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P5 STATE

TOP AUSTRALIA VARSITY TO TRAIN SKUAST-K STUDENTS FOR AGRI-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Western Sydney University (WSU), Australia is conducting 16-week comprehensive training for the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology Kashmir students for

THINK

APARTHEID IN THE HOLY LAND

In a new, well-documented report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) asserts that the Israeli government is enforcing a systemic policy to maintain the "domination by Jewish Israelis over Palestinians." The nearly seven million Palestinians in the occupied territories and



P3 CITY

NO VACCINATION WITHOUT REGISTRATION: DC SRINAGAR

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar Muhammad Aijaz Asad on Saturday kick-started the COVID vaccination drive at Shri Maharaj Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital...



Quote!

There is no loneliness more miserable than self-admiration.

—Hazrat Ali

19TH RAMAZAN

	Iftar TODAY	Sehri TOMMOROW
FIQAH HANAFIYA	07:16	04:11
FIQAH JAFARIYA	07:25	04:07

Illustration of a mosque dome and crescent moon.

NEWS DIGEST

Burglars Loot Cash From Pulwama Shrine

SRINAGAR: Unidentified burglars looted unaccounted cash from a shrine in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, officials said Saturday. They said unknown thieves during the intervening night of Friday and Saturday, broke open the donation box at a shrine in Rahmoo village of the district and decamped with unaccounted cash. The burglary at [More On P10](#)

2 Minors Among 3 Injured By Dogs

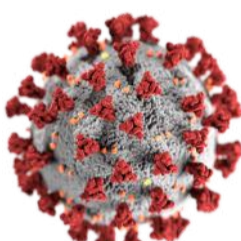
SRINAGAR: Three people including two minors were bitten by stray dogs on Saturday in Garoora area of north Kashmir's Baniptora district. According to reports, stray dogs attacked and injured three people, including two minors in Garoora area of the district on Saturday. The injured Rafia Masood (4), Zeeshan Hamid Dar (10) and 38 year old Farooq Ahmad were shifted to hospitals but were advised to stay at [More On P10](#)

2 FCR Employees Injured In Attack

SRINAGAR: At least two employees of the Forest Control Room (FCR) were injured after their team camp under an attack by timber smugglers in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, reports said Saturday. A team of FCR employees were carrying out night patrolling in Mitrigam forest area of the district, when they noticed movement of a few timber-laden horses, reports said. The FCR team came under [More On P10](#)

2 Dead After Truck Falls Into Gorge

SRINAGAR: A truck driver and his helper on Saturday were killed when their vehicle plunged into a gorge in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir. A truck on the way to Jammu from Srinagar met with an accident near Ramsoo area of Ramban when the driver lost control over the vehicle and it fell into a deep gorge and was submerged in the Bishlari Nallah, sources said Saturday. [More On P10](#)



Corona Kills 47 People In J&K, Highest Single Day Toll

3832 Fresh Cases Of Infection Reported, 2330 In Kashmir



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir continues to grapple with a coronavirus pandemic as the infection claimed the lives of 47

more people, the highest ever fatalities in a single day, even as 3832 fresh cases of Covid-19 were detected across J&K in the last 24 hours. According to the officials, 30

more people succumbed to the virus in Jammu division while 17 coronavirus related deaths were reported from Kashmir Valley, taking the death toll since the outbreak of [More On P10](#)

Normal Life On Freeze

Normal life remained affected in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday with the imposition of the lockdown in the wake of an alarming surge in coronavirus cases. "Lockdown remained in force in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday as restrictions on the movement and assembly of people continued to remain imposed across the UT," the officials said. They said security forces put barricades on roads at many places in the city here as well as in other district headquarters of the valley and the Jammu region to prevent the movement of people. However, essential and emergency services were allowed, they added. The officials said shops, fuel stations and other business establishments were shut across the UT. The Jammu and Kashmir administration had imposed lockdown in 11 districts -- Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam, Kulgam, Pulwama, Ganderbal, Jammu, Kathua, Reasi and Udhampur -- at 7 pm on Thursday. In the rest [More On P10](#)

Kupwara Teacher Fired for Being 'Threat To State'

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday sacked a teacher in Kupwara district from his service for his alleged anti-national activities, barely over a week after a Special Task Force (STF) was framed to identifying and the government employees involved in anti-national activities and pose a threat to the

country's security. "The Lieutenant Governor after considering the facts and circumstances of the case and on the basis of the information available that the activities of Idrees Jan, Teacher, Government Middle School, Kralpora, Kupwara are such as to warrant his dismissal from service," reads an order issued by Commissioner secretary General [More On P10](#)

Widespread Rains Predicted In Kashmir

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The weather department on Saturday forecast "scattered" and "fairly widespread" rain from 4 to May 7 and has issued "yellow warning" for isolated lightning and thunder showers with gusty winds in Jammu and

Kashmir. Till May 3, isolated light rain and thunderstorms in Kashmir and Pirpanjal range of Jammu division towards late afternoon have been predicted. "There is a possibility of scattered rain on May 4, fairly widespread rain on May 5 and 6 and scattered rain on May 7," a MeT official said [More On P10](#)

J&K Rolls Out Third Phase Of Vaccination Drive

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The third phase of the COVID-19 vaccination drive to cover people in the 18-45 age group began in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday in a phased manner starting with the cities of Srinagar and Jammu.

Srinagar Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Aijaz Asad kick-started the vaccination drive for the people in the age group of 18-45 years at Shri Maharaj Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital here. Officials said 1.25 lakh new doses of the two vaccines -- Covaxin and Covishield -- reached the valley on Saturday. Asad said the eligible people must get themselves registered and that nobody will get the jab without registering for the vaccination. He said a total of 10



File Photo: Abid Bhat

designated centres have been set up by the district administration for the people to be vaccinated.

"The number of designated centres will be increased soon," he added.

Earlier in the day, the Jammu and Kashmir administration said COVAXIN will be administered to the 18-45 age group free of cost.

"It will be by prior registration and prior appointment

only. Please do not crowd the vaccination centres without appointment," the Department of Information and Public Relations said on Twitter on Saturday. The government has announced a free of cost vaccine for the people falling in the age group of 18-45.

The first consignment of the Covaxin vaccine arrived in the valley from Hyderabad on Saturday, the officials said. They said 15 [More On P10](#)

'Vaccination Underway In Jails'

Jammu- The COVID-19 vaccination of eligible jail inmates is in progress and was started from the holding centre housing over 200 illegal immigrants from Myanmar here, Director General of Police, Prisons Department, V K Singh said on Saturday. He said there are no coronavirus positive cases among over 4,500 inmates in any of the 13 jails across the Union Territory. [More On P10](#)



Faheem Younus, MD
VP/CQO/Chief of Infectious Diseases, University of MD UCH

4 Vaccine Points

1. None of the vaccines can cause COVID. If you tested + after the shot it's real infection
2. Wait 1-3 months after COVID to get your 1st or 2nd shot
3. COVID vaccines don't suppress immunity
4. OK to get the 2nd dose after 4 or 8 or 12 weeks. But don't skip

Indoor is FAR riskier than outdoor

Less than 10% of COVID was caused by outdoor exposure. Indoor is 18-times riskier

Watch out for offices, public transport, restaurants, wedding halls, religious services, family get together and other indoor gatherings

Dr Khawar Khan Achakzai
Registrar Internal Medicine, GMC Srinagar And Associated Hospitals

Question: Wanted to know whether I should go for vaccination, it's been only 5 weeks since I tested negative.

Answer: Yes, you can go for the vaccine, COVID vaccines should be given 4-8 weeks after resolution of sign symptoms in case of active COVID, both first or second dose

Cop Injured In Anantnag Militant Attack

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: A police personnel was injured in a militant attack on a police party in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, an official said.

Militants opened fire on a police party, which was on COVID-19 curfew duty, at Lazibal area of south Kashmir's Anantnag district in the evening, the official said.

He said the policeman, identified as Ghulam Muhammad, was injured in the attack.

The official said the police party retaliated, but the militants managed to flee under the cover of darkness.

The injured policeman was taken to a hospital and was discharged after first aid, he said.

The area has been cordoned off and a hunt has [More On P10](#)

Kashmiri Boy's 'Oxygen Zakat' Comes As A Breath Of Fresh Air For Valley

Zaid Bin Shabir

Amid the barrage of calls ringing his cellphone inside his home, a jetlagged man is busy filling the backseat of an unknown car with four oxygen cylinders and dozens of PPE kits. It's been weeks since his routine starts and ends with the same activity. The car is bound to travel towards another city hospital where three members of the same family are gasping for breath.

As soon as the tyre screeches the empty roads of Srinagar's Shivpora area, Azhar Malik, 24, is back at his home-cum-office,

attending more distressed calls and jotting down the address of a distressed father, a son and a mother, all imploring to save their loved ones running short of oxygen.

Azhar's oxygen drive started with a different kind of "struggle" when this London-turned boy's lucrative life changed into a young man trapped by his necessity of wearing a stuffy PPE kit, a double layer of surgical masks and a face-shield, inhaling his own exhalations and dwindling outside the Intensive Care Unit of Srinagar's Chest Disease (CD) Hospital.

His contented life made him



a witness of a new journey that started on a devastating note, and continued with moments of relief and rest occurring rarely

and fleetingly.

In March 2020, when the invisible enemy ambushed the lockdown-ridden community,

Azhar was unaware that his role would evolve. Many gasped for their life inside the crowded

grieling nights. By the time she came home, the trauma of disparity and helplessness had al-

MANY OF THOSE UNFORTUNATE people didn't have their loved ones by their side because they themselves were either fighting the virus or they had abandoned their dead. It was disturbing scenario."

wards of Kashmir and one of those helpless people nursing themselves was Azhar's mother.

His mother was finally discharged from the CD Hospital's Emergency unit where she fought contagion for seventeen

ready changed her son.

"I witnessed more than a dozen deaths in one single week," Azhar recalls his dreadful time in the hospital.

"Many of those unfortunate people didn't have their loved

ones by their side because they themselves were either fighting the virus or they had abandoned their dead. It was disturbing scenario."

As months passed adamantly, nothing much was happening in his life except coping with anxiety. "Everyone deserves a respectful end," Azhar says. "I wasn't making peace with those people not having a dignified end."

But without letting the anxiety cloud his vision for a long-time, Azhar came across a social media post--eulogising an unknown Samaritan who had been burying the Covid casualties and delivering [More On P10](#)



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**KASHMIR
OBSERVER**

Sunday| 02-05-2021

Researchers find casual link between cardiovascular health and coffee consumption

Agencies

In a world-first study of 390,435 people, University of South Australia researchers found causal genetic evidence that cardio health - as reflected in blood pressure and heart rate - influences coffee consumption. Conducted in partnership with the SAHMRI, the team found that people with high blood pressure, angina, and arrhythmia were more likely to drink less coffee, decaffeinated coffee or avoid coffee altogether compared to those without such symptoms and that this was based on genetics. Lead researcher and Director of UniSA's Australian Centre for

Precision Health, Professor Eli-na Hypponen says it's a positive finding that shows our genetics actively regulate the amount of coffee we drink and protect us from consuming too much. "People drink coffee for all sorts of reasons - as a pick me up when they're feeling tired, because it tastes good, or simply because it's part of their daily routine," Prof Hypponen says. "But what we don't recognise is that people subconsciously self-regulate safe levels of caffeine based on how high their blood pressure is, and this is likely a result of a protective genetic mechanism. "What this means is that someone who drinks a lot of coffee is

likely more genetically tolerant of caffeine, as compared to someone who drinks very little. "Conversely, a non-coffee drinker, or someone who drinks decaffeinated coffee, is more likely prone to the adverse effects of caffeine, and more susceptible to high blood pressure." In Australia, one in four men, and one in five women suffer from high blood pressure, with the condition being a risk factor for many chronic health conditions including stroke, heart failure and chronic kidney disease. Using data from the UK Biobank, researchers examined the habitual coffee consumption of 390,435 people, comparing this with baseline levels of systolic

and diastolic blood pressure, and baseline heart rate. Causal relationships were determined via Mendelian randomization. Prof Hypponen says how much coffee we drink is likely to be an indicator of our cardio health. "Whether we drink a lot of coffee, a little, or avoid caffeine altogether, this study shows that genetics are guiding our decisions to protect our cardio health," Prof Hypponen says. "If your body is telling you not to drink that extra cup of coffee, there's likely a reason why. Listen to your body, it's more in tune with your health than you may think."



Scholarships This Week

Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir

Scholarship Name 1: National Scholarship Scheme (SAKSHAM) HRDM, 2021

Description: The Human Resource & Development Mission invites applications for National Scholarship Scheme (SAKSHAM) HRDM, 2021 from 10th, 12th, graduation, postgraduation, any degree or diploma (10th is minimum qualification candidate with higher qualification are eligible to apply) who are in the age group of 16-40 years. A step towards the Digital India initiative, this online examination reduces the processing time of the results and helps deliver scholarships to meritorious students in a faster way.

Eligibility: The scholarship is open for candidates between 16 and 40 years of age who have completed 10th, 12th, graduation, postgraduation, any degree or diploma; where 10th is the minimum qualification candidate with higher qualification are eligible to apply.

Prizes & Rewards: Up to INR 6000
Last Date to Apply: 15-05-2021
Application mode: Online application only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/SSH8

Scholarship Name 2: INAE Woman Engineer of the Year Award 2021

Description: Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE) is inviting applications for the INAE Woman Engineer of the Year Award 2021 from Woman Engineers between 40 and 60 years. The award aims to recognize and honor deserving women engineers every year, who have made outstanding contributions to any field of Engineering and Technology in India and may serve as role models to budding women engineering professionals in the future.



Eligibility: The fellowship is open for women engineers working in India, between the age of 40 to 60 years. The award is to be bestowed on an individual only, who should be a citizen of India. The nominee need not be an INAE Fellow. In case the nominee is an INAE Fellow, she should not be a member of the INAE Governing Council during the year of the award.

Prizes & Rewards: INR 2 lakh and a citation
Last Date to Apply: 15-05-2021
Application mode: Via post only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/NWA4

Scholarship Name 3: HDFC Bank Parivartan's ECS Scholarship 2021-22

Description: HDFC Bank invites applications from students studying in Class 6 to post-graduation level. The scholarship supports meritorious and needy students belonging to underprivileged sections of the

society. It will be given either on the basis of merit-cum-means or family/personal crisis. Eligibility: The scholarship is open for Indian nationals only. The students must be studying in any of the standards between Class 6 to 12, Diploma, Undergraduate or Postgraduate (including professional and non-professional courses) level. For merit-cum-means based scholarship, the students must have passed their previous qualifying examination with at least 55% marks and their annual family income must be less than or equal to INR 2.5 lakh. However, for a need-based scholarship, the students must be facing a personal or family crisis that has occurred during the past three years, due to which they are unable to continue bearing the cost of education and are at risk of dropping out.

Prizes & Rewards: Up to INR 75,000
Last Date to Apply: 31-07-2021
Application mode: Online applications only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/HEC9

Even A Little Extra Weight Raises Risk Of Severe Covid If Below 40: Study

Marthe Fourcade, Bloomberg

Carrying even a little extra weight raises the risk of developing a severe form of Covid-19, especially in younger adults, according to a new study. The findings published Thursday offer fresh insights into who is most at risk of complications, laying out the effects for certain age and ethnic groups and showing how weight gain matters. The study comes as repeated lockdowns and pandemic stress lead to expanding waistlines in many developed countries and quashes the



perception that only the obese face worse outcomes. Those with a body mass index above 23, which is considered at the upper end of the healthy range,

are already at higher risk, according to the U.K. researchers. They found that each one-point increase in BMI raises the chance of hospitalization by 5% and of intensive-care admission by 10%. The impact was greatest in those under age 40, and the risks were amplified for Black people compared with other ethnic groups, the scientists found after studying the health records of almost 7 million people in England. Being overweight had little effect on outcomes for people older than 80. The research was published in The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology journal.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL ENGINEERING WING BUGDAM NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No: 01 of 2021-22 DATED:-30-04-2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of U T J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on item rate Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works.

Sno	Name of work	Adv Cost Rs in Lacs	Cost of tender Documents	Time of completion	Class of contractor	Treasury challan account head
1	2	3	4	6	7	9
1	Compound walling-landscapping and Inner Gate at CFC Kanihama,Narbal.	6.61	1000	1 month	DEE/CEE	0515
2	Construction of Diversion near play ground Shoolipora (A) from H/O Gh Rasool Dar to Nazir Ahmad Sheikh.	4.47	1000	1 month	DEE	0515
	Construction of Diversion near play ground Shoolipora (A) from H/O Nazir Ahmad Sheikh to disposal end.	4.46	1000	1 month	DEE	0515

1. (I) Position of AAA: -Accorded (ii) Position of funds: Demanded

1. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

a	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	30.04.2021
b	Period of downloading of bidding documents	30.04.2021
c	Bid submission Start Date	30.04.2021
d	Bid Submission End Date	21.05.2021 4.00PM
e	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	22.05.2021 at 10.00 A.M in the Office of Executive Engineer Rural Engineering wing Bugdam

2 Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer Rural Engineering wing Bugdam (tender inviting authority).

- All bidders has to submit bid security declaration form instead of earnest money deposit (EMD) as per the circular of finance department. The bid security declaration form is enclosed below.
- The first lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3 % of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within 2 days before fixation of contract failing which the work will be put to tenders afresh. The CDR/FDR will be released only after successful completion of work.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer Rural Engineering Wing Bugdam (tender receiving authority).
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids 5 The work shall be put to fresh tenders in case of:

- Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- 6 Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.**
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.
 - To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.
 - 6.3 The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form
 - 6.4 Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
 - 6.5 Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid. Besides, original / photocopies of documents related to the bid be submitted physically / by registered post / through courier before the dates specified in Para-1.
 7. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the technical bid. Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.
 8. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.
 9. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer Rural Engineering wing Bugdam must be uploaded with the documents of the bid.
 - The original Treasury Challan (cost of tender document) and relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.
 10. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually. The BOQ downloaded should be used for filling the item rate inclusive of all taxes and it should be saved with the same name as it contains.
 11. Price escalation and Taxes:- The unit rates and prices shall be quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees and the rates quoted shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work, unless otherwise specified. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.
 12. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on REW e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required
 13. In case of CRF and any other specified project. The relevant guidelines / standard bidding document shall be followed.
 14. Instructions to Bidder (ITB)
 - 15.1 All bidders shall upload the following information and documents along with qualification criteria / qualification information with their bids:-
 - Copies of original documents defining constitution/ legal status, place of registration and principal place of Business with Cell No. and Correspondence address.
 - Treasury Challan.
 - Valid GST No. with latest return and Pan card.
 - 15.2 The bidder at his own responsibility and risk should visit and examine the site of work and its surroundings before submission of bid.
 - 15.3 Non attendance of pre-bid meeting will not be cause of disqualification of the bidder.
 - 15.4 All documents relating to the bid shall be in the English Language.
 - 15.5 Bidder must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents including tender documents fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid. No document (s) which has / have not been uploaded shall be entertained in the form of hard copy. However, in case of any clarification the bidders shall have to produce original documents in support of soft copies if need arises 16. The material used for execution of developmental works shall be borne by the contractor itself.
 17. If the bidder does not quote rate for any item of the rate list/quantity schedule, cost of such item/ items shall be deemed to be part of the overall/total contract value. No rate shall be allowed for such item / items in the allotment of contract.

No: XEN/REW/BD/1139-50
Date: 30/04/2021

DIPK-1105/21

Executive Engineer,
Rural Engineering Wing Bugdam

JAMMU AND KASHMIR LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Sub:- Selection criteria for the post of Legal Assistant/Junior Legal Assistant, advertised by J&K Legal Services Authority in terms of Advertisement Notice No. 01 of 2021 dated 08.03.2021.

NOTIFICATION

No. 03.

Dated: 30.04.2021

In terms of Jammu and Kashmir Legal Service Authorities/Committees (officers and employees) Recruitment Rules, 2021, the competent authority has been pleased to lay down the following criteria for making selection to the posts of Legal Assistant/Junior Legal Assistant (Direct Quota).

(A) Written Test.

There shall be an objective type written test comprising of 80 questions, each question carrying one mark. The duration of the written test shall be 85 minutes. The written test shall comprise questions on the following subjects:-

i.	Constitutional Law	15 Marks
ii.	Administrative Law	10 Marks
iii.	Code of Civil Procedure, 1908	10 Marks
iv.	Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973	10 Marks
v.	Law of contract	15 Marks
vi.	Environmental law	10 Marks
vii.	General Knowledge/Current affairs	10 Marks

(B) Interview/Viva-Voce

There shall be viva-voce of 20 Marks. The candidates will be called for interview/viva-voce on merit on the basis of their performance in the written examination in the ratio of 1:5.
By Order.

Sd/-
(M. K. Sharma)
Member Secretary

DIPK-1132/21

Elements Masquerading As Journalists Obstructing Work In Hospitals: KPC

Demands Action, Urges Media Persons To Follow SOPs

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Press Club on Saturday expressed concern at some unknown social media users entering hospitals with mics masquerading as journalists.

"The recent incident of a social media user barging into a Covid hospital with least regard towards SOPs is one such example, highlighting the menace. Since social media is a powerful platform to reach people, and anyone is free to use it for journalistic work as well however a trained journalist would never obstruct the functioning of medical staff."

The statement said that unfortunately many such elements have cropped up who indulge in such activities with utter disregard towards professionalism. "Such elements by these actions bring a bad name to the profession and also make the job of a genuine journalist difficult. These activities should be desisted from. Before practicing journalism we would urge young-



Image for representation

sters to seek proper training on journalistic guidelines and media ethics."

It said that with Covid-19 causing devastating losses in Kashmir, the media has an extraordinary responsibility to keep the public informed. "In the process, journalists are playing a crucial role by risking their lives as chances of getting infected with the coronavirus are very high during travel or while gathering news. A lot of journalists have already lost their lives to this deadly virus. Also, the psychological impact of reporting

the pandemic is quite higher, Kashmir Press Club said in a statement on Saturday.

"At the Kashmir Press Club we would urge our members and the fraternity in general to take utmost care while doing their jobs at the frontline. Please follow the SOPs laid down for safety in this pandemic very strictly. We would also urge the media establishments to pay more attention towards the well being of the working journalists in this crisis. Wherever possible work-from-home models should be encouraged."

No Vaccination Without Registration: DC Srinagar

Observer News Service

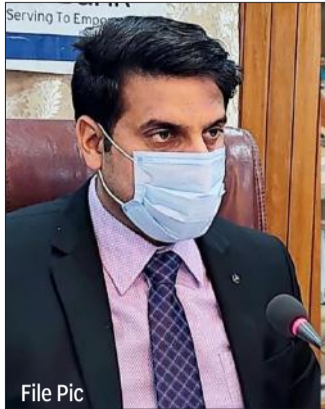
SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar Muhammad Aijaz Asad on Saturday kick-started the COVID vaccination drive at Shri Maharaj Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital for the people between age group of 18-45 years saying that the eligible people must get themselves registered and that nobody will get inoculation without registering for the vaccination.

Asad said that a total of ten designated centres have been set up by the district administration where the people between the age of 18-45 will be vaccinated.

The designated centres include Sub centre Natipora, UPHC Nishat, SMHS hospital, SKIMS Soura, G B Pant hospital, Boys Secondary School NIT, Miranda School Chinkral Mohalla, Community hall, health Centre Miskeen Bagh and Government Higher Secondary School Batamalo.

"The number of designated centres will be increased soon," he said, adding that the people must get themselves registered on Co-Win portal, saying that nobody will be vaccinated until and unless getting him/herself registered.

Pertinently, Jammu and Kash-



File Pic

mir has announced a free of cost vaccine for the people falling in the age group of 18-45.

Asked about the reports regarding shortage of vaccine, DC Srinagar said that there was no shortage at all and the number of people getting vaccinated every day is higher in Srinagar than other districts of the Union Territory. "The Covishield has arrived in ample quantity and there is no shortage," he said.

While quoting the health experts, he said that vaccines are the magic bullet as it is the ultimate protection against the virus. There is a need to follow the Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) in letter and spirit.

THE NUMBER OF DESIGNATED CENTRES will be increased soon," he said, adding that the people must get themselves registered on Co-Win portal, saying that nobody will be vaccinated until and unless getting him/herself registered.

Five Day STC Event Begins At NIT Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A five-day long short-term course (STC) on "Semiconductor Physics to Smart Devices to Intelligent Automation" began at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Saturday, in which more than 800 participants are expected to participate.

The virtual event was organised by the Department of Physics NIT Srinagar in collaboration with the Semiconductor Society of India through virtual mode and the inaugural session was attended by more than 400 participants. Prof. MA Shah is the convener of the five-day-long event.

The event was presided over by Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal appreciated the physics department faculty for taking this great initiative to educate the youth about the importance of semiconductor devices and their applications enabled with artificial intelligence.

"To complement these efforts, over the years, we have done a lot of work at NIT Srinagar and developed lab for materials including Central Research Facility Centre, where we can both develop and test material," Dr. Sehgal said.

"I hope as a team, we can work jointly and allot such research projects for both undergraduate and postgraduate students, where they can work across the departments to develop some useful devices which will benefit the common people," he said.

Director NIT Srinagar said technological institutions have a big responsibility to make the life of people around them easy, cost-effective, and more beneficial.

Dr. Sehgal said in this direction, all NITs, IITs and other technical institutions are doing great work and apart from gadgets for big companies, now they are providing gadgets for medical practitioners.

"The 5-day STC will be beneficial for the participants and definitely, we will learn from each other's experience and NIT Srinagar will be always ahead to conduct such webinars and conferences," he added.

Director NIT also lauded the role of Dr Shah in organizing many scientific

events on the campus.

On the occasion, Chairman Semiconductor society of India, Prof R. K Sharma said now technology has advanced in health care, even in a present pandemic, the HRCST Scan is proving lifeline for early detection of Covid19 and saving lives.

Dr Sharma said the importance of semiconductor devices, particularly the micro-senses and systems on chip which are required for a variety of requirements in the country. They are mostly imported as we are not able to take them to production irrespective hundreds of papers have been published on the topic, he said.

"Technologists at NITs and IITs should take the responsibility to get produced in the country to bridge this gap. We are still lagging in developing our material for our own devices; a lot of more work should be done in the development of semiconductor materials unless we will be always dependent," he said.

Dr. Sharma also announced that the semi-conductor society of India will have its chapter in NIT Srinagar in future and it will be more helpful for students and faculty.

Registrar NIT Prof. Kaiser Bukhari said in the present world if we think of any sort of development then the presence of science and technology can be ignored.

"If we look back, we will find that every next decade one generation is advancing in the field of mobile technology, starting from first-generation up to now 5th generation, we are advancing towards more and more sophisticated and smaller technologies," he said.

Prof. Bukhari said over the past few years, significant research efforts have been devoted to improving the efficiencies of semiconductor materials. In recent years this technology has shown great potential as a low-cost, environmentally friendly, and sustainable technology and has become a hot research topic, he said.

"The present webinar aims to address the various aspects of the growing technology including working principles of semiconductors, latest advances in the field and the future of semiconductor devices. The webinar will of great importance to transfer the knowledge to benefit all with heaps and bounds," Prof. Bukhari said.

SMC's Demolition Team Pelted With Stones In City Outskirts

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A demolition drive of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) turned into a fist fight on Saturday at Maloora area of Srinagar after locals of the area pelted stones on the corporation's demolition team.

Reports said that a demolition drive team led by deputy Mayor of SMC, Parvaiz Qadri, Chief Enforcement Officer Mudasar Bandy and other officials turned into a battle ground after locals at Maloora area of outskirts of Srinagar district attacked the



File Pic

demolition team with stones. However the squad continued dismantling structures in the area that were constructed without any permission from the authority.

Reports said some vehicles of SMC and other private vehicles were damaged in the incident.

Locals of the area while talking to media said, "We have paid a huge amount to the concerned Ward officer and concerned councillor of ward 32 Shahzad Ahmad, besides other officials of the corporation".

Commissioner SMC Athar Amir said that they have received the reports of illegal construction and accordingly a team led by deputy Mayor demolished the illegal construction and further corporation will take strict action against the violators adding that those involved will be dealt with as per law if found guilty.

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS (BOPEE)

Tele/Fax: 0194-2433590, 2437647 (Srinagar); 0191-2479371, 2470102 (Jammu)

Website: www.jkbopee.gov.in E-mail: coejakbopee@gmail.com/helpdeskjakbopee@gmail.com

Subject:-

Provisional select list of candidates for admission to B. Pharmacy Courses, 2020 under TFW category at Prabha Harjilal College of Pharmacy and Pre-Clinical Sciences, Mad-e-Meharban Campus of Health Sciences, Jammu - Third list thereof:

Reference: (i) Notification No. 037-BOPEE of 2021 dated 17-03-2021.
(ii) Notification No. 049-BOPEE of 2021 dated 02-04-2021.
(iii) Notification No. 051-BOPEE of 2021 dated 07-04-2021.
(iv) Notification No. 057-BOPEE of 2021 dated 17-04-2021.

Notification No. 59-BOPEE of 2021
Dated 30-04-2021

Consequent upon receipt of shortfall from Prabha Harjilal College of Pharmacy and Pre-Clinical Sciences, Mad-e-Meharban Campus of Health Sciences, Jammu in respect of Notification No. 057-BOPEE of 2021 dated 17-04-2021, the Board hereby notifies the name of following candidates to be provisionally selected for B. Pharmacy Course, 2020 in the above mentioned College/Institution under TFW category:-

S.No.	Name	Category	%age	Rank	CAT-SLI
01.	Adfar Shafi Bhat	TFW	82.00	4	TFW
02.	Seerat Farooq	TFW	80.60	5	TFW
03.	Gazanfar Yousuf Lone	TFW	80.20	7	TFW

It is pertinent to mention here that the Board vide Notification No. 037-BOPEE of 2021 dated 17-03-2021 at page No. 3 under heading "Important" notified that the supernumerary seats under Tuition Fee Waiver (TFW) i.e. 5% of intake equals to three seats of TFW shall be filled by the Board after first/second round of admission. Therefore, the Board has now considered Rank 4, 5 and 7 as TFW candidates instead of OM candidates as they may have not joined due to the reason that they might be waiting for selection under TFW category.

The above provisionally selected candidates are advised to report to the College for admission along with following documents w.e.f. 03.05.2021 to 11-05-2021 upto 4.00 p.m.:-

1. Domicile Certificate.
2. Marks Card of 12th Class examination with PCB/PCM
3. Date of Birth Certificate.
4. Valid TFW certificate.
5. Any other document(s) as required by the concerned College.

The Principal of the concerned College shall get the above mentioned original certificates of the concerned candidates verified by the Incharge College Admission Committee and countersigned by him/her before allowing the candidates to complete their admission formalities.

In case the above candidates fail to take admission against this Notification under TFW category, Mr. Simranjeet Singh Bali, with Rank 09, who is already admitted in the first provisional select list under OM category shall be considered under TFW category candidate. Further, a waiting list of following two candidates bearing Rank 12 and 13 shall be operated upon for admission by the College:-

S.No.	Name	Category	%age	Rank	CAT-SLI
01.	Haseeb Ul Hassan	TFW	76.20	12	TFW
02.	Sajad Ahmad Zargar	TFW	75.80	13	TFW

The candidates provisionally selected in waiting list shall report to the College for admission on 12-05-2021 at 10.30 a.m. only. The Principal of the College shall allow these candidates to complete their admission formalities in case of any shortfall on that day.

The College shall submit shortfall of candidates, if any, who do not complete their admission formalities, to the BOPEE Office, Srinagar/Jammu on 12-05-2021 at 4.00 p.m. positively.

The other terms and conditions shall remain the same as mentioned in the Notifications/Notices issued from time to time on the subject.

E. & O. E.

DIPK-NB-586/21

No. BOPEE/Adm-02/2013

(Dr. Sunil Gupta)
Controller of Examinations,
J&K BOPEE

Dated: 30-04-2021

DIAL-EMMA



- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS



- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BUIBHARA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

- Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)
- Mughal Road - (Closed)
- Srinagar- Leh- (open)

This Day in History

- 1335 - Otto the Merry, Duke of Austria, becomes Duke of Carinthia.
- 1345 - "Quaden Maendach" in Ghent: battles between fullers & weavers
- 1497 - John Cabot's expedition departs Bristol searching for new lands across the Atlantic
- 1526 - German evangelical monarchy joins Schmalkaldische League
- 1598 - France & Spain sign Peace of Vervins
- 1776 - France & Spain agreed to give weapons to American rebels
- 1808 - Uprising against French occupation begins in Madrid
- 1833 - Russian Tsar Nicolas I bans public sale of serfs
- 1889 - Abyssinian Emperor Menelik II and Italy sign Treaty of Wichale
- 1905 - French newspapers publish lists of Jules Vernes unpublished work
- 1906 - Tsar Nicolas II of Russia dismisses his moderate Prime Minister Witte and appoints Ivan Goremykin, a conservative bureaucrat
- 1911 - French troops occupy Fès El Bali Morocco
- 1924 - Netherlands refuses to recognize USSR
- 1926 - US military intervenes in Nicaragua
- 1927 - Intl Economic Conference (52 countries including USSR) opens
- 1933 - In Germany, Adolf Hitler bans trade unions
- 1942 - Japanese troops occupy Mandalay, Burma
- 1945 - Allies occupy Wismar, Northern Germany
- 1945 - WWII: Battle of Berlin ends as Soviet army takes Berlin and General Weidling surrenders
- 1945 - Yugoslav troops occupy Trieste
- 1946 - The "Battle of Alcatraz" takes place, killing two guards and three inmates
- 1953 - Hussein I installed as king of Jordan
- 1955 - India proposal to discrimination against Dalits or "Untouchables" punishable
- 1956 - US Lab detects high-temperature microwave radiation from Venus
- 1975 - Apple records closes down
- 1997 - Mercury Mail announces its 1 millionth internet subscriber
- 1999 - Panamanian election, 1999: Mireya

From KO Archives

MIRWAIZ DIALS SALAHUDIN Hizb Supremo Offered Seat At Hurriyat

ISLAMABAD - Moderate Hurriyat leader Mirwaiz Umer Farooq has sought support of Pakistan-based militant group Hizbul Muzahideen's leader Sayeed Salahuddin for persuading hard-line Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani to agree to a unification of the conglomerate.

Pakistani newspaper Daily Times reported that Mirwaiz Farooq called up Salahuddin who is also the Chairman of the Muttahida Jihad Council (MJC) a conglomerate of militant groups, and asked him to help unify the Hurriyat factions.

Umer Farooq offered the MJC leader a post in the Hurriyat Conference and requested him to persuade Geelani, to agree for unification, Salahuddin told Mirwaiz that a decision to join the Hurriyat Conference would be taken after consulting the MJC leadership, the newspaper said.

Salahuddin's spokesman Saleem Hashmi has confirmed the telephone contact, the daily said.

Following the contact, Saluhammad has begun consultations with other Council leaders and is likely to convene a meeting next week to discuss developments on the Kashmir issue, it said.

There would be a series of meetings in Islamabad in the next 15 days to discuss the Kashmir issue.

President Pervez Musharraf was himself likely to meet the Kashmiri leaders, the report said. It said a close aide of Musharraf had a meeting with the Hurriyat's 'azad' Jammu and Kashmir chapter and discussed developments on the Kashmir issue, including the President's visit to New Delhi.

The President's aide asked Kashmiri leaders to speed up efforts for unification of Hurriyat Conference. Earlier in the backdrop of Pakistan's unhappiness at his posturings on Kashmir issue, Syed Ali Shah Geelani appeared to have softened his stand seeking to reach out to the moderate faction saving it favoured coordination among parties which view Kashmir as a "dispute".

"There is a need to have co-ordination at all levels among the parties which consider Kashmir as a dispute and demand right of self-determination for Kashmiris." Geelani who had split the Hurriyat in 2003, said in his address at the opening of the district office of his Tehreek-e-Hurriyat here.

He said the coordination would be with organisations which accept the constitution of his Hurriyat Conference.

Without naming any outfit, Geelani said "I am extending an invitation to the organisations with open heart to have coordination." Geelani had stayed away from a function of Pakistan national day in Delhi and I had attacked that country's decision to reciprocate India's confidence building measures to enhance people-to-people contact accusing Islamabad of helping to deflect from the main issue.

(Kashmir Observer, 02 May, 2005)

KU Condoles Demise Of Prof Irshad Hamal

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Vice-Chancellor University of Kashmir Prof Talat Ahmad, Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir, faculty and officers of the varsity Saturday condoled the demise of Prof Irshad Hamal, former Vice-Chancellor, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University Rajouri.

Describing Prof Hamal as an able teacher and administrator whose contributions to the growth and development of BGSBU will always be remembered, Prof Talat and other officers prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul while expressing their solidarity with the bereaved family in this hour of grief.

DEMISE

Syed Iqbal Rizvi S/o Syed Hussain Rizvi R/o Abiyar, Kathimaidan, Zadalbal left for heavenly abode on Friday, 30th of April 2021.
Deceased was buried at his ancestral graveyard Baba Mazar, Zadalbal, Srinagar. No congregational Faizha Khwai will be held in view of the prevailing conditions.
All are humbly requested to please recite Quran Sharief and Fatiha at their respective places.

Bereaved
Syed Danish Rizvi
and Sadaat-e-Rizvi
Abiyar, Kathimaidan, Zadalbal
8825053741

US Bans Travel From Covid-Hit India. See Who Are Exempted



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON: Certain categories of students, academics, journalists and individuals have been exempted from the India travel ban announced by President Joe Biden, the US State Department said.

The exemptions were issued by Secretary of State Tony Blinken, hours after Joe Biden issued a proclamation restricting travel from India beginning May 4 because of the "extraordinarily high COVID-19 caseloads and multiple variants circulating in the country".

According to the US State Department, the travel ban exemption is in line with a similar exemption that the US has granted to some categories of travellers from Brazil, China, Iran and or South Africa.

In keeping with the Department of State's commitment to facilitate legitimate travel to the United States, Secretary Blinken decided today to apply the same set of National Interest Exceptions to India that he had previously applied to all other regional travel restrictions currently in effect as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Department said.

Students seeking to commence studies in the fall, academics, journalists and individuals who provide critical infrastructure support in countries affected by a geographic COVID-19 restriction may qualify for the exception, it said.

This includes qualified applicants who have been present in India, Brazil, China, Iran, or South Africa, it added.

The pandemic continues to limit the number of visas our embassies and consulates abroad are able to process, it said. As always, visa applicants should check the website of the nearest embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date information about visa appointment availability, the State Department said.

As the global situation evolves, the Department continues to seek ways to process more visa applications, in line with science-based guidance from health authorities and with the health and safety of staff and applicants as our priority, it said.

In a national interest exemption issued by the State Department on April 26, which it said is good for India too, students with valid F-1 and M-1 visas intending to begin or continue an academic programme commencing August 1 or later do not need to contact an embassy or consulate to seek an individual exemption to travel.

They may enter the United States no earlier than 30 days before the start of their academic studies.

Students seeking to apply for new F-1 or M-1 visas should check the status of visa services at the nearest embassy or consulate.

Those applicants who are found to be otherwise qualified for an F-1 or M-1 visa will automatically be considered for an NIE to travel, it said.

The Department of State also continues to grant NIEs for qualified travellers seeking to enter the US for purposes related to humanitarian travel, public health response and national security.

These travellers and any others who believe their travel to be in the United States' national interest should also review the website of the nearest US embassy or consulate for instruction on how to contact them, it said.

In another memorandum on April 8, the Secretary of State had determined that the travel of immigrants, fiancé (e) visa holders, certain exchange visitors, and pilots and air crew travelling to the United States for training or aircraft pickup, delivery or maintenance is in the national interest for purposes of approving exceptions under the geographic COVID presidential proclamations.

These proclamations restrict the entry of individuals physically present, within the 14-day period prior to their attempted entry into the United States, in the People's Republic of China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Schengen Area, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Federative Republic of Brazil, or Republic of South Africa.

This article provides further details regarding this determination. India has now been added to the list.



The US-led military onslaught in Afghanistan began in October 2001 after September 11 attacks. (File)

Afghan Retreat: US Starts Withdrawing From Its Longest War

Agencies

KABUL: The United States formally begins withdrawing its last troops from Afghanistan Saturday, bringing its longest war nearer to an end but also heralding an uncertain future for a country in the tightening grip of an emboldened Taliban.

US officials on the ground say the withdrawal is already a work in progress -- and May 1 is just a continuation -- but Washington has made an issue of the date because it is a deadline agreed with the Taliban in 2020 to complete the pullout.

The skies above Kabul and nearby Bagram airbase have been buzzing with more US helicopter activity than usual as the pullout gears up, following the start Thursday of a concurrent NATO withdrawal.

The prospect of an end of 20 years of US presence comes despite fighting raging across the countryside in the absence of a peace deal.

A stark reminder of what remains came late Friday with a car bomb in Pul-e-Alam, south of the capital, killing at least 21 people and wounding 100 more.

US President Joe Biden is determined to end what he called "the forever war", announcing last month that the withdrawal of the remaining 2,500 American forces would be complete by the 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

"A horrific attack 20 years ago... cannot explain why we should remain there in 2021," he said.

Since the US withdrawal deal

was struck the Taliban have not directly engaged foreign troops, but insurgents have mercilessly attacked government forces in the countryside and waged a terror campaign in urban areas.

The exit of US forces has only exacerbated the fear felt by ordinary Afghans.

"Everyone is scared that we might go back to the dark days of the Taliban era," said Mena Nowrozi, who works at a private radio station in Kabul.

"The Taliban are still the same; they have not changed. The US should have extended their presence by at least a year or two," she told AFP.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani insists that government forces -- who for months have carried out most of the ground fighting against the Taliban -- are "fully capable" of keeping the insurgents at bay.

He said the pullout also means the Taliban have no reason to fight.

"Who are you killing? What are you destroying? Your pretext of fighting the foreigners is now over," Ghani said in a speech this week.

Worst-case analysis
Still, General Mark Milley, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, has not ruled out total chaos.

"On the worst-case analysis, you have a potential collapse of the government, a potential collapse of the military," he said earlier this week.

"You have a civil war and all the humanitarian catastrophe that goes with it."

At Least 30 Killed In Car Bomb Blast In Afghanistan



KABUL: A huge car bomb blast killed at least 30 people and injured dozens more in Afghanistan's eastern Logar province on Friday evening, with high-school students among the casualties, officials said.

The car packed with explosives detonated in Logar's capital of Pul-e Alam near the house of the former head of the provincial council, Didar Lawang, the spokesman for Logar's governor, said.

The house also operated as a guesthouse and the blast had struck just as guests were breaking their fast during the holy Islamic month of Ramadan, according to the head of Logar's provincial council, Hasibullah Stanekzai.

He said among the casual-

ties were highschool students who had been staying at the house, having travelled to the capital to sit their university entrance exam, as well as pro-government militia members who were staying there while waiting for air transport to another district.

It was not immediately clear who was behind the blast. The insurgent Taliban did not immediately respond to request for comment.

Violence in Afghanistan has escalated in recent weeks after U.S. President Joe Biden announced the U.S. would withdraw troops by September 11 to end two decades of foreign military presence.

That decision angered the Taliban who had signed a deal

with previous U.S. President Donald Trump that specified troops would be gone from the country by May 1 subject to certain security guarantees.

Interior ministry spokesman Tariq Arian said that the deaths from Friday's blast could rise.

A provincial health official said just over 60 injured people had been taken to hospital and many students were among the victims.

The European Union's delegation to Afghanistan condemned the attack.

"In the holy month of Ramadan, horrible news on a car bomb in Pul-e-Alam, Logar province, killing and injuring innocent civilians, including students...this is a tragedy for the whole country," it said on Twitter. **REUTERS**

US-China Tensions Carry Seeds Of War, Warns Kissinger

Agencies

WASHINGTON: Acclaimed diplomat Henry Kissinger said on Friday that US-China tensions threaten to engulf the entire world and could lead to an Armageddon-like clash between the two military and technology giants.

The 97-year-old former US secretary of state, who as an adviser to president Richard Nixon crafted the 1971 unfreezing of relations between Washington and Beijing, said the mix of economic, military and technological strengths of the two superpowers carried more risks than the Cold War with the Soviet Union.

Strains with China are "the biggest problem for America, the biggest problem for the world," Kissinger told the McCain Institute's Sedona Forum on global issues.

"Because if we can't solve that, then the risk is that all over the world a kind of cold war will develop between China and the United States."

While nuclear weapons were already large enough to damage the entire globe during the Cold War, he said advances in nuclear technology and artificial intelligence -- where China and the United States are both leaders -- have multiplied the doomsday threat.

"For the first time in human history, humanity has the capacity to extinguish itself in a finite period of time," Kissinger said.

"We have developed the technology of a power that is beyond what anybody imagined even 70 years ago. And now, to the nuclear issue is added the high tech



issue, which in the field of artificial intelligence, in its essence is based on the fact that man becomes a partner of machines and that machines can develop their own judgement," he said.

"So in a military conflict between high-tech powers, it's of colossal significance."

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union during the decades after World War II was more one-dimensional, focused on nuclear weapons competition, said Kissinger, one of the leading strategic thinkers of the past six decades. "The Soviet Union had no economic capacity. They had military technological capacity," he said.

"(They) didn't have developmental technological capacity as China does. China is a huge economic power in addition to being a significant military power."

Kissinger said US policy toward China must take a two-pronged approach: standing firm on US principles to demand China's respect, while maintaining a constant dialogue and finding areas of cooperation. "I'm not saying that diplomacy will always lead to beneficial results," he said.

Kyrgyz-Tajik Clashes Over Reservoir Leave 40 Dead



BISHKEK: Authorities in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan reported nearly 40 people killed in fighting over a reservoir and water pumping station at their disputed border, in one of the bloodiest clashes in years on the restive frontier.

Villagers and border guards reached a ceasefire overnight and by Friday the fighting appeared to have ended. The presidents of both countries spoke by phone for the first time since the clashes broke out.

The clashes had erupted this week along the frontier between the Kyrgyz-Tajik border," Kyrgyz Tajikistan's Sughd province and Kyrgyzstan's southern Batken province because of a dispute over the reservoir and pump, claimed by both sides on the Isfara river.

Villagers from opposing sides hurled rocks at each other and border guards joined the fray with guns, mortars and even, according to Kyrgyz border guards, a Tajik attack helicopter.

At least one Kyrgyz border outpost and a number of houses on the Kyrgyz side were set ablaze, while Tajikistan reported damage from shelling to a bridge.

Kyrgyz authorities reported 31 people killed on their side, all but three of them civilians, and

123 wounded. Local government sources in Tajikistan said eight people had been killed on their side, including four border guards. The tolls were many times higher than initially reported on Thursday.

The two sides reported no fresh fighting on Friday. Kyrgyzstan, which had accused Tajik troops of entering its territory, said they had withdrawn.

"The heads of states discussed measures to de-escalate the situation as quickly as possible on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border," Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov's office said after his conversation with Tajik leader Imomali Rakhmon.

However, videos posted on social media showed volunteers gathering in various parts of Tajikistan to head to the conflict zone.

The frontier, dating to the Soviet era, is poorly demarcated and border disputes are frequent, though usually on a smaller scale.

Both countries host Russian military bases and maintain close relationships with Moscow.

The Kremlin said on Friday it was "deeply concerned" by the clash and that President Vladimir Putin was ready to act as a mediator. **REUTERS**

Australians Arriving From Covid-Hit India Could Face 5 Years' Jail, Fine

SYDNEY: Australian residents and citizens who have been in India within 14 days of the date they plan to return home will be banned from entering Australia as of Monday and those who disobey will face fines and jail, government officials said.

The temporary emergency determination, issued late on Friday, is the first time Australia has made it a criminal offence for its citizens to return home.

The move is part of strict measures to stop travellers to Australia from the world's second most populous nation as it contends with a surge in COVID-19 cases and deaths.

The restrictions come into effect from May 3 and breaching the ban risks civil penalties and up to five years imprisonment, Health Minister Greg Hunt said in a statement.

"The government does not make these decisions lightly," Hunt said. "However, it is critical the integrity of the Australian public health and quarantine systems is protected and the number of COVID-19 cases in quarantine facilities is reduced to a manageable level."

The government will reconsider the restrictions on May 15. India's coronavirus death count passed 200,000 this week, and cases are nearing 19 million as virulent new strains have combined with "super-spreader" events such as political rallies and religious festivals.

Neela Janakiraman, an Australian surgeon with family in India said the decision to "criminalise" Australians returning from India was disproportionate and overly punitive.

"Indian-Australians are seeing this as a racist policy because we are being treated different than people from other



countries who have had similar waves of infection like the U.S., the UK and Europe. It is very hard to feel anything other than targeted as an ethnic group."

Human rights groups also voiced indignation at the ban, suggesting the government's focus should be on improving its quarantine system, not on punishment.

"This is an outrageous response. Australians have a right of return to their own country," Human Rights Watch's Australia director, Elaine Pearson said in a statement. "The government should be looking for ways to safely quarantine Australians returning from India, instead of focusing their efforts on prison sentences and harsh punishments."

Australia, which has no community transmissions, on Tuesday introduced a temporary suspension of direct flights from India until mid-May. However, some Australians, including cricketers Adam Zampa and Kane Richardson, returned via Doha.

Tuesday's move had left over 9,000 Australians stranded in India, 650 of whom are registered as vulnerable, officials said.

Australia has all but stamped out the coronavirus after closing its borders to non-citizens and permanent residents in March 2020, recording just 29,800 cases and 910 deaths. **REUTERS**

NEWS MAKERS

Over 1,200 Journalists Died In 14 Months From Covid-19

Agencies

More than 1,200 journalists have died from Covid-19 across the world since March last year, according to the Press Emblem Campaign (PEC).

"Journalists are engaged in a profession which is particularly exposed to the virus as many have been forced to continue working in contact with the population," it said in a statement on Friday ahead of the World Press Freedom Day on May 3.

The PEC said it has counted more than 1,200 journalists in 75 countries who died from Covid-19 complications between March 2020 and April 29 this year.

It called governments to take action to help the media most affected and to



support the families of the victims.

"This is an unprecedented slaughter and a great loss for the profession," PEC Secretary-General Blaise Lempem was quoted saying.

"On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, we call for honouring eminent colleagues of all ages who have not survived the pandemic," he added.

The PEC also considers there is a need to distribute vaccines equally all over the world, to stop the spread of the virus and its new

strains in developing countries. "Vaccine production is limited and it is available for the wealthiest countries, preventing access to journalists in South America and South Asia. As long as this situation continues, deaths will keep on increasing," reads the statement.

The rate of deceased journalists accelerated further in April this year with the deaths of 125 journalists in one month or more than four per day.

"The deaths of dozens of Indian journalists, often still in full swing, is particularly heartbreaking," Lempem was quoted in the statement.

The situation is particularly alarming in India: in the past two weeks, at least 50 journalists have succumbed to the virus, on average 3 to 5 every day, according to PEC.

No Celebrations, Bursting Of Crackers Over Election Results, Says Madras HC

The Madras High Court on Friday appealed to political leaders and the party cadres in Tamil Nadu not to go in for celebrations, including bursting of crackers after the announcement of election results on May 2 or 3, citing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The leaders should keep their rank and file in check.

There can be no celebrations, bursting of crackers and rallies till the present grim situation of pandemic eases, the first bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy said.

They must take proactive steps and be an example to others.

The bench made the observations after being satisfied with the arrangements made on May 2 by the state Health depart-

ment and the Election Commission, as stated in their respective status reports.

Counting of votes polled in the April 6 Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu and neighbouring Puducherry will be taken up on Sunday.

The bench hoped that on that day, the political parties, media personnel and the citizens would adhere to the instructions and the guidelines, follow the norms and cooperate with the authorities in the greater interest of the public at large.

The bench also advised the people not to panic and rush to the hospitals or make a mad rush for vaccines.

They can follow the guidelines issued by the state government and go to the hospital as the last resort. **PTI**

Bar Association Expresses Concern Over Health Condition Of Kashmiri Prisoners

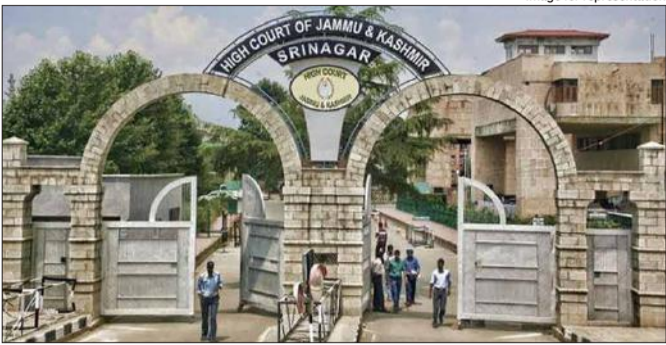


Image for representation

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association Saturday expressed concern over the deteriorating health conditions of the hundreds of Kashmiri prisoners lodged in different jails in India.

Bar urged the Government Of India and UT J&K administration to shift these prisoners from outside jails to the nearest jails in Kashmir valley.

"In view of the disastrous Covid-19 wave throughout India which is consuming thousands of lives per day, the family members of these prisoners are seriously concerned about the health and lives of their imprisoned kith and kin," a Bar statement said.

Bar while expressing deep concern about the physical conditions of the Kashmiri prison-

ers in outside jails demanded immediate shifting of these prisoners to the nearest jails in Kashmir valley.

It also appealed that the cases of these prisoners/detainees must be reviewed for parole and in view of the grave pandemic situation be released on parole for the time being.

A meeting of Bar decided to appeal the Govt. of India and UT administration for review of the cases for release on parole and shifting of these prisoners to the nearest jails in Kashmir valley.

The meeting observed that due to Covid-19 restrictions courts are not able to take up cases with the desired priority as such Administration be review cases for shifting or release of the overall prisoners on parole which is the prerogative of the Govt. and not of judiciary.

Yaseen Seeks Release Of Political Prisoners Ahead Of Eid-ul-Fitr

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chairman People's Democratic Front (PDF) Hakeem Yaseen Saturday urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to release all the political detainees on the eve of Eid-ul-fitr so that they could join their families on the auspicious occasion.

In a statement, he said release of political detainees on Eid would go a long way to build a sense of goodwill and confidence among the people.

He said release of political detainees on the eve of religious festival Eid-ul-fitre would be one of the much needed confidence building measures (CBM) to end political uncertainty and lack of trust among the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said Kashmir is a political problem which can be solved

amicably through the process of meaningful negotiations and reconciliation between the genuine stakeholders. He said uptil resolution of the vexed Kashmir imbroglio, the centre and the LG government should work towards the well being of the common people and redress their grievances with regard to provision of basic amenities and fundamental rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution.

Yaseen said that outbreak of the dreaded Covid pandemic too has necessitated the release of political prisoners to save them from the killer infection in the jails, which by no means are equipped to deal with pandemic situations. He has also urged the need for shifting of all detainees from outside jails to Kashmir on humanitarian ground.

...COVID-19 Family Blames Shortage Of Oxygen After Four Covid Patients Die In Jammu Hospital

No Patient Died Of Oxygen Shortage: Admin

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Notwithstanding the claims of administration of ample oxygen supply, four Covid-19 patients admitted in Jammu's Batra Hospital died on Saturday allegedly due to non-availability of oxygen, a charge rejected by the hospital administration.

Situation in Batra Hospital turned chaotic when four Covid positive patients allegedly died for want of Oxygen support. Attendants of the deceased patients blamed hospital administration and government for callousness and created ruckus in the hospital premises.

"Our patient was undergoing treatment at the hospital for the past 17 days and died painfully of suffocation due to non-availability of oxygen," one of the protesting relatives of the deceased said.

However, the hospital management denied the charge and said there was no shortage of oxygen in the hospital.

"Four deaths have taken place today (Saturday) due to various reasons but not because of shortage of oxygen. We have 32 more patients on oxygen support," hospital principal Pawan Malhotra said.

He said the hospital has not taken any new patients for the past three days because of the heavy rush and also gave an option to the admitted patients to take voluntary discharge if they desire so.

"The (oxygen) supply is coming regularly and we constantly remain in touch with the government to ensure that there is no shortage of oxygen," Malhotra said.

Meanwhile, the relatives of the patients said that their "loved ones died due to shortage of oxygen supply and hospital authorities kept

hiding the cause of death."

A hospital official on the condition of anonymity said that Batra hospital requires 350 oxygen cylinders daily for treatment of Covid patients but the supply got affected and there was shortage of oxygen since late night. Two of four patients died of oxygen shortage while other two due to medical reasons," he said.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir administration said that no patient died due to shortage of oxygen supply at Acharya Shri Chander College of Medical Sciences (ASCOM) hospital as regular replenishment is being undertaken as per requirement raised.

"Four deaths reported in Batra hospital Jammu today (Saturday) occurred because

91.45 percent, Ganderbal 90.18 percent, Kulgam 71.80 percent and Shopian 87.48 percent.

In Jammu division, the recovery rate of Jammu district is 80.74 percent, Udhampur has 89.29, Rajouri 80.35 percent, Doda 91.11 percent, Kuthua 87.18 percent, Samba 78.74 percent, Kishtwar 95.06 percent, Poonch 87.41 percent, Ramban 87.31 percent and Reasi 78.83 percent.

J&K is witnessing a steep surge in positive cases while deaths are also increasing with each passing day.

Notably, the active cases in Jammu and Kashmir are around 30,000 while as in first wave the highest active positive cases in J&K were around 22,000—(KNO)

of routine medical reasons, not because of shortage of oxygen," a statement issued by the administration said.

The statement, uploaded by the Department of Information and Public Relations on its Twitter handle, said as far as oxygen supply to Batra hospital is concerned, 253 oxygen cylinders were supplied to it in the last 24 hours and regular replenishment is being undertaken as per requirement raised.

"The supply of oxygen is being closely monitored," the statement said.

It said while there is an increasing demand due to a rise in the number of COVID cases, no patient has died due to shortage of supply of oxygen.

"Please do not pay heed to rumours," the administration said.

MP Masoodi Cautions Admin Against Complacency In Combating Covid

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Hasnain Masoodi, MP Anantnag Saturday cautioned the LG administration against any complacency in the fight against Covid-19 pandemic.

In a statement, Masoodi said that tall claims made by the administration as regards preparedness to take up the challenge and commitment to employ all tools to defeat the deadly pandemic do not match the situation on the ground.

Masoodi voiced serious concern over the non-availability of important diagnostic kits like RT-PCR in some of the hospitals and the alarming deficiency of such and other Covid combat components in almost all the hospitals across south Kashmir.

The statement emphasised that tracking, tracing and testing being of utmost impor-

tance in an overall strategy to fight the pandemic, the administration can ill afford to be complacent in providing diagnostic tools to our hard-pressed frontline warriors engaged in the battle against Covid-19 pandemic.

"As per the available information administration has surprisingly fixed a target of 750 RAT and 750 RT-PCR tests per day for a population of 1.2 million in Anantnag district and like unrealistic targets in other districts; that as people in large numbers throng the hospitals to have Covid tests done, it is becoming near impossible for healthcare workers to restrict the tests to the fixed target, resulting in a shortage of kits."

He has also expressed concern over the non-availability of vaccines in most of the healthcare centres in the An-

antnag and other three districts of south Kashmir.

The vaccination campaign, it is stated, resultantly has come to a halt in such areas. "It is distressing that while millions of rupees are spent on advertisements through electronic and print media exhorting people to go for vaccinations when people queue up outside healthcare centres, they are sent back without vaccination."

Delay in the procurement of vaccines, now admitted by the government, according to the statement, is attributable to the absence of leadership and resultant lack of accountability.

He demanded that in the battle against deadly epidemic leadership role be assigned to a senior officer, so that sense of accountability is inculcated and responsibility fixed for lapses, if any, in meeting the challenge.

Police Arrest Two Drug Peddlers In Baramulla, Budgam

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday said that it arrested two drug peddlers in Budgam and Baramulla districts of the valley.

Officers from Police Station Baramulla at a checkpoint established at Janbazpora Baramulla intercepted a person identified as Showkat Ahmad Khan son of Gh Muhammad Khan, a resident of Nadihal Rafiabad (employee of PHE Deptt). During checking, officers were able to recover 650 grams of Charas from his possession, a police statement said.

"He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody. Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law stands registered at Police Station Baramulla and investigation has been taken up."

Similarly in Budgam, the statement said, police party from



Image for representation

Police Station Charar-e-Sharief at a checkpoint established at Kanidajan Crossing intercepted a person identified as Mohammad Saleem Bhat son of Mohammad Ahsan Bhat, a resident of Nowhar Charar-e-Sharief. "During checking, officers were able to recover 200 grams of Charas from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to Police Station where he remains in custody."

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 29/2021 under relevant sections of law stands registered at Police Station Charar-e-Sharief and investigation has been taken up.

Police Register Case After Govt Employee Assaulted In Budgam



Image for representation

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Days after raising an illegal brick kiln to ground, district administration Budgam Saturday stopped the illegal construction of a proposed brick kiln, seized a JCB and registered a formal case against a mob that assaulted a government employee.

Sources said that after receiving information about a brick kiln being constructed illegally in Mulshula area of Beerwah, a team lead by Tehsildar Beerwah Haroon Rashid rushed to spot to ascertain the facts.

"A large number of people mostly females confronted the government team and even resorting to stone-pelting," they said. Witnesses said that miscreants attacked the officials with sticks.

"I took the concerned SHO along and the information we had received was correct. A JCB was used to cut the soil illegally. The driver fled away while a mob emerged there and resisted our move. We somehow, managed to seize the JCB, but the mob meanwhile, assaulted a government employee during the melee," Tehsildar Beerwah said.

He said that a formal case has been registered against the intending brick kiln owner, miscreants and the land owner.

When contacted, a police official confirmed that an FIR vide number 54/21 under section 147,148, 336, 332,353 and 21 Brick Kiln Act 2010 has been resisted against the accused. (KNT)

1000 LPM Oxygen Generation Plant Made Functional In Kulgam

Observer News Service

KULGAM: In a move to augment health services in the district, a 1000 LPM Oxygen generation plant was Saturday made functional at District Hospital here.

In this regard a simple inauguration function was organised and Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat inaugurated the Oxygen generation plant and dedicated it for patient care.

On the occasion, the DC said



Image for representation

that there is now capacity of 100 high flow oxygen beds in the hospital after induction of services of this 1000 LPM Oxygen generation plant.

GMC Jammu Suspends OPD Services

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Administration of Government Medical College Hospital Jammu has decided to suspend OPD services, including in its Associated Hospitals in view of increased Covid Patient load.

A handout issued here stated that 'In view of recent surge of

Covid 19 pandemic and increase in patient load, the routine OPDs in GMC & its Associated Hospitals shall remain suspended w.e.f. 03-05-2021 till further order.'

However, in order to avoid inconvenience to general public, the emergency services shall continue to remain functional (24x7) as per routine.

Top Australia Varsity To Train SKUAST-K Students For Agri-Entrepreneurship, Innovation

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Western Sydney University (WSU), Australia is conducting 16-week comprehensive training for the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology Kashmir students for developing entrepreneurial orientation and converting their innovations and business ideas into successful and commercially viable enterprises.

The aim of the programme, which is first of kind training held for students of a university from J&K, is to nurture Kashmir's agricultural entrepreneurs for tomorrow, who will run technology-driven and artificial intelligence-based agribusinesses. It will also expose the students to international standards of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The 12-module training programme by the Business School of WSU, Australia is organised under the sponsorship of the World Bank-ICAR funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) for the institutional development of the SKUAST-K.

SKUAST-K was the only institution among the seven agricultural universities of the country approved by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for the training. For organising the training for its students, SKUAST-K has to enter into an MoU with the Western Sydney University, Australia.

The 60 students who will undergo the training were selected from 440 applicants from the various faculties of the SKUAST-K. The selection of the students was done on the basis of a test conducted by the WSU, Australia to check the entrepreneurial ability, innovative ideas and startup

knowledge of the applicants.

Also, 12 teachers of the SKUAST-K are taking part in the training, who will act as mentors of the students in their entrepreneurial quest and will also help in creating an ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship at SKUAST-K.

Vice-Chancellor SKUAST-K Prof JP Sharma chaired the online inaugural session of the programme. The V-C, in his address, defined innovative and entrepreneurial behaviour of people as a key for any nations progress. While appreciating the organizing team from both the Universities, he stressed getting ideas converted into viable enterprise while keeping the essence of social responsibility.

Dean College of Business, WSU, Prof Amir Mahmood, expressed enthusiasm at joining hands in promoting global entrepreneurship skills with local taste among the students of SKUAST-K.

Director Planning and Monitoring and PI NAHEP, Prof NA Ganai, talked about the concerted efforts gone into making the programme happening to tap the potential of students in making agriculture a viable venture by adopting advanced technology.

Don Wright from Western Sydney University in his message expressed satisfaction and desire to have a meaningful impact on the association through the currently devised module. The other officers and faculty members from Western Sydney University who are set to be engaged with the program include Ian Anderson, Inu Rana and Nisha Rakshesh to mention but a few., Coordinator Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cell, IDP NAHEP, Dr Farahnaz Rasool conducted the proceedings of the function.

NEWS MAKERS

Div Com Inaugurates Covid-19 War Room In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Srinagar Saturday launched a 24/7 dedicated Helpline at Covid-19 War Control Room in order to facilitate the general public regarding Covid-19 related queries and to ensure systematic redressal of such issues.

The facility was inaugurated by the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole in presence of Chairman DDMA Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad.

After inauguration, the Div Com was given a brief about the facilities available at Covid War Room.

The Div Com was given a brief demonstration about

the initiative and was told that people can log on to the website www.waseela.in and can get real time information about Covid-19 related issues including the number of isolation beds, Oxygen & beds as well as normal beds available in city hospitals. Statistics about positive cases, tests conducted, vaccination details, information regarding containment zones etc. shall also be available on the web portal.

The Div Com was further informed that all City hospitals have been mapped with the Covid-19 War Room so that all information is timely updated on the website. "People can dial helpline No's. *01942483650* & *01942483651* for any query with regard to Covid-19.

The Divisional Commissioner appreciated the efforts of DDMA for timely setting up of the Control Room to facilitate the people in this crucial time.

On the occasion, the Chairman DDMA said the basic purpose of establishing the Covid-19 War Room is to provide instant information to the people about Beds, Oxygen, Ventilators, ICU available in the hospitals besides addressing other Covid-19 related issues. He also said that necessary support in the form of medicines and food etc will also be facilitated for the deserving covid positive persons especially ones belonging to BPL families through voluntary organisations.

Ex-VC BGSBU Prof Hamal Dies

JAMMU: Former Vice-Chancellor Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University Rajouri Prof. Irshad Ahmad Hamal left for heavenly abode on Saturday morning.

Hamal was taken ill briefly before passing away Saturday morning, a close relative of the top-academician said.

Incumbent Vice Chancellor of the varsity Prof. Akbar Masood, Senior functionaries and faculty members have condoled the demise.

Recalling the contribution of Prof. Hamal as the Vice Chancellor of BGSBU (2010-2015) Prof. Akbar Masood in his condolence message credited Hamal for his several academic and developmental initiatives in the varsity.

Prof. Akbar said that the contribution of Prof. Hamal in the growth and development of the University would always be remembered.

Praying for eternal peace to the departed soul, Akbar said, "I am deeply saddened to hear about the demise of Prof. Irshad Ahmed Hamal. It is a moment of grief and loss for the entire



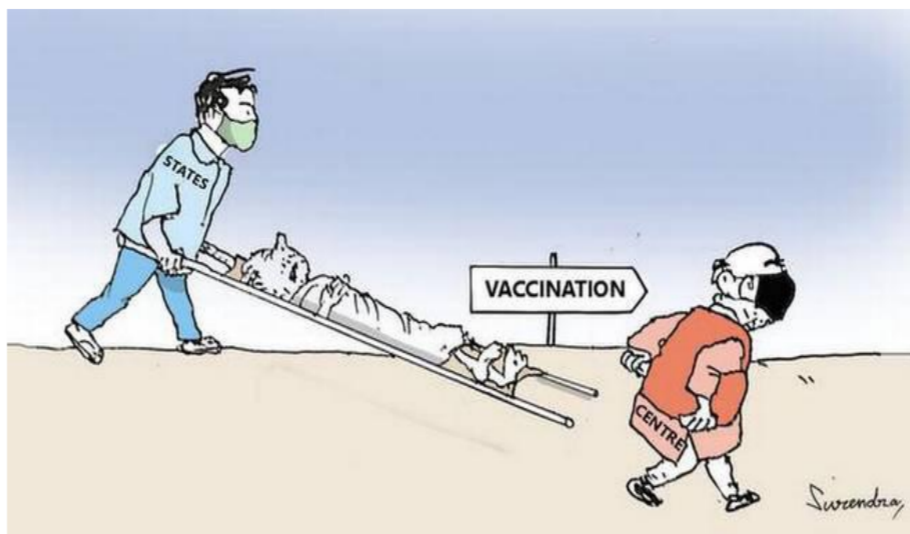
BGSBU fraternity. On behalf of the whole BGSBU family, I express my deepest condolences and pray to Almighty to grant peace to the departed soul and patience to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss."

Dean Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, Registrar, Dean of various schools, Heads of various departments, Faculty members, Officers and staff of the University also condoled the sad demise of Prof. Irshad Ahmed Hamal and expressed their solidarity with the bereaved family.

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NO HOLDS BARRED



The world is watching to see if America and the West will find Israeli apartheid as repugnant as they found South African apartheid. If they do, their support for Israel will have to be contingent on Israel's respect for Palestinians' dignity and humanity

Marketing Millets

Millets need to be promoted more proactively by the government, to boost its demand and consumption to turn it into a profitable crop for the farmers

Asad Mirza

The policy makers should try to focus on a greater integration of a national mission and sub-missions on nutri-cereals with the flagship Poshan Abhiyaan. The focus on revival of millets should be complimented by the revival of consumption by producers. A collective, or cluster marketing approach, may help growers

A positive fallout of the Covid-19 could be described as a change in our eating habits and foods, which we consume. As everyone is trying to boost their immunity and stay active during in-home stretches, everyone is looking forward to getting a balanced and nutritious diet, which could help them fight off the Covid-19 virus. One such cereal, which has assumed greater attention in these anxieties filled days, is millet.

Millets have been around for centuries as a food group but somewhere down the line, particularly in India, we seem to have replaced them with polished rice and maida-mixed wheat. Consuming millets was considered to be meant for the poor.

ncient grains like jowar, ragi, foxtail, bajra and other minor millets are promising cereals which are nutritionally superior to major cereals and serve as a good source of protein, high dietary fibre, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and micronutrients. Millets seem to be in demand again as it is known to be an immunity booster.

Do you know what was the staple grain of India a few decades back? You would be surprised to know it was the humble millets; also currently one-third of the world's population consumes millets regularly.

But the small, humble grains are finally getting their due as super food and powerhouse of immunity. Millets are now on the verge of becoming superstars of nutrition. Millets are a rich source of a wide variety of micronutrients such as calcium, thiamine and magnesium. It is the presence of these micronutrients that support the immune system. Millets are a good source of protein, high dietary fibre, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and micronutrients.

What are millets and their advantages?

As per agricultural scientists, Millets are a group of small-grained cereal food crops, which are highly tolerant to drought and other extreme weather conditions and are grown with low chemical inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides. Most of the millet crops are native to India and are popularly known as nutri-cereals as they provide most of the nutrients required for normal functioning of the human body. Millets are classified into Major Millets and Minor Millets based on their grain size.

Millets are gluten free and non-allergenic. Millet

consumption decreases triglycerides and C-reactive protein, thereby preventing cardiovascular diseases. All millets are rich in dietary fibre. Dietary fibre has water absorbing and bulking property. It increases transit time of food in the gut, which helps in reducing risk of inflammatory bowel disease, and acts as a detoxifying agent in the body.

Nutritionists promote millets, as they are gluten-free, highly nutritious and rich in dietary fibre. They are rich in micronutrients, including calcium, iron, phosphorus, etc. They are low in Glycemic Index (GI) and as such don't cause a huge spike in blood sugar. Thus, millets should ideally be an integral part of our daily diet.

Many doctors endorse the positive effects of consuming millets, as they are anti-acidic and gluten free; helps to prevent type 2 diabetes; are effective in reducing blood pressure; reduces risk of gastrointestinal conditions like gastric ulcers or colon cancer; eliminate problems like constipation, excess gas, bloating and cramping. Millets also act as a probiotic feeding micro flora in our inner ecosystem. Millets hydrate our colon to keep us from being constipated. Millets contain major and minor nutrients in good amounts.

Millets are high in nutrition and dietary fibre. They serve as a good source of protein, micronutrients and phytochemicals. The millets contain 7-12% protein, 2-5% fat, 65-75% carbohydrates and 15-20% dietary fibre. The essential amino acid profile of the millet protein is better than various cereals such as maize. Millets contain fewer cross-linked prolamins, which may be an additional factor contributing to higher digestibility of the millet proteins.

Millet promotion by the government

The Government of India marked 2018 as the National Year of Millets to boost production of the nutrient-rich millets and the agro-industries involved in its production. As per Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India needs to work on the Millets revolution in order to ensure a nutritious diet and good health. Under his stewardship India sponsored a UN resolution to get 2023 declared as International Year of the Millets, aimed at enhancing production and consumption of millets.

The Indian policymakers have refocused their attention towards millet farming systems and enacted policies to create an enabling environment for the farmers. With respect to millets production, some of

the existing schemes by the Government of India include: Integrated Cereals Development Programmes in Coarse Cereals (ICDP-CC), Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA), Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millet Promotion (INSIMP), a part of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) which is the only comprehensive initiative to support millet production. But cultivation of millets should be promoted in drylands states and also mountainous regions to generate additional income for the farmers.

However, a lot still needs to be done to give millets their due share in the food chain of the population. The policy makers should try to focus on a greater integration of a national mission and sub-missions on nutri-cereals with the flagship Poshan Abhiyaan. The focus on revival of millets should be complimented by the revival of consumption by producers. A collective, or cluster marketing approach, may help growers. Various states have been distributing millets through the public distribution system (PDS), the government needs to increase its distribution in other states too. Efforts should also be made to include the nutrient-rich smaller millets in the mid-day meal schemes in government and government-aided schools in the states, to promote their acceptability.

Nowadays everyone is concerned about increasing their immunity and pursuing a healthy and fit diet for a healthy body. Millets could help in achieving this at a lesser cost. The government targeting the young and health conscious to different forms of millets, for a healthy and immunity boosting diet should launch a publicity campaign promoting millets. As demand would lead the supply, millets can assume once again a prime place in our regular diet, and also bring a large area in the country under cultivation.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

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Apartheid in the Holy Land

Fawaz A. Gerges



In a new, well-documented report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) asserts that the Israeli government is enforcing a systemic policy to maintain the "domination by Jewish Israelis over Palestinians." The nearly seven million Palestinians in the occupied territories and within Israel itself face collective persecution under an apartheid system.

Pointing to Israeli laws that enshrine extra-political rights for Jews over Arabs living in the same areas, HRW concludes that the Israeli government is "privileging Jewish Israelis while repressing Palestinians, most severely in the occupied territory." While several hundred thousand Israeli settlers live in the occupied territories as full Israeli citizens, the report notes, 2.7 million Palestinians are concentrated in dense population centers under military rule.

Even more ominous are Israel's emerging population-control measures. "The authorities have adopted policies to mitigate what they have openly described as a demographic 'threat' from Palestinians," the report avers. "In Jerusalem, for example, the government's plan for the municipality ... sets the goal of 'maintaining a solid Jewish majority in the city' and even specifies the demographic ratios it hopes to maintain."

The report's central point is that, after decades of HRW (and others) warning that Israel's control of Palestinian life might lead to apartheid, the "threshold" has now been crossed. Indeed, one of the more startling new findings in the report is that even the Palestinians living in Israel are subjected to a form of apartheid rule.

Apartheid and collective persecution are both crimes against humanity under the 1998 Rome Statute. There, apartheid is defined as an "institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other," while persecution describes "the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights" of a group of people.

HRW is the first major international rights body to level such allegations, and its report will have serious implications for Israel and its key Western backers, particularly the United States. After the collapse of South Africa's apartheid re-

gime three decades ago, the world must not tolerate another, and particularly not one located at the heart of a volatile region, where it will serve as a catalyst for extremism and conflict.

In this context, Western inaction would undermine peace as well as Israel's own long-term security. Given the special US-Israel relationship, it will be incumbent on President Joe Biden's administration to remind Israeli officials of just how grave the accusation of apartheid is. The longer the charge sticks, the greater the threat it will pose to perceptions of Israel's legitimacy.

Far from acting on a "longstanding anti-Israeli agenda," as Israel's foreign minister claims, HRW is echoing similar findings by Israeli human-rights organizations. B'Tselem, for example, released a report in January titled: "A Regime of Jewish Supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This Is Apartheid." It based that conclusion on more than 30 years of reporting by human-rights groups documenting abuses in occu-

pied Palestinian territories and within Israel.

HRW's damning report also indirectly implicates US and Western leaders who have been complicit in Israel's illegal actions and persecution of the Palestinian people. Having repeatedly affirmed that human rights is a pillar of its foreign policy, the Biden administration now faces an important early test of its commitment to these norms.

Unlike its predecessors, the Biden administration cannot bury its head in the sand and give Israel another free pass. Failure to act would call into question all of Biden's recent criticism of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Russia, China, and others for human-rights and rule-of-law violations. It would reinforce a widespread belief among Arabs and Muslims that the US and Europe practice a double standard in the Middle East, rewarding friends and punishing foes. If Biden ignores Israel's systemic discrimination against Palestinians, the US will be open to accusations of hypocrisy and cynicism.

Equally important, Biden has committed his

administration to eradicating systemic racism at home – a daunting and worthy challenge. Americans of all colors, including many African-Americans and American Jews, already see a direct connection between promoting human rights abroad and upholding them at home.

Moreover, if Biden and other Western leaders turn a blind eye to state-sanctioned "systematic discrimination," they risk encouraging the Israeli right to commit even more abuses, from annexation of Palestinian land to expulsion of Palestinians from their homes.

The HRW report is a clarion call for Israel's patrons to wake up to the dangers they have encouraged. Biden must not cede the moral high ground that he currently occupies relative to his predecessor. Donald Trump did Israel no favors by giving Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu everything he wanted. By empowering the most anti-democratic and xenophobic forces in Israeli society, the Trump administration brought Israel to its current crossroads.

The world is watching to see if America and the West will find Israeli apartheid as repugnant as they found South African apartheid. If they do, their support for Israel will have to be contingent on Israel's respect for Palestinians' dignity and humanity.

Biden's current prestige gives him leverage. But the time to use it is now. The US must pressure Israel to end its apartheid policies and its occupation of Palestinian lands. A change in US policy is a crucial first step toward creating a Palestinian state that can live in peace alongside its Israeli neighbor.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

Fawaz A. Gerges, Professor of International Relations and Middle Eastern Politics at the London School of Economics and Political Science, is author of the forthcoming *The Hundred Years' War for Control of the Middle East* (Princeton University Press, 2021).

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Suffering Al-Aqsa & Indifference of Muslims

Latеef Shah

“The importance and sacredness of Jerusalem is emphasised in the Quran and various Muslim traditions. For Muslims, like Masjid al Haram and Masjid al Nabwi, the virtues of praying in Al-Aqsa are also exalted

THE religious and historical significance of Masjid al Aqsa, (The Farthest Mosque), also known as Bait al Maqdis is not lost on any Muslim. It occupies an important place in Muslim history, heritage, culture and religion. Located in Jerusalem, it is the third holiest place for Muslims. In fact it is important and sacred for followers of all the three Abrahimic faiths: Islam, Christianity and Judaism. The Mosque with a silver colour dome is situated on the Temple Mount. Throughout its history, the city of Jerusalem has been ruled by Muslims, Christians and now Jews.

For Muslims, Al Aqsa is not only their first Qibla, the place facing which they would offer prayers, but is significant also because Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh), started his miraculous night Journey, Al-Isra from Mecca to Masjid al Aqsa and then his heavenly ascension. This journey has linked Masjid al Aqsa and Jerusalem to the hearts and minds of Muslims worldwide. As Quran says, Glory to Allah who did take His Servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque (in Makkah) to the Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem) whose precincts We did bless - (Al-Isra 17:1).

Its importance for Muslims has been impressed upon by making Al-Aqsa an important part of the Prophet's journey. As per the Muslim tradition, before his ascension, Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) led congregational prayer in the mosque in which all previous Prophets of Allah participated. Al-Aqsa therefore holds the unique distinction of being the only mosque where all the prophets performed their Namaz in congregation. The importance and sacredness of Jerusalem is emphasised in the Quran and various Muslim traditions. For Muslims, like Masjid al Haram and Masjid al Nabwi, the virtues of praying in Al-Aqsa are also exalted. It also holds the distinction of being the second mosque on the surface of the earth, after the Sacred Mosque in Makkah.

Muslims laid siege to Jerusalem, during the rule of Umar ibn Al Khatab. But he was not leading the army. The inhabitants of the city agreed to surrender if Umar ibn al Khatab himself came to the city in person. He arrived in the city and received the keys to the city in 637 CE. He concluded a peace treaty with the people of the city which allowed the Jews to enter the city who were denied access to the city by its Christian rulers. Under the Muslim rule the city became free to followers of all the three faiths: Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The Muslim rule really helped the city to remain prosperous and peaceful where followers of all the religions lived with peace and harmony and were free to perform their religious duties and obligations.



But after Israel occupied east Jerusalem in 1967, Palestinian Muslims have got restricted access to the mosque. The Waqf Ministry of Jordan had control of the Masjid till the 1967 war between Israel and the Arabs. After their victory, the Israeli authorities didn't take direct control of the mosque, but transferred it to the Islamic Waqf Trust. But this transfer did not stop the Israeli Security Forces, IDF from conducting searches and patrol within the premises of Al Aqsa. Israeli authorities have also enlarged the prayer plaza at the Western Wall in Jerusalem's old city. Despite a Jerusalem court order against such a move, which the court said would violate the status quo, Israeli authorities went ahead with the expansion. Various encroachments by Israel on the Islamic authority at the site have triggered clashes between Israeli police and Palestinians. In 1996, Prime Minister Netanyahu opened the Western Wall tunnel, another excavation close to the mosque compound, resulting in clashes in which 75 Palestinians and 15 Israeli soldiers were killed. Knowing its importance and sensitivity to Muslims, Israel has often acted provocatively and added to the anger and frustration of Palestinian Muslims.

Given its importance, it is incumbent upon Muslims worldwide, not only in Palestine to remain observant of Israeli designs regarding the

Holy Mosque and use all resources at its disposal to thwart any Israeli attempts to undermine Muslim religious feelings. But it is a sad commentary on the affairs of Muslims worldwide, that despite such historical and religious significance, they have forgotten and almost given up their claims on the Al Aqsa.

Common Muslims take out processions and impress upon the world on the last day of Ramadan by observing it as the Al Quds Day. It was initiated in 1979 by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to express solidarity with the people of Palestine and oppose Zionism and Israeli occupation, most notably that of Jerusalem. Iran is perhaps the only Muslim country where the Govt sponsors rallies and protests on this day. Given how close the Arab regimes like Saudi Arabia have come to Israel, one cannot expect them to take any lead in making a case for liberation of Al Quds from Israeli occupation. Muslim by and large seem to be proactive in many cases where a Muslim cause is involved, but unfortunately in case of Al Aqsa, despite its religious and historic importance, Muslim leaders and even commoners have largely remained indifferent. If this indifference and insensitivity continues, future generations of Muslims will not even know the tragic history of Al-Aqsa under Israeli occupation.

What has passed has left us now, the last twenty days have been registered, our deeds are done, and our intentions set upon the scales—but we have the next ten days to push and put everything we have into the days and nights. We still have time to build a relationship with the Qur'an, we still can make du'a and give in charity: the last ten nights of Ramadan count and they matter. While we will be rewarded for what we do in the day, there are unique blessings in the nights of the last ten days. While we are “searching” for the night of qadr it is important to be in a state of worship to ensure we catch the blessing of the night. Our qadr can change based on this night and how we conduct ourselves and the state Allah finds us in. It's important to have in mind your own plan to maximise upon the blessings.

We've shortlisted ten tips and reflections that we hope will help you make the most of the next ten days. The night of decree begins at Maghrib and ends at Fajr. If we are able to catch Lalatul Qadr, Allah has blessed us with it. If you are also looking for a great cause to support with your sadaqah or zakat, head here.

Renew Intentions

Renew your intention for Ramadan and continue to renew it before and throughout acts of worship and performing good deeds. Intentions are something we need to continuously check and re-visit to ensure the root is that we are doing it to attain the pleasure of Allah. Especially in these last ten days, pause to renew your intentions before performing good deeds so that no efforts go to waste.

“Actions are but by intentions and every man shall have only that which he intended.” Muslim & Bukhari

Sincere intention also magnifies a small deed. Imam As-Sadiq mentions that:

“Anyone who performs a small act for the sake of God, God will make it bigger than he wished in the sight of others. And anyone who performs a great act for the sake of people, God will make it trivial in the sight of others.”

2. Ensure you are in your best state

Avoid deal-breakers that cause you to fall into sins such as backbiting, lying, cheating however big or small, or any bad habits that are displeasing to Allah—so that you are permitted to catch the night of power and are not found in a state of sin. It's important to take time to reflect on areas of your own behaviours that need to stop or be improved. Often recognising the issue itself is the first step to stopping.

When and if you find yourself committing a bad deed, ensure you follow it up with a good deed and seek forgiveness.

3. Give of what you love

Zakat and Sadaqah are multiplied on the night

10 Ibadah Tips for the Last 10 Days of Ramadan

AMALIAH TEAM

of power, so donate money each day to maximise your chances of catching the reward. Try to renew your intention before doing so, and you can also think outside of the box; so if you're not in a position to donate money, or wish to give alongside monetary donations, think instead about what you love the most—and then give from that same love, in a way you believe Allah would love also.

You can donate sadaqah and zakat to some incredible causes here.

If you love it when people spend time with you—make a conscious effort to spend time and reach out to others; with the right intention it can be and is considered sadaqa. Rizq is not just finan-

Halabi, 'Umdat al-Huffaz] The Provider (al-Raz-zaq)

4. It's all about the night

The last third of the night is precious, and we can reap the benefits of it by making du'a and performing salah. Take advantage of the baraka of that time.

5. Plan & Prepare

If you find your time or mind restricted throughout the day or occupied with work, children, and day-to-day tasks, don't worry—as Allah has blessed us with the night, and understands

“What has passed has left us now, the last twenty days have been registered, our deeds are done, and our intentions set upon the scales—but we have the next ten days to push and put everything we have into the days and nights

cial so reflect on what Allah has blessed you with, and give. It may be you have free time, which you can donate to a charity that needs admin support—or you have been blessed with knowledge that you can share with others.

Explanation of Rizq: Seekers Guidance:

(a) The general worldly or next-worldly giving of blessings and the like. Allah Most High says, “[those] who believe in the unseen, keep up the prayer, and give out of what We have provided for them.” [2.3] i.e. that which we have given them and blessed them with;

(b) that which nourishes us—and by extension generally that which one wears or uses. The Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, “If you were to rely on Allah as He should be relied on, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds. They go out in the morning hungry and return in the evening full.” i.e. their bellies are full;

(c) a great good that has been granted to its possessor. Allah Most High says, “Give out of what We have provided for you, before death comes to one of you...” [63.10] i.e. from wealth, knowledge, and prestige.

[Raghib, al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an; al-

our lives. The time when most are sleeping happens to be the time most precious to Allah and His servants. Prepare all you can throughout the day, including meals, cleaning, errands, workload, washing, and even rest—in order to clear your mind and physical space ready for worship throughout the night.

6. Du'a lists and Routines

As part of preparing for nights in worship, spend a short amount of time compiling your favorite duas, and also outlining a bit of a routine: a structure can help you make the most of the nights. This could look like completing a set amount of prayers, dhikr, and/or du'a that will keep you engaged throughout the night. Change and adapt worship to ensure you are engaged and mindful of what you are doing.

Mind Mapping duas or dua list tips

7. Every night is important

If you can, try to treat every night in the last ten nights as the night of power. Ultimately, we truly do not know when it is. While many cite Laylatal Qadr as the 27th of Ramadan—truly Allah knows best, so try to worship your absolute best each day in the last ten nights in order to

maximise your chances of catching the night. This amount of effort may be hard, but remember that Allah knows your intention and that in itself may be rewarded—always try your best and have faith.

To donate to help those around the world without access to healthcare – visit here.

8. Value small acts

Small acts of worship through the day and night all add up. Deeds are not judged by quantity but weighted by their intentions. Du'a after every salah or dhikr while you're doing the dishes—if they happen to fall on the day/night of power, your rewards will be increased, even if it is the dhikr of astaghfirullahfirAllah, it will be multiplied in reward in comparison to saying it outside of Ramadan.

“...And whoever performs an obligatory act during it (Ramadan), he is like whoever performed seventy obligatory acts in other times.” (Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah)

Small acts of worship can also look like wasting as little as possible. You may have been gorging at home in the first two-thirds of the month, or accidentally wasting food/ being less mindful of things like single-use plastics. You can use these last ten days to be a little more mindful of how much/what you're consuming—in foods and in goods. Your intentions and actions in being a steward to the Earth will be so much more rewarded in these last ten days.

Just £1 in sadaqah could be heavy as a good deed!

9. Reflection

Taffakur is important: Worship in these last 10 days can look like lots of things, but Allah also loves those who reflect. Take some time out to reflect on what you love about Allah, His creation, and what you want to strive towards for His sake. Making a mental or physical gratitude list is also a way of reflecting on the glory of Allah and your blessings. If you're in dark times, use this conscious effort and have the conviction that Allah will forgive and reward you for your every effort. Reflection can also be planned around the Qur'an and Allah's creation.

10. Have a good opinion of Allah

Have full trust in your Rabb and think positively of Allah. Having a good opinion of Allah can also motivate you. We're told that whoever goes into Ramadan, expecting forgiveness and reward from his Lord, will have it [Hadith: Musnad A mad 1691]. If you've felt this to be challenging throughout Ramadan so far, try your best to get to this place for the last ten nights. Reflection on the majesty and goodness of Allah can you help you get there. Your Rabb is Al-Kareem.

Amaliah

NOVEL CHIP that improves testing, tracing for Covid

Agencies

A team of researchers has developed a chip that provides a simpler and more rapid method of genome sequencing for viruses like Covid-19. The researchers, including Jeremy Edwards from the University of New Mexico, were able to sequence 95 per cent of the genome of each sample with greater than 99.9 per cent accuracy. "This new technology allows for faster and more

accurate tracing of Covid and other respiratory viruses, including the appearance of new variants," Edwards said. "With this simple and rapid testing procedure, scientists will be able to more accurately track the progression and better prevent the onset of the next pandemic," Edwards added. For the study, published in the journal Langmuir, the team created a tiled genome array they developed for rapid and inexpensive full viral genome resequencing and applied their SARS-CoV-2-specific genome til-

ing array to rapidly and accurately resequenced the viral genome from eight clinical samples acquired from patients in Wyoming that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2. With more than 142 million people worldwide having contracted the virus, vigilant testing and contact tracing are the most effective ways to slow the spread of Covid-19. According to the researchers, traditional methods

of clinical testing often produce false positives or negatives and traditional methods of sequencing are time-consuming and expensive. This new technology will virtually eliminate all of these barriers, they said. "The chip technology is the best available technology for large-scale viral genome surveillance and monitoring viral variants. This technology could not only help control this pandemic and also prevent future pandemics," Edwards noted.

Beauty Behaviours During Pandemic

Shahnaz Husain

As women look for ways to spend their time stuck at home during the pandemic, beauty routines have been a focus for some. From advancing their skincare routine to giving themselves a haircut, women have taken their beauty and personal care into their own hands.

From the personal to the professional, the role of beauty – how we express and access it – has changed since the second wave of the pandemic broke out in this country.-----

As the second wave of coronavirus devastates India, We are living in a time like no other, with the pandemic affecting every aspect of our lives and not least our beauty regimes.

Thanks to the 'Zoom boom,' we've also become a lot more comfortable and accepting of seeing each other wearing less make-up.

With no signs of slowing down, and the pandemic worsening in many parts of the country, many of us have changed our beauty priorities since the second wave intensified.

This might sound like a long, boring and stressful time, but it is also the perfect opportunity to detox, or upgrade your beauty routine to make working from home a transformative period by exploring new makeup trends and improve your skincare routine in extra time.

But being stuck at home does come with a silver lining. you'll have more time on your hands with nowhere to go or people to meet, so there's been no better time than now to to catch up with your beauty needs and practise more self-care.

With limited exposure to the sun, pollution, dust and grime this is the perfect time to whip up some home remedies and concoctions for your skin even if you can not go to parlour .

It's a great time to for yourself, to catch up with your beauty needs.

You have enough time to try something new and change up what you're applying on your face and body every morning and evening in routine matter during your busy scheduled . Ask yourself what

does your skin really need right now? Is it hydration? Is it a deep cleanse? Then, adapt your products accordingly while indulging in some guilt-free self-care.

We are going to share with you the herbal beauty tips which can be used for daily beauty routine while you are in Lock-down.

Make an avocado face mask
Homemade Avocado Face Masks are amongst



the best natural face masks that nourish your face with non-greasy moisture and revitalize the skin.

This fruit is packed with skin-friendly minerals such as iron, calcium, potassium, copper, magnesium, etc., vitamins A, E, B, and K and unsaturated fats.

One mashed avocado with 1 teaspoon of honey works fine as both act as natural moisturisers. Take 1 fully ripe fresh avocado and mash it up into creamy pulp in a bowl. Add 1 tablespoon of honey and one tablespoon of fresh plain yoghurt and stir until it turns into a uniform paste. Apply to skin and leave it on for 15 minutes. Rinse off the mixture with lukewarm water and pat dry your face with a soft towel .This mask works wonders for mature, wrinkled and dry skin.

Always use a ripe avocado for making face masks.To make the avocado mask cool and refreshing, keep it in your fridge for a couple of minutes before applying it.

Your skin is constantly exposed to pollutants and environmental aggressors even if you aren't going outside, indoor pollution can be up to five times more concentrated than outside. You need to essentially protect your skin with sun-

screen while at home.

Apply Sunscreen -----
Sunscreen should be applied every day to exposed skin, and not just if you are going to be in the sun. During Lockdown/curfew period when you are going to be indoors, apply sunscreen on the areas not covered by clothing, such as the face and hands. Sunscreens can be applied under makeup. Sun protection is the principal means of preventing premature aging .

Wet hair is weaker and more prone to breakage.

Moisturise Your Hands -----
We're all washing our hands much more often (or we should be!) which leads to a lot more hand eczema cases.All that washing and hand sanitiser dries out the skin, . Many people are experiencing cracked and chapped hands due to excessive washing of hands time and again as a matter of precaution or tension. "If your hands are cracking, coconut oil is one of the best things you can use." You can also use the regular, original petroleum jelly if you want. You can, however, use castor oil on your face. castor oil can be beneficial to your skin.

Have a Luxury Bath
You can try one of the following bath additives. Some of these can remove fatigue, while others replace oils, or relieve itching. Select one according to your needs. A bath that leaves your body soft, smooth and perfumed can make you feel really good. Bath: Add two tablespoons of honey to a bucket of bathwater. It is said to induce relaxation and leave your skin soft and moist.

Vinegar: Add two tablespoons of vinegar. This helps to relieve itching.

Eau de Cologne: Adding a few drops of cologne makes you feel cool and leaves the body fragrant.

Almond Oil: Add one tablespoon almond oil to your bath water if you have dry skin.

After-bath Body Lotion: Mix together 100 ml rose water with one tablespoon pure glycerin. Keep in a bottle with a lid.

Face Mask: Mix ripe papaya pulp with two parts honey, two parts yoghurt, two parts powdered dried orange and lemon peel and 3 parts oatmeal.

Tips: Your bath or shower water should not be too cold or too hot. Give your body scrub with a loofah or sponge. This helps to stimulate the skin and remove dead cells, leaving the body thoroughly cleansed. Pay special attention to areas where the skin is hard, like the elbow, knees and feet. If you have dry skin, use glycerine soap. Baby soap is also gentle on the skin.

You may, indeed, be harming your skin if you don't wear sunscreen — even indoors. So even if you're indoors, if you're close to a window you still run the risk of exposure to UVA rays and possible skin damage. , That's because, while glass effectively blocks most ultraviolet (UV) rays, it does not block all of them in equal measure. .Your sunscreens should have an SPF of 30 or higher that provides broad-spectrum coverage against sunburn and tanning etc . You should prefer water-resistant sunscreens so as they cannot be easily removed by sweating or swimming etc

Avoid Heat Hair Tools

Another thing that you can avoid for the next few weeks during Lock-down/curfew period is using heated hair tools, such as blow dryers ,Curling irons ,tongs, straighteners etc and allow the hairs to dry naturally as you have sufficient time with you. .The heat styling tools can cause breakage, damage and drying. .

Once you've washed your hair, lightly pat it with a towel. Then leave the hair to dry naturally for at least 15 minutes.

Once your hair has been towel-dried, use a wide-tooth comb to detangle. Be very gentle with your hair at this stage.

Instagram working on new tools for influencers

Agencies

Facebook-owned Instagram is working on a suite of new tools to help influencers make money off its platform, including creator shops, affiliate commerce and a "branded content marketplace." Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced the upcoming features during a live stream with Instagram chief Adam Mosseri. Creator Shops would be an extension of the company's existing shopping features, which allows business-

es to sell products, reports Engadget.

"We see a lot of creators setting up shops too, and one part of being a content creator business model is you create great content, and then you can sell stuff, and so having creator shops is awesome," Zuckerberg said.

Zuckerberg also said the company is working on tools that would enable Instagram stars to get paid for promoting products.

"Creators should be able to get a cut of the sales of things that they're recommending and we should build up an affiliate recommendation

marketplace to enable that to all happen," he said.

Instagram is also working on a "branded content marketplace" that would help match influencers with sponsors.

Zuckerberg noted that such a tool could help enable up-and-coming talent to monetize and help create a kind of "creator middle class." According to the report, the new tools are still in the works, but could dramatically shift the way influencers monetize their following on the platform.

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Government of Jammu & Kashmir(UT)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION PULWAMA.
TENDER NOTICE
E-NIT No :-10/EEP/RNB/of 2021-22/ 1045-55 Dt. 30 /04/2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT term e-tenders (In Single Cover system) are invited on Item Rate Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Government for the following work:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (Rs.)	Time of Completion In working days	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Accounts	Administrative Accord Approval No:
1	construction of Protection wall on Chandipora Link.	1.80	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
2	Restoration of road by way of construction of R/ wall on Drussu chatripora road.	1.90	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
3	Restoration of road by way of construction of R/ wall on Interior roads at Batnoor	3.00	200/-	07 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
4	Restoration of Interior roads of Batpora Naina by way of P/L of WBM G-II.	2.00	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
5	Restoration of road by way of construction of CC Drain on Lassipora litter road in Km 2nd at village Armulla and km 6th at village Litter	1.98	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
6	Restoration of Interior roads of Pinglina Ganie Mohalla. by way of P/L of WBM G-II.	1.00	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
7	Restoration of Interior roads of Ratnipora by way of P/L of WBM G-II.	1.50	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
8	Restoration of road by way of P/L of WBM G-II on Interior roads at Tahab.	1.50	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
9	Restoration of road by way of construction of CC Drain on Interior roads at Tahab opposite Masjid Sharief Siraj Mohalla.	1.80	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
10	Restoration of Interior roads of Tenpona by way of P/L of WBM G-II.	1.90	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
11	Restoration of road by way of P/L of WBM G-II on Kangan Dadoora.	2.48	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
12	Restoration of link road at Wakherwan by way of P/L of WBM G-II.	2.00	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
13	Restoration of road by way of P/L of WBM G-II on Mirpora Bridge To PHC and kandnard bangladesh wasoora.	2.00	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
14	Restoration of road by way of construction of R/ wall on Pinglina Gudoor road.	2.00	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-
15	Restoration of road by way of construction of R/ wall on Tiken sountbugh road.	1.60	200/-	05 Working days	DEE	3054 M&R	-

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www .jktenders. gov. in as per schedule of date given below:-

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	30/04/2021
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 30 /04/2021 10:00 A.M.
3.	Bid submission Start Date	30 /04/2021 from 10.00 AM
4.	Bid Submission End Date	17 /05/2020 upto 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	18/05/2020 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama
6.	Submission of Performance Security (PS)	Within 3 days of receipt of LOA. (The First lowest bidder has to provide 3% of Contract Value Cost as Performance Security instead of EMD within 3 days after opening of Financial Bid)

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/Receipt (Debited to M.H.0059 PWD) and Bid securing declaration instead of EMD as per format Appendix-1 below on stamp paper duly attested by Notary in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama showing clearly the name of work along with NIT No. & S.No. failing which the tender will be rejected out rightly. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site www.jktenders. gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama

2. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.

All other terms and conditions shall be available in website www.jktenders.gov.in

Head Draftsman
DIPK-1118/21

Technical Officer

Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Pulwama

India Demand Worries Knock Oil Prices From Six-Week Highs



LONDON:Oil prices slipped on Friday, taking a breather after touching their highest in six weeks as concerns of wider lockdowns in India and Brazil to curb the Covid-19 pandemic offset a bullish outlook on summer fuel demand and the economic recovery.

Brent crude was \$0.84, or 1.2%, lower at \$67.22 a barrel by 1016 GMT, the last day of trading for the front-month June contract. US West Texas Intermediate crude for June was at \$64.04 a barrel, down \$0.97, or 1.4%.

Prices also came under pressure after China's factory activity growth slowed and missed forecasts in April, although a private sector survey showed that Japan's factory activity expanded in April at the fastest pace since early 2018.

"The post Covid-19 demand recovery is still uneven and the surge in Indian cases serves as a timely reminder that any rally to \$70 is too premature," Energy Aspects analysts said in a note.

Such a level is likely to be reached only in the third quarter this year, when demand improves materially and destocking ends, they said.

The world's third largest oil consumer – India – is in deep crisis, with hospitals and morgues overwhelmed, as the number of Covid-19 cases topped 18 million on Thursday.

The surging infection numbers and renewed mobility restricting measures have "forced us to revise down Indian gasoline and gasoil demand" estimates for 2021, said JBC Energy's senior analyst Eugene Lindell.

Brent is on track to gain around 7% in April while WTI could end around 8% higher.

That would be their fifth monthly gain in six as global demand has almost returned to pre-pandemic levels on the back of fiscal stimulus and the easing of virus lockdowns in some countries, while production cuts from OPEC and their allies including Russia eased crude oil oversupply. **REUTERS**

THE POST COVID-19 DEMAND recovery is still uneven and the surge in Indian cases serves as a timely reminder that any rally to \$70 is too premature," Energy Aspects analysts said in a note.

Govt Directs Steel Companies To Set Up 10,000 Oxygenated Beds For Covid Patients



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: The government has directed steel companies to set up 10,000 oxygenated beds for treating COVID-19 patients.

While 5,000 beds will be set up by the steel PSUs, another 5,000 will be established by private companies like Tata Steel, JSPL, JSW Steel and AMNS India, Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Friday.

In a tweet, the minister informed about a series of meetings held with leaders of the steel industry from both public and private sectors on stepping up the steel industry's contribution towards fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Steel PSUs @SAILsteel, @RINL_VSP, @nmdclimited, @MOIL_LIMITED are setting

up 5000 oxygenated beds for treating Covid-19 patients.

Another 5000 beds with gaseous oxygen to be set up by @TATASteelLtd, @AMNSIndia, @jswsteel and @Jindal_Official taking the total to over 10,000," Pradhan said.

The companies have also been asked to do whatever possible to enhance the supply of liquid medical oxygen from steel plants, including supplying gaseous oxygen directly from plants to hospitals.

State-owned SAIL and RINL and private players like Tata Steel, JSW Steel, JSPL and AMNS India are supplying oxygen to various health facilities across the country.

According to the ministry, steel plants supplied 3,390-tonne medical oxygen to hospitals on Thursday.

Centre Releases Rs 8,873 Cr From Disaster Relief Fund To States



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The finance ministry on Saturday said it has released in advance to the states the first instalment worth Rs 8,873.6 crore of the state disaster response fund (SDRF) for the current fiscal. Up to 50 per cent of the amount released, which is Rs 4436.8 crore, can be used by the states for COVID-19 containment measures.

Normally, the first instalment of SDRF is released in the month of June as per the recommendations of the Finance Commission.

"However, in relaxation of normal procedure, not only has the release of SDRF been advanced, the amount has also been released without waiting for the utilisation certificate of the amount provided to the states in the last financial year," the ministry said in a statement.

As a special dispensation, the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, at the recommendation of Ministry of Home Affairs has released in advance of the normal schedule the 1st instalment of the Central Share of the State Disaster Response

Fund (SDRF) for the year 2021-22 to all the states. An amount of Rs 8,873.6 crore has been released to the states, it said.

The funds from the SDRF may be used by the states for various measures related to containment of COVID-19 including meeting the cost of oxygen generation and storage plants in hospitals, ventilators, air purifiers, strengthening ambulance services, COVID-19 hospitals, Covid Care Centres, consumables, thermal scanners, personal protective equipment, testing laboratories, testing kits, containment zone, etc.

GST Collections Hit Record High Of Rs 1.41 Lakh Crore In April

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

GST collections crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore mark for the seventh month in a row and touched a record high of over Rs 1.41 lakh crore in April, indicating economic recovery, the Finance Ministry said on Saturday.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections, which directly reflect the state of economic activity, in April are 14 per cent higher than Rs 1.23 lakh crore mopped up in March.

In April last year, the revenue had plummeted to a record low of Rs 32,172 crore, after the government imposed a nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus. As economic activity picked up, GST collections started crossing the Rs 1 lakh crore mark since October last year.

The gross GST revenue collected in the month of April 2021 is at a record high of Rs 1,41,384 crore, of which CGST is Rs 27,837 crore, SGST Rs 35,621 crore, IGST Rs 68,481 crore (including Rs 29,599 crore collected on import of goods) and cess Rs 9,445 crore (including Rs 981 crore collected on import of goods).

During April, revenues from domestic transaction (including import of services) are 21 per cent higher than in March.

"GST revenues have not only crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore mark successively for the last seven months but have also shown a steady increase. These are clear indicators of sustained economic recovery during this period.



Closer monitoring against fake-billing, deep data analytics using data from multiple sources including GST, income-tax and customs IT systems and effective tax administration have also contributed to the steady increase in tax revenue," the ministry said.

Tax experts, however, said that since the April collections reflect economic activity in March, the GST mop-up in the coming months could see decline owing to lockdowns in certain parts of the country to curb surge in Covid cases.

Deloitte India Senior Director M S Mani said, "The all-time high collections which relate to supplies made in March 2021 could now give way to muted collections in the coming months due to the lower economic activities in April."

Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co. Partner Rajat Bose said the collection figures for April represent the tax collected

towards transactions done in the month of March 2021. "Since its the year end, most companies close their books and raise invoices during the financial close."

That is perhaps one of the reasons for the spurt in GST collections in April, Bose said adding "the real challenge lies ahead as most parts of the country are again in a lockdown and most industries are temporarily shut."

AMRG & Associates Senior Partner Rajat Mohan said the high growth trajectory in GST collection is bound to nosedive in the coming few months owing to second wave of COVID infections that have given alarming rate of transmission and the country is in the middle of lockdown situation.

EY Tax Partner Abhishek Jain said that "with certain parts of the country facing lockdown due to the surge in Covid cases, the collections may experience a decline in the coming months".

Petrol, Diesel Prices Remain Static For 17 Days In A Row



Agencies

NEW DELHI: Fuel prices in the country remained unchanged on Saturday as oil marketing companies decided to wait and watch the situation prevailing in global oil markets before restarting daily revision of petrol and diesel prices.

Sources indicated that price revisions may begin anytime next week after results to state elections are declared. However, whether price of petrol and diesel would move up or down then would depend on actual average global price in the last fortnight of March.

OMCs benchmark retail fuel prices to a 15-day rolling average of global refined products' prices and dollar exchange rate.

With no price change on Saturday, pump price of petrol and diesel remained at Rs 90.40 a litre and Rs 80.73 a litre respective in Delhi. This is 16 consecutive day when fuel prices have not been revised.

The price of the two auto fuels had fallen by 16 paise and 14 paise per litre respectively on April 15 after a 15 day break when OMCs kept its prices static. Thereafter revision of

fuel prices have been halted.

Across the country as well the petrol and diesel price remained unchanged on Saturday but its retail levels varied depending on the level of local levies in respective states.

Premium petrol, however, continues to remain over Rs 100 a litre in Mumbai and several other cities across the country.

The OMCs went on price cut for the first time this year on two consecutive days – March 24 and 25 after keeping oil prices steady for past 24 days. It again reduced the price on March 30. Thereafter, fuel prices have remained unchanged for past 15 days before falling again on April 15. In all petrol prices have fallen by 77 paise per litre while diesel by 74 paise per litre in 2021 so far.

Earlier, petrol and diesel prices increased 26 times in 2021 with the two auto fuels increasing by Rs 7.46 and Rs 7.60 per litre respectively so far this year.

With global crude prices at over \$67 a barrel mark, OMCs may have revise fuel prices upwards again if there is any further firming up.

Will Engage Openly, Constructively On Government's Content Withholding Requests: Twitter

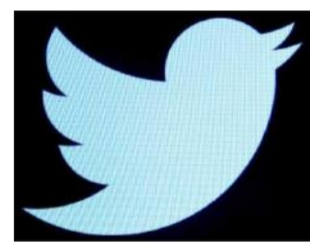
NEW DELHI: Days after it blocked dozens of posts allegedly critical of COVID-19 crisis handling, Twitter has said it will consider more requests from the government to withhold content and will continue to engage "openly and constructively" with it.

"We notify the account holder directly so they're aware that we've received a legal order pertaining to the account by sending a message to the email address associated with the account(s), if available, unless we are prohibited from doing so," Twitter said in a blog on Thursday.

The microblogging platform had received a number of take-down requests from India over the past few months around content that the government termed as misinformation around farmer protests and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"In the event we receive more requests to withhold content from the Government of India within the country, we will continue to engage openly and constructively based on our overarching commitment to serve the public conversation during a crisis," Twitter said.

It added that the platform will continue to proactively communicate to any affected account, and publish every individual request it receives from the government to the



Lumen Database.

Just a few days back, Twitter and other social media platforms removed about 100 posts and URLs after the government asked them to remove content that was critical of the handling of the current medical crisis or spreading fake news around the pandemic.

Reports citing Lumen database, an independent research project studying cease and desist letters concerning online content, suggested that more than 50 posts – including those by a Member of Parliament, MLA and filmmakers – were removed by Twitter on government request.

Government sources had said social media platforms were asked to remove the posts and URLs (uniform resource locators) to "prevent obstructions in the fight against the pandemic" and disruption of public order due to the said posts.

In its blog, Twitter said it continues to support a range of government authorities with public service initiatives around the COVID-19 pandemic. **-PTI**

SHORT TAKES

Borosil To Fund Education Of Children Of Staff Who Lost Lives To COVID-19

Setting precedence, Borosil and Borosil Renewables have announced COVID relief for its employees and their families. Borosil Managing Director Shreevar Kheruka has informed that in the event of an employee losing life due to COVID-19, his or her family will continue to receive the salary for the next two years.

In a LinkedIn post, Kheruka said the company will also "take care of the education of the children till their graduation in India". Family members will also be eligible to receive other additional benefits the employee is entitled to.

"The above is no comparison to the scale of the loss, but hopefully will allow the family enough time to process the bereavement and reorient," the heart-warming post reads. Kheruka informed that Borosil has lost four employees to the pandemic that is sweeping through the country.

Netizens have cheered the thoughtful gesture of the company on various social media platforms.

SBI Cuts Home Loan Interest Rate To 6.70%

State Bank of India (SBI) Saturday said it has reduced home loan interest rate to 6.70 per cent.

The lender said home loan interest rates are now starting from 6.70 per cent for loans up to Rs 30 lakh and 6.95 per cent for loans above Rs 30 lakh to Rs 75 lakh.

The interest rate on home loans above Rs 75 lakh is 7.05 per cent, the bank said in a release. "The affordability for the consumer increases immensely with the present home loan interest rate offerings which reduce the EMI (equated monthly instalment) amounts substantially," its managing director (retail and digital banking) C.S. Setty said.

To women borrowers, the bank is offering a special five basis points (bps) concession on home loan interest rates.

Customers can also apply for a loan through YONO app and get an additional interest concession of 5 basis points, the



release said.

The bank was offering home loans at an interest rate starting from 6.70 per cent till March 31, 2021. From April 1, 2021, it restored the original interest rates starting from 6.95 per cent.

The lender commands over 34 per cent market share in home loans. Its home loan portfolio has crossed the milestone of Rs 5 lakh crore. **-PTI**

Australia Tightens Travel Ban From India, Violators Face Penalties, 5-Year Jail Term

Agencies

Hours after the US banned travel from India, Australia has tightened its restrictions on people arriving from the COVID-battered nation. The island country has imposed one of the strictest travel restrictions in place with penalties and jail term for those who disobey the rules.

From May 3, any traveller into Australia who has been in India in the past 14 days could face fines and up to five years imprisonment, Health Minister Greg Hunt said in a statement. "The government does not make these decisions lightly," Hunt



said. "However, it is critical the integrity of the Australian public health and quarantine systems is

protected and the number of COVID-19 cases in quarantine facilities is reduced to a manageable level," Reuters reported citing Hunt's statement.

The government will reconsider the restrictions on May 15. Australia strengthened its earlier travel ban, in an attempt to prevent the double variant Indian outbreak from reaching its shores. This is the first time Australia has made it a criminal offence for its citizens to return home.

The threat came after travellers on indirect flights from India exposed a loophole in the government's attempt to temporarily block arrivals from the South Asian nation.

Killer Roads Claim 1000 Lives In 6 Years

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Nearly one thousand persons have lost their lives in the past six years in different road accidents that occurred in rural areas of Kashmir division, officials said Saturday.

In response to an application filed under right to information (RTI) Act by activist M M Shuja, the Traffic police officer of rural Kashmir has stated that 954 persons have lost their lives during traffic accidents in the jurisdiction of traffic rural Kashmir from March 2016 to March 2021.

The officer has further said that the department has recovered over Rs 14 crores from its jurisdiction.

"Rs 1, 41,033,256 have been recovered from violators as fine in the jurisdiction of traffic rural

Kashmir from March 2016 to March 2021," reads the reply.

The Public Information Officer (PIO) has also said, "There are 282 officers and 104 SPOs including those attached from various districts are presently deployed on traffic regulation duties in the jurisdiction of this unit comprising all districts except district Srinagar of the Kashmir valley."

"At least 90 Traffic awareness programmes have been organized by this unit during the year 2020. However no expenditure has been projected or allotted for the said purpose," reads the RTI reply.

The officer said that in the year, 2017-2018 at least Rs 60,000 were utilized for organizing various traffic awareness programmes in schools, with drivers and road users and the department also organized road

rallies in the jurisdiction of traffic rural Kashmir.

However, in the year 2018-2019 no amount was utilized by the department in jurisdiction of traffic in rural Kashmir. The documents reveal that in the year 2019-2020 only Rs 10,000 were utilized in organizing various traffic awareness programmes in schools, with drivers and road users.

On asking about the proposal submitted by the traffic police department to the government for streamlining the traffic system, the officer in a RTI reply has said, "Various projects have been forwarded to PHQ and THQ Jammu and Kashmir for perusal and consideration."

"110 programmes have been jointly organized by the department of traffic in rural Kashmir with ARTOs of the Valley from March 2016 to 2021," it reads.

India gets 1.5 lakh doses of SputnikV vaccine first consignment from Russia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

HYDERABAD: As many as 150,000 doses of the Sputnik V vaccine first consignment landed in Hyderabad from Russia on Saturday, Dr Reddys Laboratories said.

The drug maker, which has tied up with Russian Direct Investment Fund for the vaccine said in a statement that the initial quantity will be used across different channels as a pilot to line up the supply chain for the larger vaccination program rollout.

Subsequent consignments will arrive in the next few weeks, it further said.

"We are pleased to announce that the first consignment of 150,000 doses of the Sputnik V vaccine has landed in Hyderabad from Russia.

The rollout of the consignment will be subject to the necessary clearances, which will



be processed over the next few days," Deepak Sapra CEO API and Services, Dr.Reddys, said.

In September 2020, Dr. Reddys and RDIF entered into a partnership to conduct clinical trials of the SputnikV, developed by the Gamaleya National Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology and the rights for distribution of the first 100

million doses in India.

Later it was enhanced to 125 million.

Dr Reddys has already received approval from Indian drug regulator for restricted emergency use of Sputnik V.

"This is a reaffirmation of Dr Reddys commitment towards combating COVID-19 in India through our portfolio

of therapeutics and vaccines," Sapra further said.

SputnikV will be the third vaccine to be used in India against coronavirus.

Currently the Centre has rolled out a nationwide vaccination drive using two COVID-19 vaccines -- Covaxin of Bharat Biotech and Covishield of Oxford-AstraZeneca, manufactured by Serum Institute of India in Pune.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in a tweet said that Hyderabad customs expedited the clearance of the COVID-19 vaccine imported from Russia. "Hyderabad Customs, @cgstcushyd facilitated expeditious clearance of #SputnikV Vaccine imported from Russia," CBIC tweeted.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in a tweet said: "Appropriate timely response @cgstcushyd. Need of the hour."

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Corona Kills

pandemic last year to 2330 in J&K.

Among the victims from Valley included two men aged 25 from Srinagar and Handwara.

The 25-year-old from Natipora Srinagar died at SKIMS Soura, two days after he was admitted to the tertiary care hospital, the officials said. Also, they said, another youth from Magam, Handwara died at SDH Kupwara.

A 50-year-old man from Kathidarwaza here also died at SKIMS, nearly a week after he was admitted there, they said.

A 60-year-old man from Karannagar died a day after he was admitted to SKIMS, they said. A 73-year-old woman from Sanatnagar died five days after she was admitted to SKIMS, they said.

Four other persons also died at SKIMS: 70-year-old man from Pandach Srinagar, a 69-year-old woman from Nigeen Srinagar, a 73-year-old man from Sanatnagar Srinagar a 68-year-old Chadoora Budgam

An 80-year-old man from Umer Colony Lal Bazar Srinagar who was admitted to SMHS hospital on April 27 died at the facility, they said.

Also, they said, a 75-year-old man from Solina Payeen Srinagar, a 62-year-old man from Hyderpora and a 55-year-old from Wanabal Nowgam died at SMHS hospital.

A 50-year-old woman from Hangalpora died at GMC Anantnag, less than a day after she was admitted there, they said.

Also, a 37-year-old man from Bihar was brought dead to GMC Anantnag and tested positive for covid-19, they said. However, his death would not be counted among the fatalities in J&K, they said.

With these fresh deaths, the number of people succumbing to the virus has gone up to 2330 in J&K—919 in Jammu and 1411 in Kashmir.

Regarding the fresh cases detected on Saturday, officials said, 2601 were from the Valley and 1231 others from Jammu division, taking the overall tally of infections to 179915.

Giving the district wise details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 1084 cases, Baramulla 309, Budgam 291, Pulwama 70, Kupwara 122, Anantnag 286, Bandipora 77, Ganderbal 94, Kulgam 221, Shopian 47, Jammu 504, Udhampur 141, Rajouri 96, Doda 42, Kathua 120, Samba 137, Kishtwar 15, Poonch 64, Ramban 60 and Reasi 52.

There are 30343 active cases—11172 in Jammu and 19171 in Kashmir, officials said. (With GNS inputs)

Curfew Extended

and Principal Secretary to the Government, Public Works (R&B) Department were constituted during a high-level meeting chaired by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha here on Saturday, an official spokesperson said.

The meeting, he said, also announced to extend curfew in four districts of Srinagar, Baramulla, Budgam, and Jammu till May 6 morning instead of May 3

"The decision was taken during a high-level meeting chaired by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha in which he passed specific directions for effectively controlling the spread of the Corona virus in the UT and providing best care to the patients," the official spokesperson said.

He said that the LG is closely monitoring the Covid scenario in J&K and is taking regular review meetings with the concerned departments in order to assess the situation across the UT.

"After analyzing the district-wise situation, the meeting decided to extend Corona Curfew for three more days in the above mentioned four districts. A re-assessment of the situation will be taken before 6th May for laying down further action plan. Instructions were issued to the concerned officers for continuing micro-containment zoning as per requirement," he said

"The Corona curfew at night shall continue in all Municipal / Urban Local Body limits of all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, including the above four districts. Night curfew will be in force from 8 pm to 7 am. Other restrictions when curfew is not there will continue as before," he added.

Emphasizing on optimal availability of oxygen supply, the LG, as per the official spokesperson directed for conducting Oxygen Audit in every hospital of the UT.

The LG, he said, also directed the Health department to lay special focus on the judicious usage of oxygen. The Lt Governor further directed for increasing beds with oxygen cylinders, besides effective operationalization of 108 Ambulance service to cater to the needs of the patients.

During the meeting, the official spokesperson said that the LG sought feedback

from concerned Administrative Heads, Divisional Commissioners, Health and Police Departments regarding the evolving situation and also invited their suggestions for strengthening the pandemic control system component against the spread of Covid-19.

On vaccination, he said that Sinha asked the concerned officers to ensure that vaccination drive is not hampered during the lockdown period, and advised them to take comprehensive measures, besides reaching out to targeted age groups through mobile vaccination. The meeting also decided to have separate locations for different age groups for vaccination.

"The Lt Governor directed the concerned officers to make correct projection of requirements, besides effectively streamlining the supply and demand so that there would be apt availability of the necessary resources. The Lt Governor further asked the concerned officers to coordinate with Army authorities for augmenting their existing health capacities," he added.

According to the official spokesperson, Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education gave a detailed overview of district-wise Covid situation in J&K, including medical infrastructure, bed occupancy, daily trend, testing and vaccination rate, testing capacities, oxygen availability, etc. He also informed the meeting that the DRDO team has arrived in the UT to set up 500-bedded Covid facility, one each in Srinagar and Jammu.

He said that the meeting was informed that 1,50,000 doses of vaccination for the people falling between the age of 18-45 years were procured and vaccination drive for the said age group has been started today.

"During the meeting, various valuable suggestions were made by the participants for effective Covid management pertaining to regulating logistic supply, monitoring the oxygen availability, infrastructure, and utilization of trained human resource, adopting an effective approach for rural and urban areas, increasing Jan Bhagidari in Covid control measures, developing comprehensive Preventive and Treatment plans, etc," the official spokesperson added.

BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Dilbag Singh, DGP; Arun Kumar Mehta, Financial Commissioner, Finance Department; Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education; Shaleen Kabra, Principal Secretary to the Government, Home Department; Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Government, Public Works (R&B) Department; Sh. Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lt Governor; AG Mir & Mukesh Singh – ADGsP; Pandurang K Pole, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; Dr. Raghav Langer, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Vijay Kumar, IGP Kashmir; Choudhary Mohammad Yasin, Mission Director, NHM; HoDs and other senior officers participated in the meeting, in person, and through virtual mode.

Normal Life

of the nine districts -- Bandipora, Kupwara, Shopian, Rajouri, Poonch, Samba, Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban -- the lockdown came into effect at 7 pm on Friday.

The lockdown across the UT will remain in force till 7 am on Monday, they said.

During the last 24 hours, police have arrested 40 people, lodged 26 FIRs and also realised fine worth Rs 51,270 from 335 people for violating the guidelines/rules throughout the Kashmir valley, the officials said.

Also, 11 vehicles and four two-wheelers were seized for violating the restrictions, they said. (PTI)

Kupwara Teacher

Administration department (GAD).

The order further reads "The Lieutenant Governor is satisfied under sub-clause (c) of the proviso to clause (2) of Article 311 of the Constitution of India that in the interest of the security of the State, it is not expedient to hold an enquiry in the case of Mr. Idrees Jan, Teacher, Government Middle School, Kralpora, Kupwara,"

Accordingly, the Lieutenant Governor dismisses Idrees Jan, Teacher, Government Middle School, Kralpora, Kupwara from service, with immediate effect, the order added.

However, a local news agency KNO claimed that two more government employees, including a revenue department employee and an assistant professor have been terminated by government on the basis of recommendations of a high-level committee.

Pertinently, the GAD had issued an order on April 21 in which sanction was accorded to the constitution of STF for identifying and scrutinizing the government employees who are

involved in anti-national activities and pose a threat to the country's security, and will be terminated from services, if found guilty.

According to the order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), sanction was given to the constitution of a Special Task Force, for identifying and scrutinizing cases of government employees, to initiate the process under Government Order No. 738-JK(GAD) of 2020 dated 30.07.2020, for action in terms of provisions of Article 311(2)(c) of the Constitution of India.

The order had further stated that Additional Director General of Police (CID) has been nominated as Chairman of the committee and Inspector General of Police, Jammu/ Kashmir, Representative of Home Department not Member below the rank of Additional Secretary, Representative of Department of Law, Justice Member & Parliamentary Affairs not below the rank of Additional Secretary and Representative of the Concerned Department, as necessary, not below the rank of Additional Secretary shall be the members.

"The terms of reference of the Special Task Force shall be to scrutinize cases of employees suspected of activities requiring action under Article 311(2)(c) of the Constitution of India," the order had said.

The order had also empowered the STF to compile records of such employees, wherever necessary and to refer it to the Committee constituted vide Government Order No. 738-JK(GAD) of 2020 dated 30.07.2020. It also orders STF to engage with other members of the Terror Monitoring Group (TMG) for identifying such other employees, as necessary besides taking the assistance of other Agencies and Department(s) in this regard, as necessary. "The Special Task Force shall speedily scrutinize such cases in a time-bound manner and shall be serviced by the Criminal Investigation Department," the order added.

J&K Rolls Out

boxes having a total of 75,000 doses of Covaxin were received at the Srinagar airport from the Hyderabad airport in the morning.

The officials said another consignment of 50,000 doses of Covishield vaccine from the Serum Institute of India, Pune, also arrived at the Srinagar airport.

Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday recorded its biggest single-day spike of 3,832 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the tally to 1,79,915, while a record 47 fatalities in the last 24 hours raised the toll to 2,330.

Vaccination Underway

which is a big achievement despite the lethal second wave which forced the department to suspend the physical meeting of the inmates with their relatives for their safety.

The COVID-19 vaccination drive was started on April 6 from the Holding Centre Hiranagar in Kathua district, where 58 eligible internees were inoculated. Srinagar central jail saw 38 inmates being vaccinated against the dreaded infection on April 16 and another group of 16 inmates received a jab in district jail Rajouri on April 19, Singh told PTI.

A total of 201 Rohingyas including 74 women and 35 children are presently lodged in the holding centre after they were found living illegally in Jammu city during a special verification drive in March.

According to government data, over 13,700 foreigners, including Rohingya Muslims and Bangladeshi nationals, are settled in Jammu and Samba districts of Jammu and Kashmir, where their population has increased by over 6,000 between 2008 and 2016.

The vaccination drive is in progress and will be intensified once adequate stocks of vaccines are available, the DGP prisons said.

Against a total capacity of 3,426, there are 4,550 inmates lodged in 13 jails across Jammu and Kashmir. The inmates include over 1,000 suspected militants and 69 foreign nationals -- 24 from Pakistan, 13 from Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK), 15 (Burma), eight (Nepal), five (Bangladesh), three (China) and one (Holland).

On the directions of the Supreme Court to decongest jails to ensure social distancing among the prisoners after the outbreak of the pandemic last year, the high-powered committee released 4,204 inmates on bail and 41 others on parole till March this year.

The COVID-19 situation inside the jails is well under control as none of the inmates are positive for the infection. Given the prevailing (COVID-19) situation, it is a big achievement for the department, Singh said.

While two elderly prisoners, one each from district jail Rajouri and Sub-jail Baderwah, having co-morbidities had succumbed to COVID-19, 542 prisoners recovered from the

infection after successful treatment and various measures put in place by the department for the safety of the prisoners, he said.

In view of the surge in COVID-19 cases within and outside J&K, we have once again suspended physical 'mulaqat' (meeting) of inmates with their family members with effect from April 27. However, to enable contact of inmates with their family members, telephone facility have been made available in all the 13 jails of the Union Territory, the DGP Prisons said.

He said all new arrivals are accepted only with COVID negative certificates.

If anyone is found positive, he or she is taken on the prison rolls but sent to Government Medical College (GMC) with guard till his or her report returns negative. Even negative cases on arrival are put in mandatory quarantine inside the jails, he said.

Singh said the department is taking due care of the inmates to ensure that their immune system is in good form, allowed to talk to next of their kin and are involved in cultural and sports activities and encouraged to follow proper COVID behavior, wearing of face masks and regular use of sanitiser.

The department is also carrying out fumigation of the prison complexes regularly, he said. (PTI)

Cop Injured

been launched to nab the attackers, the police official added.

Widespread Rains

about the forecast for one week.

The weather department has also issued 'yellow warning for "isolated lightning/ thunder showers with gusty wind 30- 40-kmph" for both Jammu and Kashmir divisions from May 1 to 5.

There are four types of colour codes signifying the level of caution: green which means no action, yellow—situation to be watched), amber—government agencies need to be prepared for severe weather and red—action needed by the agencies.

The meteorological department official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 9.4 degree Celsius against 11.4 degree Celsius on the previous night. The temperature was 0.3 degree Celsius below normal for this time of the season in the summer capital of J&K where 1.4mm of rain was recorded during the last 24 hours till 0830 hours, he said.

Qazigund recorded a low of 7.3 degree Celsius against previous night's 8.2 degree Celsius and it was below normal by 1.2 degree Celsius in the gateway town of Kashmir, the official said.

Mercury settled at 3.8 degree Celsius against 4.2 degree Celsius on the previous night in Pahalagam. The temperature was below normal by 1.1 degree Celsius during this time of the season in the famous tourist resort in South Kashmir which also received 0.1mm of rain during the time, he said.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a low of 6.2 degree Celsius against normal of 8.4 degree Celsius and last night's 8.3 degree Celsius, the official said. The area received 0.4mm of the rain during the time, he said.

Kupwara recorded a low of 6.3 degree Celsius against 8.0 degree Celsius on the previous night which was below normal by 2.1 degree Celsius for this time of the season in north Kashmir district, the official said.

Gulmarg, the world famous skiing resort in Baramulla district of north Kashmir, recorded a low of 3.0 degree Celsius against 6.0 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said. It was 1.3 degree Celsius below normal in the resort which received 5.4mm of rain in the 24 hours, the official added.

Kashmiri Boy's

essentials to the families devastated by the pandemic. This boosted his morale.

And as the destiny had pre-inscribed for him, Azhar soon turned his fallout phase into an overwhelming motivation that gave rise to another Kashmiri Samaritan besides NGOs, who cared for his Kashmiri "sons and daughters", as Azhar terms his countrymen, irrespective of their age.

But unlike the previous pandemic phase, this year Azhar isn't witnessing overwhelming calls to dig graves or arranging funerals for the dead but he's busy attending calls and arranging more and more oxygen concentrators.

"The situation is far more vicious than what it looked last year," says Azhar before attending another SOS call. "This year we're receiving more calls from the families informing us that their millennial children have died. It feels terrible."

But without much focusing on the distressing death data, Azharis planning to buy new

oxygen concentrators as the second wave is gradually getting lethal in the valley. "I already arranged almost 20 oxygen concentrators, some of which had been passed on to Kashmiris gasping for life in Delhi," he informs.

Back home, whenever his phone buzzes up with a distress call in the middle of night, he delivers the required essentials on his own to the patient's house.

"Life isn't always about rest," Azhar says. "These are vicious days that can only be managed if we plan to stand together. Otherwise, this would be another lost cause," says Azhar before updating his twitter status with an emergency SOS message for Remedesevir medicine.

Amid the current unprecedented viral wave, the Samaritan had been a constant visitor to the Chest Disease hospital, searching for a life that could be saved.

"The worst cases are currently admitted in CD hospital," he says. "I'm planning to arrange everything for a patient, if their family isn't available or are themselves being treated for the virus."

It was when Azhar finally came across a twitter page, SOSJK for the same cause which a few days down the line had not only saved lives but has also put a satisfaction in the young Samaritan's heart.

"The page has been uploading the SOS calls for patients that were in emergency need of medicines or oxygen cylinders," he says. "It was through there that I came across the overwhelming state of health infrastructure in Kashmir and decided to do more help on my own without throwing people to be dependent on the government or these hospitals."

After saving lives with his welfare works, Azhar has now started his new initiative "Oxygen Zakat", that allows people to donate this year's Zakat in form of Oxygen cylinders or donations for buying the same.

"After many months of brainstorming and discussing the Zakat issue with few Muslim scholars, I'm finally ready with this initiative," says Azhar. "And what's the biggest Zakat than saving a precious life?"

But when Azhar was yet to provide Oxygen cylinders to the needy, there were many families in his locality that were devastated by the early outbreak of the virus and were being constantly neglected by local welfare bodies.

For the same, he started a Whatsapp group and added a few privileged people in it. "And within three days, all those families were provided enough so that their basic demands could be fulfilled," says Azhar with a smile on his face. "Almost 5 families were benefited through that Whatsapp group."

Besides this, he had also ferried a Covid positive patient in his car without fearing for his life. "Unfortunately she couldn't make it as her lungs were already damaged enough," recalls Azhar.

"Later, I transported her coffin to a cemetery in Downtown and arranged a few people for a dignified funeral as that lady had no one except a juvenile son. I believe everyone deserves a respectful end."

Burglars Loot

the revered shrine has left villagers fuming. Meanwhile, police have taken cognisance of the incident and started investigation.

This is the second burglary in south Kashmir in the last two days. On Thursday, unknown thieves ran away with a donation box from Markazi Jamia Masjid Shopian.

2 Minors Among

their respective homes, after treatment with vaccines, due to the risk of novel coronavirus infection in hospitals.

Recently, a kid was mauled to death by stray dogs in south Kashmir's Pulwama district. (KNT)

2 FCR Employees

attack when they tried to intercept the smugglers who were ferrying timber on horses.

In the attack, FCR employees Fayaz Ahmad Dar and Firdous Ahmad sustained injuries.

The sudden attack by timber smugglers prompted the Range office Romshi to seek assistance from Police. However, the smugglers fled from the spot taking advantage of the darkness.

Meanwhile, police said that efforts were on to ascertain the identity of attackers.

2 Dead After

They said that after hard efforts the truck was retrieved from the nallah along with the bodies of the driver and the helper.

The identity of the deceased is being ascertained. (KNT)

DC Vs PBKS, Preview

Delhi Capitals Aim For Consolidation, Punjab Kings Want Spin To Work Again



Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: Young Punjab Kings spinners Harpreet Brar and Ravi Bishnoi wouldn't mind another dream day in office against a menacing Delhi Capitals here on Sunday, aiming to take a giant leap forward in their bid for an Indian Premier League play-off berth.

Brar's match-winning 3/19 was wonderfully complemented by Bishnoi's 2/19 as their combined haul of 5/36 in 8 overs decimated a star-studded Royal Challengers Bangalore. Come Sunday, the duo will face a tougher task against the Delhi team which has a slightly better record against spin attacks with openers Shikhar Dhawan and Prithvi Shaw in imperious form. Dhawan (311 runs) and Shaw (269 runs) have provided flying starts with five half-centuries between them along with 71 fours and 15 sixes.

For any bowling unit, facing the Dhawan-Shaw duo is a scary proposition.

Even Steve Smith and Rishabh Pant are fantastic players when it comes to tackling the slow bowlers.

In fact, Bishnoi, who primarily bowls the googly, will like to challenge the DC skipper, who has a knack of hitting against the spin over deep mid-wicket region.

The Narendra Modi Stadium track has shown that balls tend to grip and batting becomes difficult as the game progresses.

It won't be therefore surprising if the in-form KL Rahul wants to bat first again and replicate his smashing 57-ball-91 not out against RCB the other day.

For Capitals, there is a chance of veteran leg-spinner Amit Mishra making a comeback into the playing XI after DC watched Bishnoi get so much success in the past few games.

In case Mishra gets the nod, Lalit Yadav will have to make way for him although he was impressive with his off-breaks against KKR during their last game.

Axar Patel's all-round presence gives much-needed stability as he could prove to be a handful on the slower tracks.

It will be a battle of top orders where Rahul's finesse will be countered by Prithvi Shaw's exuberance while Chris Gayle will try to overpower Pant's pyrotechnics with his own marauding style of batsmanship.

However, one area where DC is slightly ahead will be the pace bowling department, comprising the troika of Avesh Khan, Kagiso Rabada and Ishant Sharma.

While Avesh has had a stand-out season so far with 13 scalps at less than 7.5 run economy rate, Rabada has got some kind of rhythm in the past two games that was absent during some of the earlier games. For Punjab also, the problem has been consistency save skipper Rahul, who has scored 331 runs so far.

In the bowling department, Mohammed Shami has only eight wickets from seven games while premium buys like Jhye Richardson and Riley Meredith have been very expensive.

Chris Jordan has been just about okay in a couple of games which has made Rahul's job of identifying the perfect pace combination infinitely difficult.

The length that Punjab Kings pace attack has bowled has been cannon fodder for the batsmen going for the jugular during the back-end of the innings.

It will be interesting to find out how much of a tactical shift happens for Punjab pacers when a Pant or Shimron Hetmyer is on strike between 17th to 20th over.

English Football Clubs Lead Social Media Boycott To Protest Racism



Agencies

LONDON: Four days of silence across Twitter, Facebook and Instagram football leagues, clubs and players in England began on Friday in a protest against racist abuse.

Such is the anger across the game, it means that if Manchester City clinches the Premier League on Sunday it will not celebrate the title on social media.

There was initially a joint boycott announcement by the English Football Association, English Premier League, English Football League, Women's Super League, Women's Championship as well as player, manager and referee bodies, anti-discrimination group Kick It Out, and the Women In Football group.

Ahead of the boycott which began at 1400 GMT on Friday through 2259 GMT on Monday, other English sports including cricket, rugby, tennis and horse racing said they would fall silent on social media. FIFA, UEFA and the Premier League's British broadcasters also said they wouldn't post online across four days.

The PFA found that 31 out of 56 racist and discriminatory tweets remain live on Twitter as of Thursday despite reporting them last year. Like Facebook, Twitter would not provide anyone for interview to discuss claims they are strengthening moves to remove discriminatory content and abusive users.

The British government on its part is introducing a law to address online safety that could

lead to social media companies being fined for failing to crack down on racism.

"We could see fines of up to 10% of annual global turnover," Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden wrote in Friday's edition of The Sun newspaper. "For a company such as Facebook or YouTube, that could be billions."

The boycott started as managers were holding news conferences ahead of the weekend's matches. Nuno Espirito Santo of Wolverhampton, who is the only Black manager in the Premier League, flagged issues about withdrawing from public information platforms.

"Not everyone on social media uses it badly," he said of the boycott. "You have to balance and we can't compromise our freedom, but at the moment I think it's a good measure."

Manchester United announced on Friday that six fans have been banned for racially abusing Tottenham forward Son Heung-min on social media. United also found in a review of Twitter, Instagram and Facebook that 3,300 abusive posts were aimed at its players from September 2019 to February 2021. Chelsea also said on Friday that a supporter had been banned for 10 days for antisemitic posts.

The PFA is preparing for more blackouts on social media.

"I personally feel this could be the first of a series of boycotts," Simone Pound, head of equalities at PFA, said. "We can do this every week if we have to. This is not going away. They have to listen to us."

Kashmir Observer, LoneStar Kashmir FC Announce Media Partnership

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a major boost to football activities in Kashmir Valley, LoneStar Kashmir FC on Saturday announced Kashmir Observer as the official media partner for its upcoming 2021-22 season.

The exclusive collaboration will see Kashmir Observer report extensively on LoneStar Kashmir's exploits as they embark on their I-League 2nd Division campaign, as well as other State and National level tournaments.

Popularly known as Kashmir FC, LoneStar was founded in 2013 by its Chairman, Iftikhar Ahmed Lone, as a non-profit professional football club. The AIFF affiliated club has since participated in major tournaments like the I-league's 2nd Division, where they twice finished as the runner-ups (2015, 2016).

The Club competes in the State and National Level Football League and Championships regularly with TRC Turf Ground, Srinagar as the Club's home ground.

Off the field, Kashmir FC is well-known for promoting and uplifting



the grassroots football scene in the Valley.

LoneStar recently "re-launched" its Women's Football Academy. The initiative received much praise, including from AIFF's Technical Director, Isaac Doru.

"This is a moment of joy for the girls of Kashmir," he said. "Thank you LoneStar Kashmir for helping the girls in building up their football hopes and dreams."

Speaking to Kashmir Observer, KFC's Team Manager Zameer Ahmad said that the collaboration will help boost the team's morale as well as enrich the footballing



sphere in the Valley.

"Football fans across Kashmir need to know what's happening on the ground. The progress we are making and the opportunities we are creating. I believe that collaborations like these can go a long way in inspiring a generation," he said.

Kashmir FC is currently coached by seasoned campaigner Chandan Rathod.

LoneStar concluded trials for its Senior, U-18 and U-20 teams earlier this month. With a new crop of youthful energy and talent coming through the ranks, KFC looks all set to take on every challenge head on.

IPL 2021: Warner Removed From SRH Captaincy, Williamson To Take Charge

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Seeking revival of fortune, SunRisers Hyderabad on Saturday removed under-performing David Warner from captaincy and handed over the reins of the team to New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson for the remainder of the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Under Warner, SRH have lost five of their six games as the Australian hasn't been in the best of form in the ongoing edition and his position had become untenable.

It has been learnt that Warner is currently not on best terms with the SunRisers think-tank, comprising of Director of Cricket Tom Moody and mentor VVS Laxman.

"SunRisers Hyderabad would like to announce that Kane Williamson will be taking over the captaincy for tomorrow's match and for the remainder of IPL 2021," SRH said in a statement.

"The team management has also made the decision that they will be changing the overseas combination for tomorrow's match against Rajasthan Royals," it further said, indicating that Warner could be dropped from their playing XI.

West Indies captain Jason Holder is likely to replace Warner in the playing XI. But at the end of the day, it is the decision of the selectors to do that," Warner had said at the post match presentation ceremony.

Warner, it is learnt, was livid that Pandey's exclusion from the side, which many believe was a selec-



tion howler, wasn't exactly his doing but had to bear the brunt for it.

"The comment that David made after the match didn't go down well with those making cricketing decisions. In any case, David and Tom hasn't had great working relation in terms of selecting the playing XI," the source in the know of things said.

It is expected that Warner will be dropped from the playing XI and they now have two options. Either to play Jason Roy as an opener or use Jason Holder as an all-rounder and bring in Wriddhiman Saha to open in place of Kedar Jadhav in the middle order.

The main problem with SRH has been their Indian set-up which isn't sadly up to the mark for a tournament like IPL.

SRH never picked good Indian players and there was always an element of risk when their overseas recruits won't come good. Warner became the first collateral damage of a poor team selection.

Warner didn't hide his anger after the loss against Capitals and termed call to drop Pandey as a "harsh" one.

"It was a harsh call in my opinion. But at the end of the day, it is the decision of the selectors to do that," Warner had said at the post match presentation ceremony.

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tion howler, wasn't exactly his doing but had to bear the brunt for it.

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DC Performing Well As A Team, Not Dependent On Individuals: Dhawan



Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: Senior opener Shikhar Dhawan feels Delhi Capitals are enjoying a successful IPL campaign because the team is functioning as a well-oiled unit and is not dependent on any one individual.

Rishabh Pant and his men have won five of their seven matches and are sitting second on the points table behind league leaders Chennai Super Kings.

"We are performing very well as a team this season. We have won five out of seven matches, so we are in a pretty good position at the moment," Dhawan was quoted as saying in a DC media release.

"The good thing is that the entire team is doing well, and we are not depending on any one individual. There has always been someone who has taken the responsibility to win matches for us.

"We have a strong side, and I am glad that we are in this position at the moment," he added.

The Capitals put up a clinical performance to defeat Kolkata Knight Riders by seven wickets in their previous game. Opener Prithvi Shaw lit up the match with a blazing 82 of 41 balls.

Dhawan, who had the best seat in the house when Shaw struck six fours in an over against KKR, feels the youngster showed a lot of courage during his innings.

"It was lovely to see Prithvi strike six boundaries in one over in the last game. We got 25 runs in the first over and the game was over there itself. He made the game easy for me as I didn't have to take any risks.

"Prithvi was in a good flow, and he backed himself to continue scoring runs in that flow, which I think shows a lot of courage he has as a batsman.

"His innings of 80-odd is bigger than many centuries because the manner in which he got the runs was of a different class altogether," he added.

The Delhi Capitals are set to take on Punjab Kings in their next match here on Sunday.

"The Punjab Kings are a good side. We cannot take any team in the IPL lightly. We have to make sure that we give our best and implement our plans properly every time we step on the field," Dhawan said.

"They are playing well at the moment and we respect that but, at the same time, we are looking forward to beating them and win another match in our campaign."

Former Pakistan Captain Shoaib Malik Says, 'I have No Plans To Retire'

Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain Shoaib Malik on Friday made it clear that he has no intentions of taking retirement from the sport.

"I am saying very clearly today I have not even thought about retirement. I have no plans to retire now because I am fit, I can bat, I can bowl and I can bowl," the 39-year-old batsman told the media on Friday.

Malik had recently taken shots at the Pakistan team management in a series of tweets, inferring that captain Babar Azam was not being allowed to take his independent decisions and the head coach had personal likes and dislikes in selecting players. He also called for the appointment of a white ball coach for the national team.

"I have recently signed two-year contracts in some leagues so where does the question of me taking retirement after the World Cup arise," he said.

Malik made it clear that he was very fit and a performer.

"I can field in hotspots, I can take two runs and I can save two runs. When I have to bowl I can also bowl and I am batting well. My fitness is top grade," he said.

Malik, despite now focussing only on T20 format since retiring from Test and ODI matches, has been kept out of the Pakistan white ball squad since last year as head coach Misbah-ul-Haq keep on trying several new players in the batting order.

Malik apparently has made it clear to the head coach that even if they consider selecting him again he will bat at number four on a set position and not be moved around like in the past.

Malik also made the point that whenever he played in the Pakistan Super League or other foreign leagues he kept on performing in the shortest format and even now worked very hard on his fitness to compete with younger players.

The veteran allrounder has played in 35 Tests, 287 one-day internationals and 116 T20 internationals for his country.

Gymnast Pranati Gets Asian Quota, To Compete At Tokyo Olympics

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India gymnast Pranati Nayak, who had claimed a bronze in vault at the Asian Artistic Gymnastic Championships in 2019, is set to compete at the Tokyo Olympics after qualifying through the continental quota.

The 26-year-old from West Bengal is the second reserve behind Sri Lanka's Elpitiya Badalge Dona Milka Geh for the Asian quota and became eligible to compete from the zone following the cancellation of the 9th Senior Asian Championships, which was scheduled to be held from May 29-June 1 in Hangzhou, China, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I was very disappointed when I couldn't achieve the qualifying score during the 2019 World Championship and with the pandemic cancelling all events, I never imagined that I will be able to realise this dream of going to the Olympics," Pranati told PTI.

"I am now waiting for the official communication from the Asian or world body regarding the same," she added.

Pranati's long-time coach Minara Begum, who retired from the Sports Authority of India (SAI) in 2019, was also extremely pleased to see her ward achieve

the qualification.

"She retained her ranking points that she had achieved after competing at the Asian event in Mongolia and the world championship in Germany and got the Asian quota after the China event was cancelled," Begum said.

"I am extremely delighted for her," she added.

After grabbing a bronze at Ulaanbaatar, Pranati had hoped to qualify for the Olympics by producing a good show at the 2019 world championships.

"I didn't do well in beam and it affected my score at world championship. I was heart broken," said Pranati, who is being trained by SAI coach Lakhman Manohar Sharma for the past two years.

She had totalled 45.832 at the world championships after scoring 14.200 in vault, 11.133 in floor exercise, 10.566 in bar and 9.933 in beam.

"I have kept myself fit and kept training during this pandemic even though no events were happening."

Asked if she was under Target Olympics Scheme (TOPS), Pranati said, "I was for a year and a half till the 2018 Asian Games. Now that I have qualified, I hope I am back in the scheme."

"I want to train hard in the next few months and put up a good show at Olympics," she signed off.

Pakistan Great Muhammad Yousuf Believes Virat Kohli Will Soon Break Century Drought

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Pakistan batting great Muhammad Yousuf believes that Indian captain Virat Kohli is in his prime and will soon start getting hundreds again in all formats.

Kohli, considered one of the best current batsmen in the world, has not scored a hundred in any format since 2019.

"Kohli is only 32 and this is the age at which top batsmen hit prime and it is only a matter of time before he starts getting hundreds again," Yousuf said in an interview.

"To achieve what he has already achieved is formidable and to me, scoring 70 Test and One-day International hundreds (by Kohli) is extreme," said Yousuf, who has played 90 Tests and 288 ODIs.

Yousuf, who still holds the world record of scoring most Test runs in a calendar year when he made 1788 runs in 2005/06 season, would not like comparing Kohli with legendary batsman Sachin Tendulkar.

"He (Kohli) has done it and jitney praise karo isko kum hai (no matter how much we praise him, it is less). But at same time I don't think there is a comparison between him and Sachin (Tendulkar)."

"Tendulkar was a different class altogether. He scored 100 international hundreds and keep in mind the era he played in and the bowlers he played against," said the former Pakistan captain.

Yousuf felt that India still continued to produce technically better batsmen as compared to Pakistan.



"Their young batters have always had role models to follow from one era to another. That is why even today, they (India) are producing better batsmen. I was lucky that when I started playing I had players like Inzamam ul Haq and Saeed Anwar to look up to and was also coached by a great like Javed Miandad."

Yousuf said that stakeholders in Pakistan cricket need to sit down and seriously think about the future because there was a dire need to get young players to also focus on other formats apart from T20.

"Or else, we will face more problems in batting in future," Yousuf, who is now a batting coach at the PCB's high performance centre,

said.

"T20 is fun cricket and I see it as a blessing in disguise as it had immensely improved the financial status of our players. But at same time, I think you can even be successful in this format by sticking to the basics and intelligent cricket with less percentage of risky shots."

He noted that batsmen like Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Babar Azam, Kane Williamson and Steve Smith were all perfect examples of this approach.

"Smith is a bit of an exception in his style of play given the way he plays, but then his approach has been very successful in all formats especially in Test cricket."

COVID Crisis In India Very Serious, Cases Yet To Peak: Biden Admn



Agenceis

Washington: The COVID-19 crisis in India is indeed very serious, the Biden Administration said on Friday, noting that the cases have not peaked yet.

"I'm afraid that the crisis in India with the surge in the virus is indeed very, very serious. India's reporting an increasing number of cases almost every day. The crisis has not peaked yet," Gayle E Smith, the State Department Coordinator for Global COVID Response and Health Security told reporters at a news conference here.

Smith explained that in a surge, there's a lag time between when people are infected, when they become sick and when they may need care.

"I think this is something that's going to need urgent and persistent attention for some time. That's why we have in the immediate sense been focused on key supplies like oxygen support, protective medical gear, vaccine manufacturing supplies, diagnostic tests and other things that are needed quite simply to respond to this immedi-

ate surge," she said.

The Biden Administration is looking at other things that can be done to build up supply chains within India so that there can be a more steady supply of all those things that are needed to manage this over time, Smith asserted.

Smith said once the Administration received the request of items from India, the interagency quickly moved to get these approved.

"There are a couple of outstanding things that agencies are working on. But again, we've rotated these goods in on a steady rhythm so far so I think it's been a pretty prompt response," Smith said.

State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said the United States will continue to lead the world in confronting COVID-19.

Smith also praised the role being played by the US corporate sector in this assistance effort towards India.

"With the crisis in India, we have been very active on responding to that. Planes have landed with supplies. Our teams are closely engaged with the Government of India to see what else may be needed additionally," she said. PTI

Centre permits oxygen concentrator imports via post, courier for personal use under gift category

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: The government has allowed imports of oxygen concentrators for personal use through post, courier or e-commerce portals under the gift category amid increasing demand for oxygen due to rising COVID-19 cases, the commerce ministry said on Saturday.

The exemption for oxygen concentrators is allowed only for a period till July 31, 2021, it said. Currently, all imported goods declared as gift with customs authorities attract customs duty and integrated GST.

An oxygen concentrator is a medical device that concentrates

oxygen from ambient air. It is in high demand due to increasing COVID-19 cases in the country. These concentrators capture and filter the air, unlike oxygen cylinders which can only store a fixed amount of oxygen.

"The government has included the import of oxygen concentrators for personal use, through post, courier or e-commerce portals, in the list of exempted categories, where Customs clearance is sought as gifts," the ministry said.

Earlier, oxygen concentrators were not mentioned in the list. Now, it has been added on account of its high demand due to COVID-19 cases. — PTI

12 Die At Delhi Hospital Due To Oxygen Shortage; HC Says 'Enough Is Enough'

Agenceis

Twelve Covid-19 patients, including the HOD of gastroenterology department, of Batra Hospital here died due to oxygen shortage, officials said on Saturday.

The facility ran out of medical oxygen - for the second time in the space of a week - at 11:45 am on Saturday.

We are trying to revive five other critical patients, said a hospital official, reported PTI

"We could not save them even after making efforts from our end. Since this wave hit the country, we've been demanding oxygen from the govt," said Dr SCL Gupta, Medical Director of Delhi's Batra Hospital.

"Our executive director is in regular touch with government officers concerned and has been updating them about our oxygen stock. INOX and Goel are two oxygen suppliers who supply us oxygen. Neither of them picks up our call," Gupta further told ANI.

R K Himthani, head of the gastroenterology department, was among those who died due to lack of oxygen.

Himthani had been admitted to the hospital for the last 15-20 days, the medical director said. Gupta said they had informed the authorities about lack of oxygen Saturday morning when they had 2,500 litres of the life-saving gas left.

Around 12.30 pm, the hospital

authorities claimed they had run out of oxygen. The oxygen tanker arrived at 1.35 pm, they said.

"At 7 am, we raised an alarm that we will run out of oxygen by 12 pm. Delhi government didn't have any oxygen to supply to us. We were without oxygen till 1:35 pm. As a result, we lost 8 patients," Dr Sudhanshu Bankata, executive director, Batra Hospital, told a news channel.

"Once a patient is pushed to the edge without the support of oxygen, it is very difficult to revive him. Unfortunately, we are expecting more fatalities," said Bankata, executive director of the hospital.

Hospitals across the national capital had sent out SOS messages last week about depleting supplies of oxygen. The Delhi government has maintained that the city is not getting its allocated quantity of the life-saving gas.

Meanwhile, Delhi High Court on Saturday warned of contempt action against Centre if the allocated 490 MT of oxygen is not supplied to Delhi today.

The court took note of eight deaths in Batra Hospital due to lack of oxygen supply and told the Central government "enough is enough". "Do you mean we will shut our eyes to the people dying in Delhi," it asked the Centre.

"We mean business. Water has gone above the head," the court said and declined to defer its order.

Supply Oxygen Or Face Contempt Of Court: Delhi HC to Centre

Agenceis

Anguished by the deaths of eight COVID-19 patients, including a doctor, at the Batra Hospital here due to a shortage of oxygen, the Delhi High Court directed the Centre on Saturday to ensure that the national capital receives its allocated share of 490 metric tonnes of the life-saving gas during the day and said "enough is enough", "much water has gone above the head".

A bench of justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli said the Centre has to ensure that Delhi receives its allocated amount of oxygen "by whatever means" and warned that a failure to do so could lead to contempt action.

The bench, which held a four-hour-long special hearing on a holiday with regard to the oxygen crisis and other COVID-19 related issues that the city is grappling with, also directed that the senior officers concerned be present before it on the

next date of hearing on Monday if the allocated oxygen is not received by Delhi by the end of the day.

"We direct the central government to ensure that the NCT of Delhi receives its allocated supply of 490 MT positively today by whatever means. Considering the fact that Delhi is not an industrial state and does not have availability of cryogenic tankers of its own, which could be requisitioned under the Disaster Management Act like other states have done, it falls upon the central government to arrange the tankers as well, so that the allocation made to Delhi could be fulfilled, lest it remains only a paper allocation. The central government shall ensure availability of cryogenic tankers as well for the said supply," the bench said.

It also noted that since April 20, the entire allocated quota of 480 MT oxygen and thereafter, 490 MT has not been delivered to Delhi

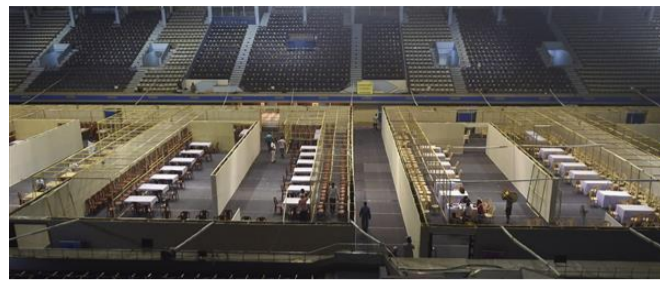
even on a single day.

"Looking at the situation, we make it clear that we may even consider initiating contempt proceedings in case of non-compliance. Amit Mahajan shall ensure the communication of this order to the officers concerned forthwith," it said.

When Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Chetan Sharma urged the bench to defer its order till May 3 or by half an hour, especially the warning about initiating contempt proceedings, it declined to accept his request and said, "Much water has gone above the head. Now we mean business. Enough is enough."

"You (Centre) made an allocation, you fulfil it. Do you mean we will shut our eyes to people dying in Delhi? Enough is enough now. Who is asking for a gram more of oxygen than is allocated? If you cannot supply, do not supply. We will see your explanation on Monday," it added.

Crucial Assembly Election Results On Sunday In Shadow Of Raging COVID Pandemic



Agenceis

New Delhi: Counting of votes will be held on Sunday in the high-stakes Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry assembly elections, overshadowed by the raging COVID pandemic, as the BJP seeks to consolidate its hold over more states and the Congress along with its allies attempts to regain lost turf.

There will be 2,364 counting halls as compared to 1,002 halls in 2016 in 822 assemble constituencies, a more than 200 per cent increase, in view of the COVID guidelines, according to the Election Commission which had drawn flak from the courts over the conduct of polls during the pandemic.

At least 15 rounds of sanitisation will be carried out at each polling centre, besides social distancing and other precautions, including a ban on gatherings, will be strictly followed, officials said.

They said counting of votes will begin at 8 AM and continue late into the night. As many as 1,100 counting observers will watch the process and candidates and agents will have to produce a negative COVID test report or double dose of vaccination certificate to get an entry.

Exit polls have forecast a tight contest between the incumbent Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress and the BJP in the crucial West Bengal assembly polls and put the ruling saffron combine ahead in Assam while projecting that the Left alliance will retain Kerala, a feat unseen in four decades. For the Congress, the exit polls predicted that it may fall short in Assam and Kerala and lose in Puducherry to the opposition alliance of AINRC-BJP-AIADMK.

The only good news for the Congress was from Tamil Nadu, where the exit polls predicted that the DMK-led opposition alliance, of which it is a part, will trounce the AIADMK-BJP coalition.

The poll results in the four states and the UT are also likely to reflect how the handling of the COVID pandemic has played on the voters' mind.

Polling was held in eight phases in West Bengal between March 27 and April 29, in Assam in three stages on March 27, April 1 and 6, while votes were cast in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and the Union Territory of Puducherry in a single phase on April 6, when the COVID surge had begun in many of the states.

Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are among the 11 states that account for 78.22 per cent of the total active cases, according to the Health ministry.

A three-tier security arrangement is in place in West Bengal's 108 counting centres and at least 292 observers have been appointed and 256 companies of central forces deployed across 23 districts of the state that voted in a gruelling election marred by violence and vicious personal attacks.

The result will decide whether Mamata Banerjee, who has been in power for 10 years and is arguably fighting the toughest poll of her political career, has been able to thwart the challenge by the battle-hardened election army of the BJP led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

The BJP, which had just three seats in the 294-member Assembly in the 2016 Assembly polls and went to win 18 out of 42 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha election, had pulled out all stops in the state in a determined bid to oust Banerjee, a vocal critic of Prime Minister Modi, and add another state to its tally of 17.

The Left-Congress alliance is third main contestant in the state.

In Tamil Nadu, both Dravidian parties—AIADMK and DMK—went into the election without their stalwarts, J Jayalalithaa and M Karunanidhi.

Chief Minister K Palaniswami and his deputy O Panneerselvam will cement their position as successors of Jayalalithaa if the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) retains power though it faces an uphill task especially after the rout in the 2019 Lok Sabha election when the DMK-led alliance won 38 out of 39 seats. The AIADMK had scored successive wins in 2011 and in 2016, when Jayalalithaa bucked the anti-incumbency trend—the first by anyone in nearly three decades in the state.

After a narrow defeat in the last assembly election where several exit polls had predicted his party's win, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) chief M K Stalin spearheaded a determined election campaign this time and vigorously toured the state to take on the ruling AIADMK.

AIADMK ally BJP, which had not won any seat in the last polls, is contesting in 20 constituencies. Another AIADMK ally PMK is contesting from 23 constituencies.

Randhir Kapoor Shifted To The ICU After Testing Positive For Covid-19

Bollywood actor, producer and director Randhir Kapoor has been shifted to the ICU after testing positive for Covid-19.

The Housefull 2 star, who was recently hospitalised along with five of his staff members, said doctors needed to perform some further tests on him.

"I have been shifted to the Intensive Care Unit to do some further tests. The hospital

is taking very good care of me and I thank Tina Ambani. Everything is under control. They are going all out for me. The doctors are around all the time," he told ETimes.

Admitted to a hospital in Mumbai, he told Times of India, "I have no clue how I got Covid. I am surprised. Let me also tell you that my entire staff of five members, too, has tested positive, and I have got them hospitalised with me in the Kokilaben Ambani

Hospital."

Father to Kareena Kapoor Khan and Karishma Kapoor, he attended wife Babita's birthday party on April 20. After he got diagnosed with the virus, Babita, Karisma and Kareena all got tested and fortunately did not contract the virus.

Randhir is the brother of Rajiv and Rishi Kapoor. Rajiv passed away earlier this year while Rishi passed away last April.

NEWS MAKER

India's elite heads to the Maldives to escape the Covid crisis

Agenceis

As Indian hospitals forfeit and cremation centres run out of space, the country's rich overlook the scenes from their Maldives-bound private jets. This is nothing extraordinary, economic inequality is the least surprising thing about the hyper-globalised 21st century, but its neo-liberal ideals manifest in a reality the eyes beg to shy away from. Out of embarrassment, or fear, you ask? We'll let you decide.

The South Asian archipelagic state of the Maldives was a popular tourist destination before the pandemic, and as borders re-opened after initial scares, it was quick to climb back up to the top. Only that this time, the ones carrying the destination back to its lost glory have been India's elite. Since the country opened its borders to tourist in mid-July, India has contributed the most visitors. Recently, as India was ravaged by the virus, countries across the globe banned visitors from the world's largest democracy. The Maldives government, however, allowed

them entry but made slight changes in policies for visitors from India.

As per the new policies, travellers arriving from India can now only stay at a resort or a safari boat and are not allowed to check into guesthouses on islands inhabited by locals.

"The geographical location of our islets help us to minimise the (virus) risk," Thoyyib Mohamed, the head of the country's tourism authority, Visit Maldives, told AFP.

"Each islet is a self-contained single resort. Even if we have a few cases popping up here and there, we can contain it within the resorts without exposing the local population."

Mohamed said that while the arrival of Indian tourists has seen a decline in the past week though they're still the most represented foreign group in their statistics. The country has long been a favourite of Bollywood stars, and most recently Alia Bhatt, her partner Ranbir Kapoor and Shradha Kapoor took trips to the Maldives, making regular updates via their social media. Private jet firms have

found great business in India's wealthy during the ruthless spread of the virus at home, as they've witnessed a sharp surge in demands from tourists seeking to go to Europe, the Middle East and the Maldives.

"It's not only the ultra rich," Rajan Mehra, head New Delhi-based private plane firm Club One Air told The Print. "Whoever can afford to take a private jet are taking private jets."

On Friday, India broke its own record, yet again, with over 386,000 cases reported, with approximately 3,500 people reported to have lost their lives. With these stats it is integral to also take note of the fact that these numbers are grossly underreported.

Tourism is Maldives largest industry, so it's not a surprise the island nation was quick to reopen borders in a bid to protect itself financially. The industry provides for more than 28% of GDP and 60% of foreign exchange, as reported by Global Edge at the Michigan State University.

"The Covid-19 pandemic is the largest shock to have ever hit the Maldives' economy. The

government closed borders between end-March to mid-July 2020, resulting in a sudden stop of tourist inflow. To mitigate the adverse welfare impacts of the crisis, the government spent \$187 million or about 4.7 percent of estimated 2020 GDP on special financing facilities for firms and freelance workers, monthly income support allowances, and discounted utility bills," reads a World Bank report.

The nations aspires to be the first in the world with a fully vaccinated tourism industry. It has taken on the ambitious project of vaccinating its entire 50,000 workforce in the tourism and hospitality industries. Mohamed told the media that about 90% of the workers were already vaccinated. In addition to these workers, the nation's health ministry reports that two-thirds of its 330,000 people had also received their first doses of the vaccine.

Though the country is witnessing a spike in its cases, it has only reported approximately 30,000 cases since the pandemic broke out, and 73 deaths.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

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ARE YOU 18+ AND READY FOR COVID VACCINATION

- COVAXIN to be rolled out for the first time in J&K UT for the 18 to 44 years from 2nd May 2021 in 2 districts of J&KUT viz, Jammu in Jammu Division and Srinagar in Kashmir Division.
- Only those beneficiaries will be vaccinated who have pre-registered themselves on and have got prior appointment from the portal on COWIN App.
- Vaccination will be exclusively available on designated COVAXIN centers free of cost.
- Vaccination will be carried out for the said age group on 5 designated centres each in Srinagar and Jammu Districts as given below.

District Srinagar

- SC Natipora
- UPHC Nishat
- SMHS Hospital SKIMS Soura
- GB Panth Hospital
- Boys Secondary school NIT Hazratbal
- Mirinda School Chinkral Mohalla (Zone S.R Gunj)
- Community Hall Centre Illahi Bagh Zone Zadibal
- Health Centre Miskeen Bagh(Khanyar)
- Govt. Higher Secondary School Batamallo

District Jammu

- Chanderbagha Hall Canal Road
- Govt. Middle School Domana
- Scouts and Guides State HQ Gandhinagar, Near Dussheera Ground.
- Cooperative public School, Marbel Market Trikuta Nagar
- Sharma Janj Ghar Tali Morh, New Plot.

The Vaccination sites for COVAXIN will be gradually increased in the coming days.

We request for your patience and understanding.

Largest Vaccination Drive

Issued in public interest:-
Directorate of Family Welfare, MCH & Immunization, J&K