

# KASHMIR OBSERVER

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P3 CITY

## DC SRINAGAR VISITS CD, SMHS HOSPITALS TO REVIEW INSTALLATION OF NEW OXYGEN PLANTS

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Tuesday visited Chest Disease and SMHS hospitals to oversee the process of installation of three new Oxygen Generation Plants...

P6

## MISPLACED CONCERNS AND MISINTERPRETED HISTORY

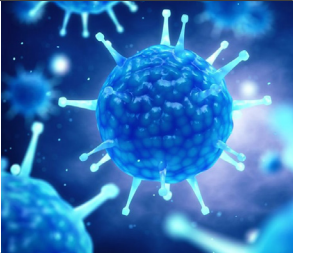
During the last week hundreds of Palestinian protesters have been wounded by the Israeli police and more than 197 are dead in Gaza and 10 in Israel, 42 were killed in the early hours of 17 May only, after the Israeli...



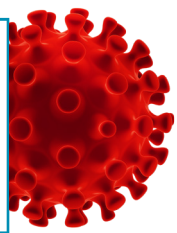
P5 NEWS

## DHSK ISSUES ADVISORY FOR PREVENTION OF BLACK FUNGUS

Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) on Tuesday issued an advisory for the prevention of Mucormycosis (Black Fungus) after such cases were...



**Quote!**  
In a time of destruction, create something  
Maxine Hong Kingston



# Kashmir Records 10-12% Drop In Covid-19 Cases: Govt

## NEWS DIGEST

### Ex-Union Minister Chaman Lal Gupta Dies

**JAMMU-** Veteran BJP leader and former union minister Chaman Lal Gupta died after a prolonged illness at his Gandhi Nagar residence here on Tuesday, days after undergoing successful treatment for COVID-19 at a hospital, his family said. Gupta (87) is survived by his two sons and a daughter. He had tested positive for COVID-19 on May 5 and returned from Narayana hospital on Sunday after successful treatment. His condition suddenly deteriorated in the wee hours and **More On P10**

### Search Operation Held In Ganderbal

**SRINAGAR:** The state forces on Tuesday launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Safapora area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. According to reports, a joint team of the army's 13RR, Ganderbal Police cordoned off Waza Mohalla area of Safapora and conducted house to house searches there. Reports said that all entry and exit points towards the area were sealed off by the security forces. **More On P10**

### Grenade Defused in Rajouri

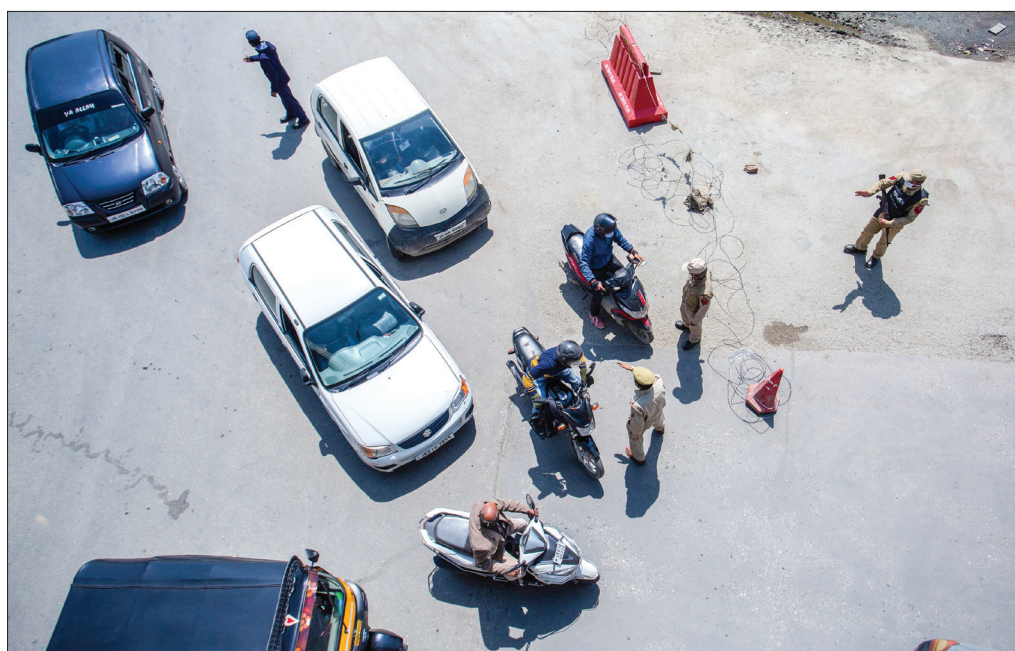
**SRINAGAR:** An unexploded grenade was destroyed by a joint team of police and army on Tuesday in Panj Nara village of Rajouri district. The rusted hand grenade was destroyed on the site by a bomb disposal squad of a local army unit with the assistance of police from Kandi police station, an official said. The grenade, he said, was found lying in bushes following which village elders informed the authorities.

### 2 Pistols Recovered In Poonch

**SRINAGAR:** Two pistols and eleven bullets were recovered during an operation in Mahra village of Surankote in Poonch district, officials said Tuesday. The said that an operation was launched jointly by army and police during which arms and ammunition were found kept hidden in the area. They said that apparently the arms and ammunition were kept in the area in the past years—(KNO)

### 4 Gamblers Held In Ganderbal: Police

**SRINAGAR:** Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested four gamblers in a raid in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Bashir Ahmad Bhat, Bashir Ahmad Kambay, Mohd Yousuf Hajam and Manzoor Ahmad Sheikh, all residents of Wakura Ganderbal were arrested by a team of cops from Police Post Shadipora in an input driven raid at Langi Bagh Wakura, a police spokesperson said. Besides playing cards, **More On P10**



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The rate of daily COVID-19 positive patients has been coming down by 10 to 12 per cent in Kashmir division over the past few days, a senior

official said on Tuesday.

Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Pandurang K Pole said, "The rate of daily COVID-19 positive patients has been witnessed to be stabilising by 10 to 12 per cent in Kashmir."

He said that, however, there are chances that the mortality rate will remain the same or even increase in the next few days.

Maintaining that the administration has been taking every possible step **More On P10**

## Corona Claims 71 More Lives, 3967 Test Positive



Firdaus Ali

**SRINAGAR:** Coronavirus claimed on Tuesday 71 more lives in Jammu and Kashmir, the second highest single-day death toll, while 3967 more people tested positive for the deadly infection across the Union Territory during the last

24 hours.

Officials told Kashmir Observer that among the 71 fatalities reported Tuesday, 39 victims were residents of Jammu division and the remaining 32 hailed from different parts of the Kashmir Valley. Their deaths, they said, raised the overall fatality count **More On P10**

KO Photo: Abid Bhat

## Fresh Vaccine Consignment Arrives: Govt

The Jammu and Kashmir administration said on Tuesday that it has received a fresh consignment of coronavirus vaccine, days after facing massive outrage over the shortage of vaccines in Kashmir Valley. "J&K has today received fresh consignment of Covishield vaccine. The immunisation drive in Jammu and Kashmir division to continue on a war footing from tomorrow, 19th May. The government has also ensured for a continuous supply of **More On P10**

## 10-Member Panel Formed To Tackle 'Third Wave'

As Jammu and Kashmir continues to battle the second wave of deadly coronavirus infection, the Union Territory administration has constituted a 10-member panel for formulating a strategy to meet a possible 'third wave' of the pandemic. In an order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) on Tuesday, the former Director of the SK institute of medical sciences (SKIMS) Dr M.S. Khuroo has been named as the Chairman of the ten member committee for **More On P10**

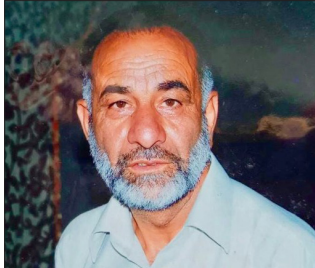
## Govt Orders 50% Attendance In Offices

The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha led Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday ordered 50 percent attendance of employees in the government offices in an effort to contain the spread of coronavirus in the Union Territory. In an order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), it has been stated that with a view to ensure adherence to social distancing norms in government offices across the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, **More On P10**

## 90 Days Interim Bail to Jail Inmates

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has decided to release jail inmates in the union territory on 90 days interim bail in view of the Supreme Court directions, an official spokesman said. A high-powered committee, headed by High Court Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, took the decision to release all the jail inmates as per the directions of the Supreme Court in March 2020, he said. Magrey directed the J&K Legal Services Authority (JKLSA) to coordinate with the other two members **More On P10**

## Journalist Gulzar Ahmad No More



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Senior journalist Gulzar Ahmad passed away at his home in Budgam after a prolonged illness on Tuesday. He was 70.

Resident Editor with the local Urdu daily, Srinagar News, Gulzar's journalistic career spanned over three decades. Gulzar earlier worked with Kashmir Observer from 1996 till 1999.

Gulzar was unwell for the last three years and was mostly confined to his home in **More On P10**

## J&K Seeks Hi-End Gadgets For Monitoring Flood Situation In Kashmir

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** J&K government has proposed the central government to procure 34 Automatic Water Level Recorders (AWLR) for various stations and tributaries besides 13 Automatic Rain Gauges (ARG) to monitor flood situation in Kashmir.

According to the reports, the Divisional Commissioner P K Pole in a meeting stated that it has proposed to install 11 AWLR stations on river Jhelum and 23 AWLR stations on various tributaries through JTFRP (World Bank—PMU).

In the meeting it was also decided that the office of

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir has proposed to install 13 ARG in various catchments to record and communicate the real time rainfall data.

Pole in a meeting also said that it will install 20 Acoustic Doppler Profilers (ADP) or WVRs to record and communicate the real time discharge or flow of Jhelum at nine stations and of various tributaries at 11 stations.

"Office of the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir has also proposed to procure other essential equipment for field and office work", reads the official document.

It was also mentioned that the **More On P10**

...Proprietary Rights Over State Land

## HC Upholds Pre-Roshni Orders

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Tuesday upheld the validity of government orders and schemes on grant of Proprietary or freehold rights over state land prior to coming into effect of Roshni Act which was scrapped last year.

Disposing of a number of petitions, a division bench of Justices Ali Mohammad Magrey and Vinod Chatterji Koul made it clear that the government cannot deny the grant of proprietary or freehold rights on any "arbitrary, unreasonable and illegal basis."

"We are unable to accept the argument advanced on behalf

of the Respondents (officials) that all pending cases of applicants under any pre-existing Scheme/Government Order of the (government) stood automatically rejected upon coming into force of the Roshni Act/Rules," the division bench said.

"In any event, since the Roshni Act/Rules having already been declared are null and void by a co-ordinate Division Bench of this Court by its decision dated 9th October, 2020 in PIL No. 19/2011, the Respondents (officials) cannot take shelter under the Roshni Act/Rules to advance such an argument," the court said after examining the decision of the coordinate Bench which it **More On P10**



DOCTOR SPEAKS

Ashiq Hussain Andrabi

After the government equated the dosage death with vaccine hesitancy in Kashmir valley, the chorus around official Covid response is only growing—with many stressing that the experts in the field should be given the charge to lead and interact with the public on mass-media platforms.

The assertion came a day after Kashmir Observer carried an exclusive

sive official data story blaming jab hesitancy for the valley's slow vaccine rate.

Earlier, Kashmiri netizens decried the dosage disparity between Jammu and Kashmir, saying: "Where are the vaccines?" Many Kashmiri journalists say, Kashmir valley's vaccination drive literally halted on May 15, 2021, followed by "zero doses administered in Kashmir" on May 16.

While the government says it's stockpiling supplies amid "vaccine hesitancy", many in Kashmir assert: "Hesitancy doesn't mean hospitals should remain devoid of critical doses."

Amid competing pitches, the frontline workers are bearing the

brunt by holding the fort, while commoners are facing Covid curfew on their way to health centres "running dry of doses".

To understand what the government calls "vaccination hesitancy" in Kashmir valley, Kashmir Observer spoke to Dr. Shah Nawaz B Kaloo of Max Hospital, New Delhi. Dr. Kaloo's celebrated superman avatar during the first phase of the pandemic last year became a twitter sensation.

**How much of this vaccine hesitancy is real?**

Well, vaccine hesitancy is not new and dates back to smallpox

vaccination.

However, during the current pandemic, the misinformation is tremendous especially on social media. This has worsened the situation.

**Since you're very active on social media, do you see any role of misinformation in shaping up of this hesitancy?**

Unfortunately, social media has worsened the misinformation problem. Conspiracy theorists are getting huge public attention and this has led to chaos. The social media platforms are yet to provide a method to report and flag unscientific or

false information.

It's need of the hour that social media platforms provide a methodology to flag such misinformation.

**What most common safety concerns do the vaccine hesitant/skeptics have?**

The concerns are many and mostly ill founded.

**How does this hesitancy pose a threat to herd immunity and complicate this fight against Covid-19?**

The vaccine is our strongest weapon against this pandemic.

And we must work towards eradication of this pandemic with vaccination. Otherwise, this health emergency may stay for many years to come.

**Vaccine hesitancy may not necessarily be vaccine refusal and there may be some legitimate concerns about the vaccine. What are some of these genuine concerns that must be addressed at an earliest possible?**

The data from clinical trials should be made public for every vaccine. Plus there should be a national registry of the post vaccination side effects if severe. This will help **More On P10**



Dr. Junaid  
Anaesthesiologist

"Natural Herd Immunity" won't work with COVID. Here's why  
1. Reinfections are common.  
2. New and Emerging variants.  
Vaccinate now.  
Vaccinate all.  
Suppress the virus while we still can.  
Don't let a variant emerge which is highly infectious and escapes vaccines.



Dr. Shumail Bashir  
Pulmonologist and Assistant Professor, GMC

Steroids are beneficial in moderate to severe COVID disease. There's enough scientific evidence to show that they reduce all cause mortality in critical COVID patients. In other words STEROIDS are LIFE SAVING! Please let experts decide where and when to prescribe them.



Dr. Dipshikha Ghosh  
Critical Care Medicine

We're likely plateauing but there will be fluctuations. Keep masking & distancing, isolate if you have symptoms, consult doctors if symptoms aggravate. Help keep numbers down. My fraternity would love to close COVID units once and for all. That's the only thing keeping us going.

## Truck Driver Held With Rs 30L Cash

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** A truck driver, hailing from Kashmir, was taken into custody on Tuesday after Rs 30 lakh unaccounted cash was recovered from his vehicle here, police said.

Mohammad Iqbal of Verinag area of south Kashmir's Anantnag district was handed over to Income Tax authorities for further inquiry, a police spokesperson said.

He said police have set up various checkpoints in view of the ongoing COVID-19 **More On P10**