

24<sup>th</sup> year OF PUBLICATION

# KASHMIR OBSERVER

Wednesday 02 June | 21 Shawwal | 1442 Hijri | Vol:24 | Issue: 128 | Pages:12 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net • twitter.com / kashmirobserver • facebook.com/kashmirobserver • Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016



P3 CITY

## GOVT'S DECISION TO UNLOCK A RIGHT DECISION: DIR SKIMS

Dr. A. G. Ahangar, Director SKIMS and Ex-Officio Secretary to Government, on Tuesday termed the administration's decision to unlock as a "right decision". Talking to reporters on the sidelines...

P6 THINK

## THE INCOHERENCE OF MUSTAFA AKYOL'S 'ETHICAL OBJECTIVISM'?

IN the nature of a book promotion, that took the form of an interview carried by Kashmir Observer, 'Gap Between Muslim World and the Rest is Growing Wider', Mustafa Akyol - formerly a journalist in Turkey and...



P5 STATE

## FCS&CA ASKS BENEFICIARIES TO OBTAIN RECEIPT FROM SALE POINTS

The Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Tuesday asked the beneficiaries to obtain receipt from their respective Government Sale...



# Amid Suicides, Experts Warn Against 'Copycat Phenomena' In Kashmir

Auqib Javeed

Beyond the bolstered bridge bids and shore up suicides in Kashmir, there's a looming danger of what Dr. Yasir Rather calls "copycat phenomena" that might end up doing more harm to the lockdown-distressed valley.

"As news of suicide spreads like fire and is sensationalised by media, we need to be also well aware of not activating copycat phenomena in someone else with mental health issues," warns Dr. Yasir, noted psychiatrist

and professor at the Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (IMHANS), Government Medical College, Srinagar.

FROM THE YEAR 2010 TO 2020, Kashmir witnessed 3024 cases of suicide—with the pandemic year of 2020 leading the decade with 457 suicides."

During the second viral wave, Kashmir was rattled when a glum girl, who was yet to observe her 16th birthday, showed up in a deadpan manner in Srinagar's Budshah Bridge on May 6. She created an instant mourning by jumping into the river. Jhelum and left lifeguards clueless for six days before they finally fished out her

IN 2015 MSF STUDY REVEALED that 45 percent of Kashmiri population is in distress. It has been around six years since then too, with a lot of trauma in these years."

bloated body from Jhelum. "People with suicidal behaviour have a cognitive distortion known as fortunetelling, where they feel like nothing is going to get better in their lives," Dr. Yasir said.

This suicidal mindset surfaced on May 31, when an unknown person jumped into Jhelum from Srinagar's Cement Bridge in Qamarwari area. On the same day, vigilant cops prevented a distressed woman from jumping from Budshah Bridge. "These persons actually in their minds start believing

PAGE 1 ANCHOR



Impossible is just an opinion.  
—Paulo Coelho

## NEWS DIGEST

### Soldier Dies Of Gunshot Injury

JAMMU: A soldier died of gunshot wounds from his service rifle at a camp here, officials said on Tuesday. They said it was not immediately clear whether Havaldar Sandeep Kumar died of accidental fire from his own weapon at Sunal camp in Akhnor sector or was it a case of suicide. They said the soldier was on duty when his colleagues heard a gunshot from his post around 8.45 pm Monday. [More On P10](#)

### 3.1 Magnitude Quake Hits Doda

SRINAGAR: An earthquake of magnitude 3.1 on the Richter scale hit Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Tuesday afternoon, officials said. The earthquake occurred at 3:47 pm and its epicentre was Doda, according to the officials. They said that the depth of earthquake was 5 km. However, there were no reports of any damage, they said.

### Homeless Beggar Found With Rs 2.58L

JAMMU: A 65-year-old beggar turned out to be the owner of over Rs 2.58 lakh shortly after she was shifted to a shelter home for better facilities in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, a senior government official said on Tuesday. The unidentified beggar, who was seen roaming the streets of bus stand and adjoining areas over the past three decades, was shifted to a shelter home meant for the homeless to provide them better living on Monday, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Nowshera, Sukhd Singh Samyal said. [More On P10](#)

### Bear Attack Leaves Teen Critical

SRINAGAR: A teenager was critically injured on Tuesday in an attack by a black bear in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. 15-year-old Maroof Zaman Khan, a resident of Shah Chenipath Rajouri was grazing cattle in the Kakroosa forest area of Handwara on Tuesday when a bear appeared there and attacked him, reports said. The teenager, reports said suffered serious injuries in the beast attack and was removed to [More On P10](#)

### Man Held With Fake Currency: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested a man with fake currency at a checkpoint in Handwara town of Kupwara district. Ishfaq Ahmad Bhat of Dangiawacha Rafiabab was chased and apprehended by the cops from police station Kralgund when he ignored the signal to stop and tried to escape from a checkpoint established at Rasripura Bridge, a police spokesperson said Tuesday. During searches, he said, the cops were able to recover 47 counterfeit currency [More On P10](#)

# J&K Govt To Implement 3-Tier Nursing System In Hospitals

Underutilization Of Testing And Vaccination Capacity Not Acceptable: LG



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In an effort to make the healthcare system more vibrant and to provide best possible care to the patients in

the Union Territory, the Jammu and Kashmir administration is mulling to introduce three three-tier systems within the hospital by categorizing nurses in three different modes.

The idea was mooted by J&K Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha during his visit to Anantnag to review Covid containment and preventive [More On P10](#)

Div Com To DCs

## 'Bring Positivity Rate Below 2% In A Month'

Observer News Service

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday directed the Deputy Commissioners to focus on coronavirus management instead of economical activities unless the cases decline to a comfortable level during gradual unlock period in the districts. Chairing a Covid-19 review meeting, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole on Tuesday called for 100 per cent utilization of Covid- management resources across all districts in Kashmir, an [More On P10](#)

## Govt Fixes Rs 400 For RT-PCR Test In Pvt Labs

To make coronavirus testing more affordable for the people, the Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday capped RT-PCR tests at Rs 400 for all private laboratories across the Union Territory. The directions in this regard were issued by the Department of Health and Medical Education. [More On P10](#)

## 32 Deaths, 1,895 Fresh Cases In 24 Hours

Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday recorded 1,895 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the total number of infections to 2,92,360 while 32 deaths in the past 24 hours pushed the toll to 3,939 in the Union Territory. [More On P10](#)

## New Guidelines Issued For Virtual Classes

Acting on the directions of Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the education department on Tuesday issued new guidelines in conducting virtual classes for pre-primary and primary school students. The guidelines were issued by BK Singh; the [More On P10](#)

# LoC Truce Holding In 'Letter And Spirit': Lt Gen Joshi

Press Trust Of India

UDHAMPUR: Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Y K Joshi on Tuesday said ceasefire understanding between India and Pakistan is being followed in letter and spirit by both sides, but asserted that the Indian Army is not letting its guard down even for one bit along the border in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Ceasefire Understanding (CFU) reached on 25 February

2021 has sustained since then and both sides (India-Pak) are abiding by the arrangement in letter and spirit, he said.

Lt Gen Joshi said the Pakistan army at present seems to be committed to ensuring peace and tranquility along the LoC, but added that we want to assure our countrymen that we are not letting our guard down even for one bit.

"The present situation is a reflection of our nation's behaviour as [More On P10](#)

# HC Seeks Govt's Stand On Financial Help To Lawyers

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Tuesday asked the government to come up with a "clear stand" as regards the grant of financial assistance to the lawyers working in Jammu and Kashmir.

A single bench of Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey passed the directions on a

petition filed by a lawyer—M. Abubakar Pandit, seeking a direction to government through Commissioner Secretary, Department Law, and Law

Secretary, to grant immediate financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 25,000 to each advocate who have earlier received the financial assistance and are in actual practice within the [More On P10](#)

## PDP Leader Parra Charged In Politico-Militant Nexus Case

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday filed a chargesheet against senior PDP leader Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra in a case related to the alleged nexus between politicians and militant groups in the union territory, officials said.

They said that Parra has been chargesheeted by the Criminal Investigation (Kashmir) wing of the Jammu and Kashmir's CID under various sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act dealing with "waging war against the country and threatening peace". The chargesheet was submitted before the competent court which has taken cognisance of the document.

Parra has been in judicial custody since his arrest earlier this year by the CIK, a branch of CID mandated to probe cases under the UAPA and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The CIK had filed a case last year against unknown politicians and others based on "reliable and confidential sources" [More On P10](#)

## Hailstorm Damages Crops In North, Central Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Many parts of north and central Kashmir were hit by heavy hailstorm on Tuesday, causing damage to agriculture and horticulture crops in the affected areas, officials said.

The hailstorm was reported from most parts of Kupwara district and some parts in adjoining Kupwara district, the officials said.

They said Khag and Chadoora areas of Budgam district were also hit by the hailstorm.

There has been some damage to agriculture and horticulture crops which are being harvested, the officials said.

The farmers in the valley are busy harvesting pea crop and cherry and strawberry these days. The officials, however, said the exact extent of damage caused [More On P10](#)



Dr. Faheem Younus

VP/ CCO/ Chief of Infectious Disease, University of MD UCH

TWO KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What is a "variant of high consequence"? It's a variant that's more deadly OR resistant to standard treatments/vaccines
2. How many such variants are found globally? ZERO! Don't believe the "sensational" media headlines



Dr. Harjit Singh Bhatti

Former President of AIIMS Resident Doctors Association

Two doses of vaccine is must to generate complete immunity. 1st dose do priming which doesn't last longer whereas 2nd is booster dose which generates cell mediated immunity & memory cells. Govt's intentions to give just 1 dose is an betrayal & an attempt to hide #VaccineShortage



Dr. Muzaffar Maqbool

Researcher and Associate Professor, Internal Medicine, GMC

Covid-19 devastating us in more than one way. Notable rise in poisoning and drug overdose cases overburdening our healthcare system. These patients are requiring intensive care management jeopardizing our already limited high dependency resources. Need ways to reduce mental stress

## Holy Quran's Gojri Translator No More

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Renowned Islamic scholar and preacher Mufti Faiz-ul-Waheed, who was the first to translate the Quran into Gojri language, died of post Covid complications at a private hospital here on Tuesday.

The 56-year-old scholar, a resident of Dodhasanbala village in Rajouri, was admitted in ASCOMS hospital on May 23 for the treatment of Covid pneumonia and breathed his last around 7.30 am due to multiple organ failure, Medical Superintendent Rabinder Rattanpal said.

He said the patient tested negative for COVID-19 on May 24 but since his condition did not show much [More On P10](#)

## Iffi Loses Battle To Covid

SRINAGAR:

Lithe, debonair, handsome and exceedingly intelligent H a k e e m Iftikhar Hussain (Iffi Bhaijan to many) loved and enjoyed life to the hilt. Alas! Iffi lost his month-long battle against the dreaded Covid-19 at a hospital in Delhi this morning, 17 days after losing his wife to the same disease. He was 67. Iffi is survived by son Asgar and daughter Sakeena.

A truly versatile man, Iftikhar was a [More On P10](#)



## Another Shell-Shocked Separation And Grave Reunion In Kashmir

Zaid Bin Shabir

Sara Begum, a 49-year old woman from the Sherkot village of north Kashmir's Handwara area, had always dreamt of watching her daughter walking down the aisle in a bride's dress but a dead-shell explosion killed Sara and her 19-year-old daughter Gulnaz Bano way before they could've lived her dream.

On May 27, the mother-daughter duo was gathered around a bag when a dead-shell exploded and tore through the roof of their house.

"When we heard the blast,



we ran for our lives," said Junaid Gulzar, Sara's close-door neighbour. "After the hue and cry had fizzled a bit, we rushed to the house and found



that the mother and daughter were heavily injured." The duo were collecting collard greens and other wild vegetables from a nearby forest of Sherkoot



Sd/-  
Executive Engineer R&B Division Bandipora





PERSONNEL OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR POLICE imposing covid lockdown in a Srinagar locality on Tuesday. KO Photo by Abid Bhat

# Srinagar Witnesses 39 Percent Covid-19 Deaths

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has topped the list of Covid related deaths with the capital district witnessing 780 out of 4000 total deaths in Kashmir division.

The total 780 deaths means that Srinagar has contributed 39 per cent deaths in Kashmir division.

The deaths reported include mostly elderly people and patients having under lying problems, however, among the dead were some young people with no underlying problems as well.

The pandemic devastated many families in Jammu and Kashmir as several lost their lone bread earners. Figures reveal that 4,000 people died in J&K due to the Covid-19 that includes 2000 from Kashmir region.

"The fatality rate in Srinagar district is 1.18 percent while as overall fatality rate in Kashmir is 1.11 percent," the figures reveal. "The recovery rate in Srinagar is 92.14 percent while as the overall recovery rate of Kashmir is 86.55 percent. There are 4,348 active cases in

## 90 Percent Of Srinagar Localities Affected By Covid: Official

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** At least 90 percent localities in the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar, have recorded Covid positive cases in 2021, officials of district administration Srinagar said.

"There are some areas where no positive case was reported in 2021. Around 10 percent of little pockets have not recorded any cases this year," he said. However, he said the names of all these localities are not available at present.

"As the cases recorded spike in April, the toll of active cases mounted to over

eleven thousand," he said, adding that the tally of active cases due to containment measures taken by the administration has declined to five thousand only.

The official said that with the unlock process there is a need to adhere to the guidelines as doing away with the proper SOPs can result in steep rise again.

Pertinently, the district administration Srinagar has declared 96 localities in the district as containment zones where the authorities continued with the lockdown restrictions in order to prevent the virus from spreading—(KNO)

Srinagar while as total active cases in the division are 22,034. So far 65,163 persons have tested positive for Covid-19 in Srinagar among them 60,044 have already recovered."

Srinagar has reported high-

est deaths in Kashmir division followed by 260 in Baramulla, 179 in Budgam, 169 in Pulwama, 161 in Anantnag, 142 in Kupwara, 102 in Kulgam, 92 in Bandipora, 69 in Ganderbal and 55 in Shopian.

# Covid SOPs Go For A Toss At B&J OPD

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Amid the continuous surge in Covid cases, the authorities at Bone and Joint (B&J) Hospital here in Srinagar have failed to ensure strict adherence to the standard Operating Procedures (SOP) at the hospital.

Witnesses said that people who visit B&J hospital in Barzulla area of Srinagar don't adhere to social distancing as a large number of people could be seen in the queue at Out-Patient Department (OPD).

They informed that the OPD remained jam-packed with the attendants as well as the patients visiting there, saying that the authorities have failed to deploy any official to ensure that the SOPs are followed in

spirit within the hospital.

The locals visiting the hospital said that people who are in dire need visit the hospice for check up or treatment, but such a crowded place could lead to a dangerous situation as there is every possibility of getting infected as the social distancing norm has literally gone for a toss.

Medical Superintendent B&J hospital, Dr. Suhail Ahmad said that they have been taking every possible measure to ensure that the SOPs are followed in spirit.

However, he said that the people visiting the hospital don't follow the guidelines sometimes. "We are here to make them aware regarding SOPs. It is like you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink," he said—(KNO)

# Over A Dozen Medical Shops Sealed In Soura

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Around a dozen medical shops were on Tuesday sealed outside the SK Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) and adjoining localities after the owners and salesmen were found unvaccinated.

Officials said that a special drive was launched by Tehsildar Eidgah, Ishfaq Khan Tuesday to check whether all medical shops' owners and salesmen have been vaccinated.

Khan said that soon after launching the drive from Soura hospital to

Nowshera, around a dozen medical shop owners and salesmen were found unvaccinated, following which the shops were sealed.

"Some of the owners were also fined for violating the norms. Vaccination certificate is mandatory for everyone to run the shops. We won't allow anyone to operate without getting vaccinated," he said.

He added that such drives will continue in the future, and they will ensure that SOPs are followed in letter and spirit.

# DC Sgr Reviews Progress Of 500-Bedded Covid Hospital At Khanmoh

**SRINAGAR:** Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Tuesday chaired a meeting of concerned officers to sort out all the issues to ensure completion of 500-bedded COVID CARE Hospital at Khonmoh within the deadline set by the Lieutenant Governor during his recent visit at the work site in Khonmoh.

Chief Engineer, KPDCL, Ajaz Ahmad Dar, Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, Chief Planning Officer, Srinagar, besides concerned Officers from DRDO, PHE, PDD, FCS&CA, Revenue were present in the meeting.

During the review the project Incharge from DRDO apprised the meeting that work is in full swing and expected to be completed shortly.

The DC asked the officers to take comprehensive measures to ensure that all requisite staff, medical supplies, equipment, diagnostic tools, and other logistics are ready within the timeline.

The DC directed for taking all necessary measures with regard to Housekeeping, Laundry, disposal of Bio-medical and other wastes. He also directed the installation of a fire fighting system at the hospital.

To ensure adequate water supply to the hospital, the DC asked the Ground Water Division to dig up a

dedicated Bore Well in the hospital premises within two days.

The Deputy Commissioner also passed the directions that SMC would ensure Sanitation and Sanitisation in and around the hospital.

The DC Srinagar reiterated that the operationalisation of DRDO's Hospital at Khonmoh would further strengthen efforts against Covid pandemic.

On the occasion, the Chief Engineer KPDCL assured that all possible measures have been taken to ensure reliable and uninterrupted supply of power in the hospital round the clock.

The Medical Superintendent of the hospital also put forth some suggestions for better functioning of the hospital.

Pertinent to mention that the Covid Hospital, Khonmoh has capacity for 125 ICU beds and 375 beds with oxygen and substantially will increase the Covid dedicated bed capacity to ramp up the healthcare infrastructure to effectively deal with the Corona virus pandemic.

In the end DC enjoined upon all the Departments to work in double shifts to meet the deadline fixed by the Lieutenant Governor. He assured DRDO of all support to achieve the intended target.

## 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
- BIJHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

## HIGHWAY STATUS

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

## This Day in History

- 1763 - Pontiac's Rebellion: At what is now Mackinaw City, Michigan, Chippewas capture Fort Michilimackinac by diverting the garrison's attention with a game of lacrosse, then chasing a ball into the fort.
- 1774 - Intolerable Acts: Amendment to original Quartering Act enacted, allowed governor in colonial America to house British soldiers in uninhabited houses, outhouses, barns, or other buildings if suitable quarters not provided.
- 1858 - Donati Comet 1st seen named after its discoverer
- 1875 - Alexander Graham Bell makes first sound transmission
- 1896-Guglielmo Marconi applies to patent the radio, accepted 2 July 1897
- 1910- Pygmies discovered in Dutch New Guinea
- 1949- Transjordan renamed Jordan
- 1955- The USSR and Yugoslavia sign the Belgrade declaration and thus normalize relations between both countries, discontinued since 1948.
- 1964- Lal Bahadur Shastri elected premier of India.
- 1966- US Surveyor 1 lands in Oceanus Procellarum; 1st lunar softlanding
- 1969- Australian aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne slices US destroyer USS Frank E Evans in half, killing 74 (South Vietnam)
- 1976- East Timor People's Assembly accepts annexation by Indonesia
- 1979- John Paul II becomes 1st pope to visit a Communist country(Poland)
- 1979- NASA launches space vehicle S-198
- 1986 Regular TV coverage of US Senate sessions begins
- 1989- 10,000 Chinese soldiers are blocked by 100,000 citizens protecting students demonstrating for democracy in Tiananmen Square, Beijing
- 1996 9th Children's Miracle Network Telethon.
- 1998- The CIH computer virus is discovered in Taiwan.

## From KO Archives

# Historic Crossing Today

Grand Reception Awaits Kashmiri Leaders In Pak

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR -** A delegation of Kashmiri leaders including those from the All Parties Hurriyat Conference - Is all set to begin an unprecedented trip to meet Pakistani and Kashmiri leaders on the other side of the Line of Control that divides the state.

Authorities here on Wednesday issued travel permits to eleven-member delegation of Hurriyat Conference.

Those crossing the LoC include 5 lop Hurriyat leaders besides Shabbir Shah and Yasin Malik of Democratic Freedom Party and the JKLF respectively

"We have got the travel permits...We are all set to leave for Azad Kashmir tomorrow," chairman of the moderate Hurriyat Conference, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq said. He is leading an 11 member delegation comprising of former chairman Maulana Abbas Ansari,chief spokesman Prof Abdul Ghani, executive members Bilal Ghani Lone and Fazal Haq Qureshi besides some general council members.

JKLF chief Yasin Malik who wanted to head a 17 member delegation decided to go alone after Pakistani authorities cleared only five of his nominees.

Meanwhile parties associated with Hurriyat are planning a grand farewell to their leaders.

Hurriyat leaders will be travelling upto Uri in their own vehicles instead of in the peace bus.

Leaders from the Mirwaiz led faction of the Hurriyat Conference will be conveyed in a cavalcade upto the Kaman Post in Uri The cavalcade is scheduled to depart at 9 a.m.

Reports from Pakistan said Hurriyat leaders are being accorded a grand reception on their arrival in Pak controlled Kashmir.

But as D-Day approaches, reservations regarding what the historic event may achieve seem to be mounting on the Pakistan side.

Syed Ali Geelani now heading his own faction of the Hurriyat has refused to accompany the contingent.

Geelani says his faction of the Hurriyat look the decision to register their "resentment" at Pakistan's "deviation from its stand on Kashmir".

The Pakistan-based Muttahida Jehad Council (MJC) has spent the past two days thinking whether or not they should meet the visiting leaders.

Former prime minister of Pakistan-administered Kashmir Sardar Abdul Qayyum said the visit was in "bad taste" because the Kashmiris "were not coming united".

Even Amanullah Khan, Chairman of the pro-independence Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, who has remained consistently cynical of initiatives backed by India or Pakistan, agrees with Sardar Qayyum.

"If they are unable to speak with one voice, they will only confuse the situation further by visiting Pakistan," he said.

"Ultimately, the Kashmiri leadership will be held responsible for the perpetuation of the Kashmir issue."

(Kashmir Observer, 02 June, 2005)

NISSAR NEWS AGENCY

TREHGAM KUPWARA

Books available for J&K, Him. and Chhatisa, NEET, JEE, IAS, IAS KAS, JSSSB General knowledge, Islamic books, Magazines, Stationery and Newspapers Local and National.

For any Advertisement and News. Contact: 9787870243

MEDICAL FACULTY FORUM-MFF

Government Medical College Anantnag

PRESS NOTE

The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Union Territory of J&K Shri, Manoj Sinha Visited the Government medical College Annantnag on 01-06-2021. The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor got first hand detailed information about the various activities regarding patient care especially the management of covid-19 patients.

The President MFF, Dr. nazir Ahmad Wani welcomed the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor and expressed his gratitude for personal Visit to lift the morale of the health care workers of the institution and particularly the faculty and expressed his gratitude for the work done during the current pandemic.

he Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor assured to augment the faculty of the college to keep pace with the teaching and training of students and for the better patient care. He also gave instructions to worthy Principal/Dean to fill up the posts of various categories lying vacant in the Hospital.

President Medical Faculty

Forum GMC Anantnag

DR Nazir Ahmad Wani

INFO

ازینابت قلم آباد

مضمون کاغذات درخواست مخائب عامر محمد ملک ولد عبدالحمید ملک

SRO 294 آڈورہ بمراوعطا کی بیکوارڈ ایمرٹفیکٹ تحت

اشتہار بمراودا آگاہی ہرخاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر پڑا میں زیر کاروئی ہے اس سلسلے میں پڑاری حالت سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل مضموع آڈورہ میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

سرفیکٹ اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کئی عذریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذریا اعتراض ساتھ ایم اندر دفتر پڑا میں پیش کرے معیا وگرنے بعد کو کئی بھی عذریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار sult

ازینابت قلم آباد

مضمون کاغذات درخواست مخائب مدثر احمد وارلد مرحوم اسد اللہ وار ساکنہ

SRO 294 لچھ بمراوعطا کی بیکوارڈ ایمرٹفیکٹ تحت

اشتہار بمراودا آگاہی ہرخاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر پڑا میں زیر کاروئی ہے اس سلسلے میں پڑاری حالت سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل مضموع لچھ میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

سرفیکٹ اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کئی عذریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذریا اعتراض ساتھ ایم اندر دفتر پڑا میں پیش کرے معیا وگرنے بعد کو کئی بھی عذریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار sult

RAHI ADVERTISERS

+91-7006034174

Sarai Dangerpora Srinagar, KMR

Public Notice

The cast of my two Sons namely Aqib Mohi-u-din and Abid Mohi-u-din has wrongly written as Peer while their correct cast is BABA which needs immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office f the Principal Govt High School Baderher within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Gh Mohi-U-Din Baba  
Father of Aqib Mohi-u-din Baba And  
Abid Mohi-u-Din Baba

Sult-r

Abdul Ahad Bhat  
No More

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of Abdul Ahad Bhat former Assistant Director fire and emergency services, father of Galaxy India, Pandach owner Muhammad Altaf Bhat & father of Ab. Rouf Bhat of Super Sales Nowshera Srinagar. Hundreds of people participate in his funeral prayers and the deceased was laid to rest in ancestral graveyard at Saadnora, Bandipora.

CNS Chief Editor Rasheed Rahi along with CNS team offered heartfelt condolences to bereaved family and prayed for peace and highest place in Jannah to deceased soul.

Meanwhile Rasm e Chahrum and congregational prayers of the deceased will be held at Jamia Masjid Pandach 90 Feet Soura Srinagar on Friday and also at ancestral graveyard at Saadnora, Bandipora

Bereaved  
MOB NO: 90182 84111

x



## Israel Rolls Back Army Chief Comments On AP's 'Coffee With Hamas'



Agencies

Israel's defence minister has distanced himself from comments made by his military chief after Israel bombed a Gaza Strip high-rise housing Al Jazeera and The Associated Press offices as well as other news outlets, saying the remarks were not meant to be taken literally.

In an article published on the website of Israel's Channel 12 news over the weekend, the military chief of staff, Lieutenant-General Aviv Kohavi, was quoted as saying "the building was destroyed justly" and he did not have a "gram of regret".

The article claimed Hamas used various floors of the al-Jalaa tower for "significant electronic warfare" meant to disrupt Israeli air force GPS communications.

The article then said Kohavi told "a foreign source" the AP's journalists drank coffee each morning in a cafeteria in the building's entrance with Hamas electronics experts, whether they knew it or not.

The AP called the comments "patently false", noting "there was not even a cafeteria in the building".

Al Jazeera also rejected the Israeli claim that Hamas was active in the building.

"I have been working in this office for more than 10 years and I have never seen anything [suspicious]," Al Jazeera's Gaza correspondent Safwat al-Kahlout said the day after the Israeli air raid levelled the tower.

"I even asked my colleagues if they've seen anything suspicious and they all confirmed to me that they have never seen any military aspects or the fighters even coming in and out," he added. "In our building we have lots of families that we know for more than 10 years, we meet

each other every day on our way in and out to the office."

### 'Portray the atmosphere'

Asked about Kohavi's comments, Defence Minister Benny Gantz told foreign journalists on Monday the military chief was only speaking in figurative terms.

"When the chief of staff talked about it, he was trying to portray the atmosphere, not the actual aspects," Gantz said.

Gantz again alleged "there was Hamas infrastructure in offices that operated from this building".

"It was never claimed that AP journalists were knowingly interacting with Hamas personnel. On the contrary, due to the nature of Hamas' activities, AP journalists had no means of knowing that Hamas personnel were in the building," the military spokesman's office said.

"The chief of the general staff explained the possible circumstances of such an encounter where the terrorist organisation Hamas embeds itself within the civilian population and uses civilian buildings for military purposes."

The Israeli army gave occupants of the building one hour to evacuate before the May 15 air raid. No one was injured, but the high-rise tower was flattened into a pile of rubble.

Al Jazeera and AP said the outlets had no indication of a Hamas presence in the building and were never warned of any possible presence before that day. The news organisations called for an independent investigation and urged Israel to make public its intelligence.

Gantz said Israel has shared its intelligence with the US government. But he indicated that Israel has no intention of making the information public, saying it did not want to divulge its sources.

Commenting on the bombing of al-Jalaa building, Al Jazeera's acting Director-General Mostefa Souag, said: "We call on the international community to condemn such barbaric actions and targeting of journalists and we demand an immediate international action to hold Israel accountable for its deliberate targeting of journalists and the media institutions."

## Israeli Tourists Flock To Yemen's Socotra Island: Report



KO Web Desk

**SANAA:** Authorities here have condemned a recent move by the United Arab Emirates to fly Israeli tourists to the strategic island of Socotra on Emirati visas. Ansarallah led Yemeni Tourism Ministry said in a statement issued on Monday that the UAE's measure violates international law, given that Socotra is a Yemeni island occupied by the Saudi-led coalition, Saba Net news agency reported.

"The transfer of tourists to the Socotra Island reveals the plans and programs of the aggressor forces, which are in line with the Zionist schemes to dominate Yemeni islands as well as the steps towards normalization with the regime," it said.

Two weeks earlier, Yemeni sources said the UAE is continuing to operate weekly direct flights and tours to Socotra without authorization from the government.

Hundreds of foreign tourists have arrived on the archipelago over the past few days using visas granted to them by Abu Dhabi, these reports added.

Images of foreign tourists have circulated recently across social media, with many activists claiming most are Israeli. Reports emerged last month after an image purporting to show a group of Israeli tourists accompanied by Emirati security officers and their assistants on the island.

The development came more than eight months after the UAE established full diplomatic rela-

tions with the Tel Aviv in a deal brokered by former US president Donald Trump.

Home to some 60,000 people, Socotra overlooks the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait, a main shipping route that connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. It has a unique ecosystem and been listed by UNESCO as a world natural heritage site.

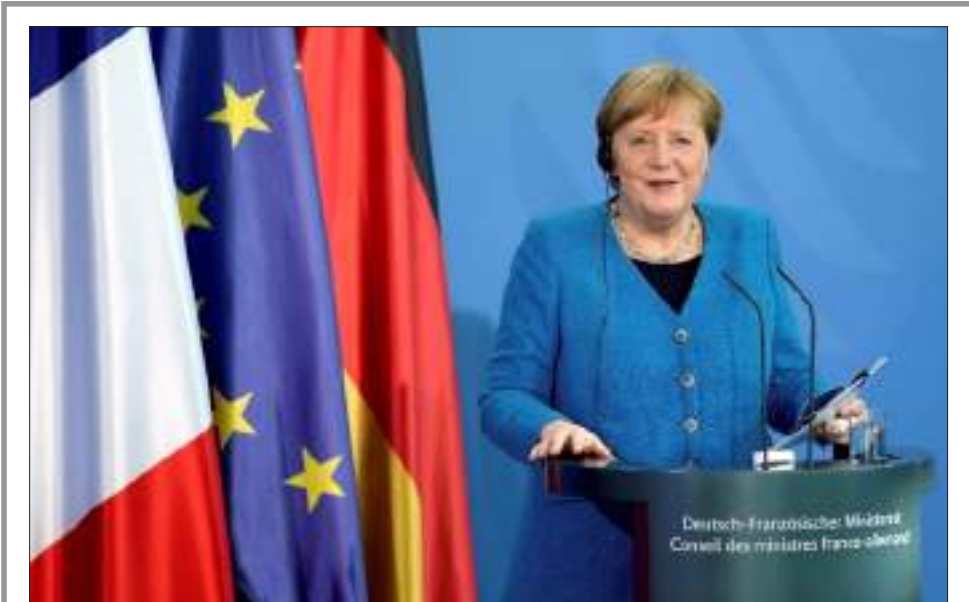
Last June, the UAE-backed separatists of the so-called Southern Transitional Council [STC] took control of the resource-rich island in a move described as a "coup" by the regime of former Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi.

Now, the Emiratis have a military base in Socotra that is used to collect intelligence on maritime traffic in the Bab el-Mandeb and the Gulf of Aden. Moreover, they are reportedly working with the 'Israelis' to set up spy bases on the Yemeni island.

The occupation of Socotra came two months after the UAE-backed separatists broke with once-allied Saudi-sponsored pro-Hadi militants in Yemen, saying they would establish a self-ruled administration in the war-torn country's southern regions.

The infighting has dealt a blow to the Riyadh-led military coalition, which has been engaged in a military campaign against Yemen since March 2015 with the aim of reinstalling Hadi in Sanaa.

The Western-sponsored bombing campaign has killed tens of thousands of Yemenis and plunged the impoverished state into what the UN says is the world's worst humanitarian crisis.



GERMAN CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL ADDRESSES a joint press conference with the French President as part of a virtual Plenary Session of the Franco-German Council of Ministers in Berlin, on May 31. — AFP

## US Used Danish Cables To Spy On Merkel, Others: Media

Agencies

**COPENHAGEN:** France warned on Monday that alleged US spying on European allies using Danish underwater cables would be "extremely serious" if confirmed, as questions mounted over whether Denmark knew what the US was doing.

In an investigative report on Sunday, Danish public broadcaster Danmarks Radio (DR) and other European media outlets said the US National Security Agency (NSA) had eavesdropped on Danish underwater internet cables from 2012 to 2014 to spy on top politicians in Germany, Sweden, Norway and France.

The NSA was able to access text messages, telephone calls and internet traffic including searches, chats and messaging services — including those of Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel, then-foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and then-opposition leader Peer Steinbrück, DR said. "It is extremely serious," France's Europe Minister Clement Beaune told France Info radio.

"We need to see if our partners in the EU, the Danes, have committed errors or faults in their cooperation with Ameri-

can services," he said.

"Between allies, there must be trust, a minimal cooperation, so these potential facts are serious," said the minister.

He said the facts must first "be verified" and then "conclusions drawn in terms of cooperation". Denmark's neighbours also demanded explanations.

"It's unacceptable if countries which have close allied cooperation feel the need to spy on one another," Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg told public broadcaster NRK. She said Norway had asked Denmark "for all the information they have".

Swedish Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist said he had been "in contact with Denmark's defence minister to ask if Danish platforms have been used to spy on Swedish politicians."

A German government spokesman said that Berlin was "in contact with all relevant national and international interlocutors to get clarification".

DR said the NSA had taken advantage of a surveillance collaboration with Denmark's military intelligence unit FE to eavesdrop.

But it was unclear whether Denmark knew at the time that the US was using the cables to

spy on Denmark's neighbours.

Defence Minister Trine Bramsen, who took over the defence portfolio in June 2019, has neither confirmed nor denied DR's report, telling only that "systematic eavesdropping of close allies is unacceptable". US eavesdropping on European leaders is, however, not new.

In 2013, former NSA contractor Edward Snowden revealed thousands of classified documents exposing the vast US surveillance put in place after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Among other things, the documents showed the US government was spying on its own citizens and carrying out widespread tapping worldwide, including of Merkel's mobile phone. However, if the Danish-US spying is confirmed, it went on during and after the 2013 Snowden affair.

In 2014, following the Snowden scandal, a secret internal working group at FE began looking into whether the NSA had used the Danish-US spying collaboration — called XKeyscore — to spy on Denmark's allies, DR said.

The group's report, codenamed Operation Dunhammer, was presented to top FE management in May 2015. What happened after that is not yet known.

## Saudi Minister Defends Volume Limit On Mosque Loudspeakers

Agencies

Saudi Arabia's Islamic affairs minister is defending a contentious order restricting the volume of mosque loudspeakers, saying it was prompted by complaints about excessive noise.

In a major policy last week in a country home to the holiest Muslim sites, the Islamic affairs ministry said the speakers should be set at no more than one-third of their maximum volume.

The order, which also limited the use of loudspeakers mainly to issue the call to prayer rather than broadcasting full sermons, triggered a conservative backlash on social media.

Translation: Where is the disturbance in this! It brings nothing but peace and comfort. Give us back loudspeakers in mosques.

Islamic Affairs Minister Abdulatif al-Sheikh said on Monday the order was in response



to citizens' complaints that the loud volume was disturbing children as well as the elderly.

"Those who want to pray do not need to wait for ... the imam's" call to prayer, al-Sheikh said in a video published by state television.

"They should be at the mosque beforehand," he added. Several television channels also broadcast prayers and Quran recitals, Sheikh said, suggesting the loudspeakers served a limited purpose.

## In Post-Pandemic Europe, Migrants Will Face Digital Fortress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

As the world begins to travel again, Europe is sending migrants a loud message: Stay away! Greek border police are firing bursts of deafening noise from an armoured truck over the frontier into Turkey. Mounted on the vehicle, the long-range acoustic device, or "sound cannon," is the size of a small TV set but can match the volume of a jet engine.

It's part of a vast array of physical and experimental new digital barriers being installed and tested during the quiet months of the coronavirus pandemic at the 200-kilometer (125-mile) Greek border with Turkey to stop people entering the European Union illegally.

A new steel wall, similar to recent construction on the U.S.-Mexico border, blocks commonly-used crossing points along the Evros River that separates the two countries.

Nearby observation towers are being fitted with long-range cameras, night vision, and multiple sensors. The data will be sent to control centers to flag suspicious movement using artificial intelligence analysis.

"We will have a clear pre-border" picture of what's happening," Police Maj. Dimosthenis Kamargios, head of the region's border guard authority, told the Associated Press.

The EU has poured 3 billion euros (\$3.7 billion) into security tech research following the refugee crisis in 2015-16, when more than 1 million people - many escaping wars in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan - fled to Greece and



on to other EU countries.

The automated surveillance network being built on the Greek-Turkish border is aimed at detecting migrants early and deterring them from crossing, with river and land patrols using searchlights and long-range acoustic devices.

Key elements of the network will be launched by the end of the year, Kamargios said. "Our task is to prevent migrants from entering the country illegally. We need modern equipment and tools to do that." Researchers at universities around Europe, working with private firms, have developed futuristic surveillance and verification technology, and tested more than a dozen projects at Greek borders.

Al-powered lie detectors and virtual border-guard interview bots have been piloted, as well as efforts to integrate satellite data with footage from drones on land, air, sea and underwater. Palm scanners record the unique vein pattern in a person's hand to use as a biometric identifier, and the makers of live camera reconstruction technology promise to erase foliage virtually, exposing people hiding near border areas.

Testing has also been conducted in Hungary, Latvia and elsewhere along the eastern EU perimeter.

## Hamas Ready For 'Rapid' Prisoner Exchange Talks With Israel



Agencies

**GAZA CITY:** Hamas is open to "indirect and rapid" negotiations on a prisoner exchange following its bloody military escalation with Israel in May, the Islamist military group said on Monday.

"There is now a real opportunity to move this file forward," Yahya Sinwar said in response to a query on a potential prisoner exchange.

"We are ready for indirect, urgent and rapid negotiations to conclude the case."

The head of Hamas' political wing in the Gaza Strip — a Palestinian enclave home to some two million people — delivered the statement on the sidelines of a visit by Egyptian intelligence chief Abbas Kamel.

Kamel is working to solidify the ceasefire Cairo brokered between Israel and Hamas that went into effect on May 21, after 11 days of Palestinian militant rocket fire and Israeli air strikes.

The aerial bombardments on Gaza killed 254 Palestinians,

including 66 children, health officials said.

Rockets and other fire from Gaza claimed 12 lives in Israel, including one child and an Arab-Israeli teenager, medics said. A Hamas official, who requested anonymity, said the Gaza talks focused on three points: turning the ceasefire into a longer-term truce, a prisoner exchange, and the reconstruction of Gaza.

Sinwar said Hamas had "no objection" to talks on reconstruction and an end to Israel's decade-long siege of Gaza "moving forward in parallel" with negotiations on a prisoner exchange.

"However, we categorically reject any link between these two aspects," he added, without specifying how many prisoners could be released.

In Cairo on Sunday, Israeli foreign minister Gabi Ashkenazi raised the issue of two soldiers thought to be dead and two other Israelis believed to be detained in Gaza.

Since Israel's 2014 invasion of the Gaza Strip, the Islamist group has held the bodies of Israeli soldiers Oron Shaul and Hadar Goldin, although Hamas has never confirmed their deaths.

Hamas is also believed to be holding two Israeli citizens who entered Gaza alone and whose families say they have mental health issues. Israel is meanwhile holding more than 5,000 Palestinians in its jails.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Christie's To Sell Isaac Newton's Notes For Greatest Work

**London:** Handwritten notes that show one of history's greatest scientific minds in action are going up for auction in London.

Pages containing Isaac Newton's jotted revisions to his masterwork, the "Principia," are expected to sell next month for between 600,000 pounds and 900,000 pounds (USD 850,000 and USD 1.3 million), auctioneer Christie's said Tuesday.

Published in 1687, Newton's "Philosophiæ naturalis principia mathematica" — "Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy" — set out the laws of gravitation and motion and is considered a scientific watershed. A first edition of the book sold at auction for USD 3.7 million in 2016.

Thomas Venning, head of books and manuscripts at Christie's in London, said the book "reinvented our understanding of the



universe." The page and a half of notes for a planned second edition include comments and diagrams by Scottish mathematician and astronomer David Gregory. The two scientists met and corresponded while Newton worked on revising the "Principia" in the 1690s.

Venning said that when he was working on the revisions, Newton was "fizzing with the energy of one of the greatest minds the world has ever seen." "And we can see that at work, the speed with which he's

writing, the ferment of ideas coming out from his pen," he said.

Keith Moore, head librarian at the Royal Society — the scientists' club where Newton was president in the 18th century — said Gregory "kept up a written dialogue with Newton. He met Newton and that partnership, almost, between the two of them, resulted in refining Newton's thinking." Newton eventually gave up on the revisions, but ultimately produced a new edition in 1713. The document will go under the hammer at Christie's in London on July 8.

"What a collector in the autograph world is looking for is the greatest minds in history, talking about their greatest achievements," Venning said.

"It's very, very rare to have that combination. And that's what you have in this particular manuscript." (AP)

## Rare 48-Kilo Atlantic Croaker Sold For Rs 72 Lakh In Pakistan

**ISLAMABAD:** A Pakistani fisherman has sold a rare 48-kg Atlantic croaker fish for a whopping Rs 72-lakh (USD 46,706), in one of the costliest seafood transactions in the country, according to a media report on Monday.

Boatsman Sajid Haji Ababakar caught fish off the coast of Gwadar in Balochistan province on Sunday, the Dawn newspaper reported.

An auction was held and the highest bid was settled at Rs 86.4 lakh.

"However, we settled for Rs 72 lakh following our tradition of discounts," Ababakar said.

Deputy Director for Fisheries, Gwadar, Ahmed Nadeem said he had never seen a fish fetch a such a high price.

The Atlantic croaker is in great demand in Europe and China for its meat and use of skin and



bones in medical sciences.

"Some fish are expensive because of their meat. But this species (large croaker fish) has a high demand because parts of it are known for their use in medicine and surgery," said Abdul Rahim Baloch, marine biologist and Assistant Director, Environment Development Authority, Gwadar.

Similarly, a fisherman caught a large croaker last week off the coast of Gwadar. The fish was sold at Rs 7.8 lakh. The Atlantic Croaker usually weighs about 1.2 kg. -PTI



## LG Orders Change In Policy After Girl's Video Requesting Lesser Homework Goes Viral

Press Trust of India

**SRINAGAR:** A six-year-old girl's video message to Prime Minister Narendra Modi complaining of a huge burden of homework through online education not only won hearts on the internet but triggered a policy change in Jammu and Kashmir to lighten the pressure on school kids.

In a short video posted on Twitter that went viral, the girl appeals to the Prime Minister to ease the burden of homework on school kids. The video has so far garnered nearly 3.3 lakh views and nearly 19,000 likes catching the attention of Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

The L-G has directed the School Education department to come out with a policy in 48 hours to ease the burden of homework on school students.

Assalamualaikum Modi sahib, is how the girl starts her video message to the PM as she complains of her teachers giving her too much homework through Zoom classes.



My classes are from 10 am till 2 pm... This much homework is for students of Class 6, 7, 10. Why are kids given this much homework Modi sahab? she says.

The cute video moved Sinha who described it as a very adorable complaint.

He directed the department to come out with a policy within 48 hours to lighten the burden of homework on school kids.

Very adorable complaint. Have directed the school education department to come out with a policy within 48 hours to lighten burden of homework on school kids. Childhood innocence is gift of God and their days should be lively, full of joy and bliss, the L-G said on Twitter.

## FCS&CA Asks Beneficiaries To Obtain Receipt From Sale Points RTI Movement Hails Decision

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Tuesday asked the beneficiaries to obtain receipt from their respective Government Sale Centre/ Fair Price Shop while receiving ration from these stores.

In a press release, the Department said that in case any store-keeper is reluctant to provide the receipt the same shall be brought to the notice of this Department on toll free No. 1800-180-7011 or through online mode on the official grievance portal i.e. feastjk.gov.in/jkgrams.

Meanwhile Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement hailed the Govt's fresh advisory to the consumers.

In a statement, Chairman RTI Movement Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat said that fresh advisory was much awaited as store-keepers were not using the point of sale machines not they provided printed receipts to

majority of the consumers.

He appreciated Commissioner Secretary FCS & CA Zubair Ahmad & Director FCS & CA Kashmir Dr Abdul Salam for the fresh advisory. He urged upon them to ensure people are made aware of this through electronic and print media.

"Majority of people in J&K don't know what a point of sale machine is as many store-keepers don't even display it on ration stores and getting printed receipts is like dream for consumers. We have been demanding this for last more than a year now. If all the ration stores start using point of same machines and give printed receipts the privilege and loot of Govt ration can be stopped & the poor consumers won't have to pay extra money for getting subsidised or free ration. Govt must create mass awareness among people to demand receipts from ration storekeepers," said Dr Raja Muzaffar.

## VOID Expresses Grief Over Demise Of MK Bhan

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Veterans of Information Department (VOID), a group of retired officers/officials of Information Department, have expressed grief and sorrow over the demise of M K Bhan, one of their colleagues, who breathed his last on Monday May 31, 2021 in Super Specialty Hospital Jammu, after a brief illness.

The group while recalling the past they have worked together with Bhan described him one among the most dedicated, hard-working and honest colleagues.

Paying tributes to departed

colleague, they said "we lost a good friend and affectionate colleague". " May God grant eternal peace to departed soul and courage to bereaved family to bear this loss" they prayed.

K B Jandial, the former Director Information, while extending sympathies, on behalf of the group, with Ajay Bhan the son of Shir MK Bhan and bereaved family said that Mahraj Krishan was industrious and diligent official, who always worked with highest degree of efficiency and dedication during his service tenure in Information Department. "The Group equally shares this grief" he added.

## ...Covid-19 'Recoveries Not Deaths Need Promotion'

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The second wave of Covid-19 has infiltrated more families than before. The health workers have been on their toes, working odd hours, ever since the first wave hit the nation; the pandemic has also had an emotional toll on them and sometimes drained their strength.

Senior Staff Nurse and Incharge Critical Care Unit for Covid at Government Medical College Jammu, Ajeet Kour shares her professional experience with great optimism, despite facing many hardships in striking a balance between duty and obligations towards family.

"Every day we witness miracles. A number of patients recover daily which hardly find any mention in public discourse and media coverage. I wish these stories should also be projected so that people's faith in the health system is restored. If there are some deaths, there are maximum recoveries also."

Ajeet Kour says that people need to consult a doctor immediately after testing positive. 'More lives can be saved if people get medical help a week in advance', she claims. She says, 'Our efforts have led an 82 year old lady to recover from Covid. Another woman got well after spending 20 days in our ward and when she left, she distributed chocolates among us. There are numerous such untold and uplifting stories'.

"The only regret I have is that a lot of young lives are being lost due to delay in seeking medical help. Young deaths leave an extremely negative impression on the morale of the society as well as of our medical fraternity."

When asked how she ex-



pects Covid to end, Ajeet Kour said, 'Covid won't end unless the society cooperates and takes up the challenge, the people take vaccination and adopt Covid appropriate behaviour'. She also expects that the media starts projecting more positive stories around the pandemic, so that patients are not discouraged from approaching a hospital in early stages of the infection.

Ajeet Kour works seven-day shifts every alternate week at the Government Medical College. She says that her work day ranges between 8-12 hours on an average. 'When I am back home, I make sure I cook for my family as much as I can. I also make sure to wear a mask at all times during my stay at home. I don't want to risk my family. I also encourage friends and family to shop online instead of in-person', she told.

Ajeet Kour has two young kids and they are responsibly handling their affairs. Resentfully, Ajeet says, 'I don't have time to attend to my children. They study by themselves on their smartphones. I just wish I could restrict their use of smartphones'.

Meanwhile, the Healthcare warrior also shared her personal ordeal and recalls, 'One month back, when the second wave of Covid-19 was at its peak, my husband contracted covid infection and tested positive in RAT test. For the first week, he was fine and I took good care of him. At the end of the week, just when his condition worsened I was expected to join duty'.

The next week, he was on oxygen support for three to four days. Only my kids were there to take care of him. God knows how my kids managed everything, especially their meals.'

The resentful Ajeet Kour continues, 'On one hand I wasn't able to help my husband and on the other, I was put in quarantine for a week before resuming my duty at GMC. So practically I was not able to help a soul during that period, neither my husband, nor my patients. I don't think I've ever felt so helpless!'

Recalling further, Ajeet Kour said, 'Those days were the hardest for me. I called home every hour. Some days were more hectic and I could only call after three to four hours'.

**“EVERY DAY WE WITNESS MIRACLES. A NUMBER of patients recover daily which hardly find any mention in public discourse and media coverage. I wish these stories should also be projected so that people's faith in the health system is restored. If there are some deaths, there are maximum recoveries also.”**

## Covid: Budgam's Recovery Rate Improves To 82 Percent

### DC B'pra Urges People To Adhere To Covid SOPs

**BUDGAM:** Deputy Commissioner Budgam S.A. Mirza Tuesday said that 9914 patients have recovered in the district. He said the recovery rate has reached 82%. This is a good indicator as the daily reported cases have gone down. He said that the positivity rate has also gone down enormously and it stands now at 4.05%, however, still there is a 34% positivity rate reported from outside containment areas, Mirza said.

He said efforts from all concerned have been doubled in order to tackle Covid-19 pandemic. He further said that Mobilisation of General public has been taken on aggressively through constant awareness methods.

Regarding relaxation, the DC clarified that adherence of all guidelines and SOPs, markets in the district shall follow rotation pattern and 33% shops shall remain open with one open shop out of three on alternate basis.

However, stand alone shops shall remain open in 2 session daily. Regarding stand alone shops located in rural areas, he said they shall remain open daily. He said that there shall be complete Corona curfew on Saturdays and Sundays, however, shopkeepers affiliated with essential service trade as already notified are exempted from the restriction provided he added.

Meanwhile Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmad on Tuesday called for strict adherence to the Covid-19 SOPs amid relaxation in covid lock down.

In a weekly briefing to the Media regarding the Management of COVID-19 in the district, Dr Owais said ease in restrictions should not be taken as victory over virus as fight against the pandemic is still going on and there is no room for any sort of laxity. He said the infection is still there and we need to be extra cautious now to avoid getting infected by the disease.

He urged people to follow the COVID-19 guidelines and adopt the covid appropriate behaviour strictly. He said the administration has relaxed the lockdown and allowed opening of shops on a rational basis to avoid large crowds in the market. He appealed to people to visit markets only in case of emergencies and avoid unnecessary visits to the markets.

DC said that the District Administration is working very hard in fighting Covid-19 pandemic and people of the district have extended their cooperation due to which visible decline has been witnessed during the past few days.

Dr Owais said that there are 898 active covid positive patients as on date, out of which only 69 patients are in hospital isolation. He said the administration conducts 1500 to 2000 tests daily and witness decrease in the positive cases from 19 percent in May to below 5 percent today.

## Attempt To Black Market Govt Rice Foiled, Two Arrested

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday foiled an attempt of black marketing of government rice and arrested two persons in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir.

A police spokesman said a huge quantity of Food Corporation of India (FCI) government rice was seized from two vehicles.

Acting on specific information, a police party intercepted two vehicles at a checkpoint on the national highway near Hanjiwera area of Pattan in north Kashmir district, the spokesman said.

He said during the search of the vehicles, 366 bags of FCI rice were recovered.

As per the documents produced by the drivers, the rice was loaded from FCI Godown Kralhar and was meant to be transported to Kulangam Kupwara, but, instead of taking the rice there, they were on their way to Srinagar for black marketing, the spokesman said.

The drivers - Mohammad Jamal Hajam and Jahangir Ahmad Bhat - were arrested and the vehicles were also seized.

A case has been registered and investigation in the matter has been initiated, the spokesman said, adding, community members are requested to share information regarding black marketing and hoarding in their areas so that strict action can be initiated against the accused.

## Adv Khan Emphasises On Implementation Of Social Sector Schemes In Kulgam Reviews Covid Mitigation Efforts In Kulgam



Observer News Service

**KULGAM:** Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Ahmad Khan, Tuesday had a comprehensive review of Covid mitigation measures being implemented by the district administration in Kulgam.

Advisor visited the District Hospital Kulgam and inspected the patient care facilities being extended there to Covid and Non Covid patients. He exhorted upon the hospital management to put in extra efforts towards making the patients feel comfortable and safe. He said that the whole medical fraternity has a special role to play in these times of crisis and the society will always remain indebted to their selfless contribution towards fighting this dreaded virus.

Advisor inspected the status of newly commissioned 1000 LPM oxygen plant and reviewed its functioning briefly. He also took stock of availability of oxygen in wards and availability of Covid care and other essential medicines there.

Deputy Commissioner briefed the Advisor about the overall functioning of the hospital informing that there is availability of 120 oxygenated beds at district hospital besides adequate cylinders and concentrators are also in stock.

Advisor appreciated healthcare workers for their role in fighting and saving human lives. He said that the government has augmented health care facilities especially in the wake of Covid and it must be their prime concern to make optimum use of the same for saving the humanity.

Later, Adviosr chaired a meeting of officers and reviewed development scenario of the district with emphasis on implementation of various social sector schemes.

Deputy Commissioner through a power point presentation presented overall development profile of the district highlighting the physical and financial achievements recorded under various projects. He informed that 6 projects had been taken up in the district under

**D**EPUTY Commissioner briefed the Advisor about the overall functioning of the hospital informing that there is availability of 120 oxygenated beds at district hospital besides adequate cylinders and concentrators are also in stock.

PMDD including NTPHC Srandoo, IPD block at District Hospital, SDH D H Pora, SDH Qaimoo and indoor stadium at Qaimoo, of which, MCH Kulgam and PHC Srandoo have been completed while the work on rest of the projects is in progress.

While reviewing implementation of social sector schemes, Advisor stressed upon the officers to sensitize the people about various welfare schemes tailored for their socio-economic empowerment. He laid emphasis on saturation of centrally sponsored and individual beneficiary oriented schemes.

Later, several delegations including transporters association, traders association, fruit association, Awkaaf Committee members and tribal delegations called on the Advisor and put forth their issues and demands for early redressal.

Earlier, Advisor Khan visited Sports Stadium Kulgam and inspected the proposed site identified for construction of Indoor stadium there. He also felicitated the players who have won medals and awards in different sports categories during various sports events held at the UT level.

## Forest Department Contests Report, Terms It Misleading

### Terms It Incorrect, Misleading

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The J&K Forest Development Corporation Budgam, has contested the news item carried by some newspapers on May 29, and termed it incorrect and misleading.

While giving clarification on the contents of the news, the Divisional Manager, J&K Forest Development Corporation Ltd, Pir Panjal West Extension, Budgam, Parvaiz Ahmad Parry, in a communique, put the facts of the story on record in light of the points raised by the author Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat.

The officer has stated that the concerns expressed by Dr Raja might be relevant, however, the context is factually incorrect as well as out rightly misleading.

He said "As an important stakeholder in the extraction, transportation; distribution of timber business for the Government, I intend to debunk some

of the factual inaccuracies and myths being propagated in the opinion piece written by Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat. The first misconception being propagated by Dr Raja is the idea that the Forest Department and Forest Development Corporation Ltd (FDCL in short) are at loggerheads on account of delegation of responsibility of distribution of timber from former to later from the year 2016 onwards. Besides, another notion has been expressed by the author that Forest Department senior officials and field staff are apprehensive that such an arrangement would lead to crises.

"To this, I intend to inform the readers that both Forest Department as well as Forest Development Corporation Ltd (FDCL) are professional institutions of the Government and both the agencies work in tandem to achieve policy goals of the Government. FDCL having the sole objective and expertise of extraction of timber and its final disposal to achieve optimum revenue for the UT exchequer while meeting the legitimate requirement of timber of people living in vicinity of forests as

well as those living far from it, has professional done so for the past five years and no crises has taken place as alleged in the article."

He said that it is to inform readers that FDCL (erstwhile SFC) was already providing timber in erstwhile "C Zone aka urban areas" prior to 2016, before the whole responsibility of extraction and distribution of timber was delegated to FDCL from the Forest Department. Forest Department being the custodian of the forests is fully involved in the extraction activities of the FDCL and regulating legal transportation as well as sale of timber stocks by FDCL.

"The benefits of present system are multifarious. One that Forest Department at field level is now more involved with its core responsibilities viz. protection of forests from illicit smuggling and sale of green timber, curbing land encroachment by vested interests, afforestation and reforestation activities and most recent & important being implementation of the Forest Rights Act, which seems to be core area of concern of the author.

Two, he said, that all extraction, transportation and sale activities of FDCL are happening under the oversight of Forest Department, which is bolstering "checks and balances" mechanism in a Government setting. Besides Forest Department de-facto if not de-jure is the parent Department for all practical purposes and FDCL is a sister wing of Forest Department. Most of the senior officers as well as mid-level officers at the helm of affairs in FDCL including this author come from Forest Department & allied wings which itself should debunk this myth of power tussle between Forest Department and FDCL. Three of my Range Managers working in Budgam FDCL Division also come from the Forest Department. Dr Raja has further stated this concern that people living near to demarcated forests are being deprived of subsidised timber.

"To that I would like to educate the readers by constructing a hypothetical scenario. Lets say, there are two persons viz. person "A" and person "B". Let's assume person "A" is a Senior Lecturer who lives near to the demarcated forests and person "B" is also a Senior Lecturer who lives far away from a demarcated forest such as a semi-urban (village) or an urban area. Should person "A" be given special subsidy on timber than person "B" on account of former being living adjacent to demarcated forest? Since, both person "A" and person "B" are in a relatively same socio-economic bracket, the answer to the question both from social justice and economic perspective has to be "Nay!". That is why the Government in its wisdom has done away with erstwhile "Zonation System" for the purpose of distribution of timber at subsidized rates.

"Now AAY ration card holders who are poorest of the poor are receiving 50% subsidy over the average auction rates of timber irrespective of their relative position from the demarcated forests. Which implies, both type of consumers, those living next to forest as well as far from it receive timber at uniform subsidized rates depending on their socio-economic standing. Rest of the consumers also receive timber at subsidized rates viz. 15% below the average auction rates. Besides, readers should keep it in mind that timber as a natural resource is not a freebee and it has to be

utilized in a manner keeping in view the common good of the all in consideration be it those living adjacent to forests or far away from it."

He said realisation of revenue for the Government is also one of the important factors in the process. Besides, Forest Department can provide timber on case by case basis under Kashmir Forest Notice or Jammu Forest Notice for repairing of log huts (kothas) or for construction purposes as mandated in the rules. However, indiscriminate exploitation of forests for construction of log huts (kothas) or timber will be detrimental to the overall ecology of this fragile Himalayan ecosystem. Dr Raja has further stated in his opinion piece that timber is lying in Palmaidan and Yumarg meadows of Budgam district for the past three years or so, which is factually incorrect. Both these Timber Depots fall under the administrative and functional jurisdiction of this author and I am the best source of information on account as a representative on the Government. Relying on mere folklore or hearsay is a wrong precedent in journalistic propriety

that one should be very careful of.

"The timber lying in these Timber Depots is under various stages of transportation after regulatory permission is given by the DFO Territorial to FDCL (remember "checks and balances"?) after verification of every cft having been extracted from the forest by FDCL by the Forest Department so that every cft is accounted for. Dr Raja has further relied on folklore while stating in his opinion piece that timber is being transported from these Timber Depots to Ganderbal, Srinagar and Baramullah. The fact is that timber is first supplied to Concessional Timber Sale Depots (CTSDs) of Budgam District commensurate to demand in such Depots and rest of the stocks are supplied to FDCL auction depots, which are situated at Shalteng/PC Srinagar to feed timber to open market. None of the stocks have ever been transported to Ganderbal or Baramulla Districts en-masse since it is financially imprudent to do so, though there is no bar on supplying timber to other Districts as per the timber requirement in such districts."



## KASHMIR OBSERVER

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of the  
Kashmir Observer LLP  
Published from: # 5- Boulevard, Srinagar-190001  
Printed at: KT Press Pvt. Ltd, Rangreth Ind Area, Srinagar.  
RNI Registration No: 69503/98  
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16  
Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider  
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja  
Switchboard: (0194) 2106304  
Editorial: (0194) 2502327  
Email editorial: editor@kashmirobsrver.net

### K O V I E W

## Covid-hit economy

India's GDP for the financial year 2020-21 has contracted 7.3 percent, according to the provisional estimates of GDP released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Monday. This despite the fact that the GDP had marginally risen in the January-March quarter (Q4) grew by 1.6 percent, and the October-December quarter had reported a growth of 0.4 percent. The reason for the deep contraction has been the abysmal performance of the economy in the April-June and the July-September quarters when the GDP plunged by 24.4 percent and 7.3 percent respectively. This was a result of a strict nationwide lockdown due to the novel coronavirus. Among the other industries, the contraction was visible in trade, hotels, transport and communications.

With the first quarter of 2021 once again witnessing the curbs on the movement, the GDP is set to suffer one more drastic contraction. The businesses have come to a halt, some sectors like tourism completely so. The union government could thus hardly afford to go for yet another lockdown. At the same time, it can't afford to let its guard down as far as the strict implementation of the measures to prevent the Covid-19 from spreading deeper into the society. It is a tightrope walk for the government. It has far fewer options as far as enforcing strict measures to arrest the spread of Covid-19. And it also has little fiscal space to pump more money into the economy to help resuscitate it. So, it is unlikely that the economy will get back on track anytime soon.

This means that the lakhs of jobs that have been lost will not be created in the near future. Last year, the lockdown triggered a flight of lakhs of labourers from the cities to their distant villages. This scene may not have replicated this year but the jobs have once again been lost in large numbers. And they are not coming back anytime soon. For that to happen, the economy will have to kickstart again. And this, in turn, will not be possible on a sustainable basis until the country is vaccinated. This would mean probably a wait of three to six more months. Perhaps even more, considering the vaccines are in short supply. Until the vaccination takes place, the Government will need to display some ingenuity to keep the number of new Covid-19 cases at a manageable level. And what's more important, ensure that the economy is not halted further.

### O T H E R O P I N O N

## The revival of the book fair gives refuge to the post-lockdown mind

The pressure to read more is always on. Estimates suggest that the most avid bookworm will finish fewer than 5,000 works before they die, and only if they live past 80. To put that into perspective, it would take the most voracious reader 140 lifetimes to finish what some believe to have been the 700,000 works contained in Egypt's ancient Library of Alexandria.

Surveys show that in recent years fewer and fewer people were up to the task. According to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in 2017 only 53 per cent of people in the US, the world's largest book market, said they had read at least one book for pleasure during the previous year, down by almost 10 per cent since 1992. In 2018, Americans were spending on average under 16 minutes per day of their leisure time reading, a decrease of six minutes since 2013. Publishers had good reason to worry.

Then came the pandemic, which continues to devastate industries globally – but not so for the world of reading. In 2020, print works were sold at the highest levels in a decade, according to BookScan, an organisation that analyses trends in the publishing sector. Ebooks and audiobooks also saw an increase in purchases. Fiction sales in the UK rose by 16 per cent. Earlier this year, Bloomsbury, the publishing house responsible for the Harry Potter novels, spoke of seeing a "ray of sunshine" after it was forced to increase its profit estimates for the second time in 2021.

The downside of all this reading, of course, is that it is a symptom of the solitude imposed by global lockdowns. While books themselves were flying off warehouse shelves and into virtual shopping carts, events that brought people together to celebrate them were cancelled. As coronavirus restrictions ease, however, the social element of bookishness may be on the rebound, reinvigorated by the pandemic boost to the market. Abu Dhabi Book Fair, for example, is happening next week – a hybrid of digital and in-person events with strict safety measures. It is one of the first to be held in person for publishers across the world since the pandemic began.

Alongside talks from some of the world's best known authors, there will be conversations around how the industry should adapt to its newfound success, perhaps even the relevance of physical book fairs in the post-pandemic world; after all, the sector saw this boom at a time when shops were closed, book fairs cancelled and the industry moved online.

But despite good sales, it is too early to say the pandemic was only positive for the industry. The UN estimates that Covid-19 has led to a shocking 100 million more children lacking basic reading skills. No publisher should celebrate if the education of its future market is in jeopardy. The industry should play its part in helping young readers make up for lost ground.

Book fairs and other in-person experiences can be part of the solution. Abu Dhabi's event has space dedicated to educational activities, with children able to learn from a global mix of authors and illustrators. Being immersed in such a physical environment is one way we can get child literacy back on track. And book fairs will still have much to offer established readers. The many different events and conversations at literary gatherings show us what is going on in the industry and among fellow enthusiasts, knowledge that helps us make informed decisions about the books we take home. Pandemic or no pandemic, we need to be selective if we can only read a few thousand works in our lifetime.

*The National News*



House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Hikmah) in Baghdad, 737 CE

# The Incoherence of 'Ethical Objectivism'

Notes on the Muslim Condition and Cavalier Attempts to Understand Islam

Wajahat Qazi

IN the nature of a book promotion, that took the form of an interview carried by Kashmir Observer, 'Gap Between Muslim World and the Rest is Growing Wider', Mustafa Akyol – formerly a journalist in Turkey and now a Fellow at the Cato Institute- rattles off key observations from his book, 'Reopening Muslim Minds: A Return to Freedom, Reason and Tolerance'.

These key observations that apparently form the gravamen of Akyol's book suggest, in the main, that the world of Islam has regressed because of 'blind' textual imitation and disavowal of critical thinking and reason thereof- the corollaries of which are freedom of religion and speech among other things- that Akyol seems to subsume under the broad rubric of 'ethical objectivism'. The analogy that is drawn in the interview is of God's injunction to Prophet Abraham (AS) to offer his son as a sacrificial offering that is then later transmogrified into offering of a lamb. Akyol dismisses this injunction not as a revelatory injunction but as a mere 'dream'.

Before dwelling on the interview and offering my critique, I would, at the onset state that I am neither an Islamic scholar nor an authority on world religions nor someone who is an expert on the Western philosophical tradition- a veritably distinguished one that the West, after disaggregating it, in different permutations and combinations draws its well spring from. My vantage point is that of an average Muslim and that of common sense interspersed with my very basic understanding of Islam and its distinguished traditions and, above all the Quran.

Now returning to Akyol's thesis, the core of which can be gleaned from the title that is suggestively loaded and rather an incorrect reading of Islamic history. Is the Muslim mind really closed? And what is the nature of 'return' that Akyol is alluding and referring to? Is this alleged 'return' the fountainhead of Islam? And, what accounts for the Muslim world's 'regression'? Does it emanate internally or externally?

On the face of it Akyol's thesis is not original. The font of his assertions draw from the Mu tazili tradition in Islamic history. While I disavow much knowledge of Mutazili' tradition but in the main, this tradition harking back to the Abbasid period, does not question Islam and its precepts but roots for a vigorous Islamic rationalism, freedom action and the creation of the Quran. As stated, I do not have the intellectual and theological wherewithal to either fully formulate the Mutazila' tradition or offer a vigorous critique. But, with respect to Akyol's assertions, he appears to have drawn from this tradition, rather copiously and then brought to bear a synthesis with some major aspects of the Western philosophical tradition, mainly liberalism.

But the starting point of a discussion of Islam, its philosophical tradition and other important and significant traditions has to be Islam itself. If the idiom and standards employed to understand are drawn from other philosophies, howsoever distinguished, this approach presents problems.

Islam itself. If the idiom and standards employed to understand are drawn from other philosophies, howsoever distinguished, this approach presents problems. So what is Islam? Yet again I must profess my limitations- scholarly and intellectual to offer a deeper exegesis. But I will offer an answer that is predicated upon my own understanding and experience.

Islam is, as is known, is a monotheistic religion, that has a set of faith based prescriptions for a person to be a Muslim: the kalima shahada (affirmation of being Muslim, by recitation of a kalima that states, 'There no God but God and Muhammad (pbuh) is His messenger, followed by a set of injunctions to pray five times a day, offer charity (zakat), fast during Ramazan, perform the Hajj pilgrimage. This is the framework of being Muslim, the core of which, is emphatic belief in the unity and oneness of God and in the messenger of Islam, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). There then is the distinguished corpus of Islamic law(fiqh), traditions(Hadees), and the venerable philosophical traditions of Islam and Irfan (roughly mysticism). Admittedly, this is a reductive delineation. There is more to Islam, Islamic history and philosophy but these are the core elements. The well spring and font of Islam is the Quran.

Given this, and Akyol's suggestion that Muslims by taking recourse to 'ethical objectivism' – a loaded phrase: how, for instance, can humans being human be entirely objective?, and then employ this as an analytical grid to understand and apply Qura'nic injunctions, opens up the proverbial pandora's box. It implies that instead of the Quran being made the judgemental view on humans and the human condition, humans use their faculties to judge the Quran. This suggestion, in turn, then means that employing human judgement to judge the Quran, that we Muslims believe to be the word of God, Who we believe is Perfect. This forms the major critique of Akyol's thesis. The corollary of this approach then is that the judgment on the Quran and its interpretation becomes

**The Quran should be read, studied and approached by all but the grid that should inform this study has to be of a special nature and character, one that emphasizes getting to know the real message of the Holy book. A cavalier, lazy approach in the study of the Quran can lead to undesirable, insalubrious consequences, especially when it is done by taking recourse to a different philosophical and intellectual tradition.**

common. That is, anyone and everyone can pick and choose from the Holy book, interpret and apply to his or her life in consonance with her or his intellectual faculties, prejudices, biases and world views. This approach could potentially lead to conflict within and without.

This is, on my part, not to privilege 'order' in the Muslim world over debate and discussion but merely to suggest that ultimately the exegesis and interpretation of the Quran have to be a domain of the experts- a suggestion that is not meant to imply monopoly of knowledge by these experts. Not at all. The Quran should be read, studied and approached by all but the grid that should inform this study has to be of a special nature and character, one that emphasizes getting to know the real message of the Holy book. A cavalier, lazy approach in the study of the Quran can lead to undesirable, insalubrious consequences, especially when it is done by taking recourse to a different philosophical and intellectual tradition.

This is not to say Muslims must close their minds to other venerable traditions and distinguished scholarship of the world. We need to and we must engage with these. It is an imperative but only after a robust engagement and understanding of our own traditions.

This is an imperative to not only understand ourselves but also the world and what it has to offer. The world, defined as it is by dazzling and

**This is an imperative to not only understand ourselves but also the world and what it has to offer. The world, defined as it is by dazzling and staggering diversity- cultural, philosophical, scientific, intellectual and so on- is a beautiful place to know, engage with and understand. It is here rather than elsewhere that Muslims have chosen to abdicate their responsibility and closed themselves. And it is here rather than a particular approach and method that the problem lies.**

staggering diversity- cultural, philosophical, scientific, intellectual and so on- is a beautiful place to know, engage with and understand. It is here rather than elsewhere that Muslims have chosen to abdicate their responsibility and closed themselves. And it is here rather than a particular approach and method that the problem lies.

The Muslim world's regression does not accrue from something inherent and intrinsic. Yes, it has huge problems and issues. But, these are a combination of the external and the internal, that has made Muslims to retreat, disengage and indulge in hair splitting debates that are, in the final analysis, tangential and indulge in blame games. The world has moved on and is advancing at a staggering pace. However, advancement and progress, important, in their own right must not be the yardsticks to gauge Islam. This would amount to getting the causality wrong. If there is a problem, it is with Mus-

lims and not with Islam.

I am not being in denial when I assert this despite the staggering problems that the Muslim world is in the grips of. Yes, we, to repeat, need to and must engage with the world and even draw, in practical matters, from others. But the spirit of this engagement for this must emanate from the world of Islam. Reason and rationality, as important and relevant as they are, and as importantly these need to be integrated in understanding the world from various perspectives, can only be poor substitutes to understand the Ultimate Reality and the Word of God. Reality cannot be objectified and reified by mere reason. To understand it, reason is an important tool and a means but not the ultimate sine qua non. Let Muslims then imbibe this critical faculty to get a firmer grip on the world and its empirical reality but let the truth- esoteric, mystical and divine- be discovered by ways and methods that emanate from the spirit of Islam.

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

*The author has a Masters with Distinction in International Relations from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. Worked as Associate Editor of Kashmir Observer.*



# The Usher to Guidance

## Remembering Mufti Faizul Waheed Qasmi

Aaqib Anjum Aafi

“  
**Some blessings are rare and singular — scholars such as Mufti Faizul Waheed are such gifts to communities. Their guidance to knowledge and guidance through knowledge are examples of unparalleled favors from the heavens to people. Jammu and Kashmir has lost the reassuring presence of Mufti Saheb but the everlasting light of his knowledge will continue to illuminate the words of Allah for everyone**



Death is inevitable but we wish for certain individuals that they live long. Allah Ta'ala has kept this emotion by default in everyone. The passing away of scholars like Asir Adrawi, Mufti Abdur Razzaq, Usman Mansurpuri and Nur Alam Khalil Amini had already devastated us and we suddenly heard in this June's first morning that the great and noble exegete of Qur'an, who blessed religious gatherings with the deep secrets of Holy Book, Mufti Faizul Waheed was no more. For an instant, I was not able to accept this reality but proclaimed, "Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'oon". Mufti Faizul Waheed was among the few scholars of Jammu and Kashmir who are widely acclaimed, but no one stood next to him in the exegesis. He held this genre of knowledge with no person second to him.

A true lover of Allah's words, he is known to have once said, "The success of everyone is hidden in the Quran".

Mufti Faizul Waheed was born in Thanamandi's Dodhasan Bala village, in Rajouri. As a kid of 17 days, he lost his father Maulvi Ghulam Hus-sain. He studied at a local high school and passed

the matriculation exams and then entered in the Persian class at the Madrasa Kashiful Uloom in Thanamanadi. The madrasa was closed eight months later following which he moved to memorize Qur'an with Hafiz Muhammad Sabir, the imam of a Jama Masjid in Rehthal, but could memorize only one chapter there.

In 1978, Mufti Faizul Waheed went on to pursue higher studies in Uttar Pradesh. He enrolled in the Madrasa Talimul Qur'an in Muzaf-farnagar and completed memorizing the Holy Qur'an in 1982. He also studied the sciences of Qur'an recitation there and enrolled in the Madrasa Khadimul Islam in Hapur for further education. In Hapur, he studied for two years and then in 1985-86, entered the Darul Uloom Deoband, the top most religious seminary in the Indian subcontinent. He completed his formal studies in 1991 and specialised in Islamic jurisprudence and became a Mufti in 1992. He also studied some courses privately including an MA in Urdu from the Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar University in Agra.

Mufti Faizul Waheed came to Jammu in 1992 and started his teaching career from Ma-

drasa Ashraf-ul Uloom. Few years later, he started the Jamia Ma'arif-ul Quran in Bhatindi, along with his colleagues from the Ashraf-ul Uloom, Qari Jamaluddin and Hafiz Nazir Ahmad, in 1995. They moved to teach in the new institution from 5 October 1995 onwards. Mufti Saheb was slammed with the Public Safety Act in the same year due to some sectarian issues and released after eleven months. He continued to teach the discourses of the Holy Qur'an soon after but was arrested yet again in May 1997 for three years.

During his imprisonment, Mufti Saheb wrote his magnum-opus, the first ever translation and exegesis of the Qur'an, apart from writing few other booklets. This action of his was a lesson for everyone, as Zaki Kayfi, remarked once:

*"sitam se ahle-dil, ahle-wafa ranjur kya honge, gham unki zindagi hai, gham se wo mafzur kya honge"*

Mufti Saheb continued teaching at Madrasa Ma'arif-ul Quran after he was released in Au-

gust 2000, where he shared gems and memorable details about the Quran. These have stayed alive for everyone to benefit from in the form of books the he wrote like "Ahkam-e-Mayyat" (The rules of the Deceased) and "Namaz ke Masa'il, Qur'an-o-Hadees ki Roshni mai" (The issues pertaining to Salah in the light of Quran and Hadees).

Some blessings are rare and singular — scholars such as Mufti Faizul Waheed are such gifts to communities. Their guidance to knowledge and guidance through knowledge are examples of unparalleled favors from the heavens to people. Jammu and Kashmir has lost the reassuring presence of Mufti Saheb but the everlasting light of his knowledge will continue to illuminate the words of Allah for everyone. What a beautiful legacy!

We ask Allah Ta'ala to accept his noble works and grant him a lofty stage in the Jan-nah. Aameen!

*The author is a Biographical Researcher and Author. Tweets at @AnjumAqib*

## Healing Through Prayer and Patience

RASHIDA JAMES-SAAIDIYA

*"The only darkness we should allow into our lives is the night, and even then we have the moon."*

--Warsan Shire

Learning to be mindful of what we store and release within our bodies, is an often overlooked opportunity to expand our hearts and deepen our spiritual vigilance. We exist within a world that is often intolerant of emotional pain and too often we cope with its presence by burying our heartache so deeply we no longer recall where it resides.

Internal healing can be challenging, but through devotion and self-surrender, spiritual renewal can be found within the sanctuary of prayer. Supplication is as important to the human psyche as air is to the physical body. It is one of our most underused and underestimated spiritual tools. The beauty that arises in listening and speaking truthfully during acts of remembrance is directly connected to our ability to remove all barriers that prevent us from being vulnerable. In this state of devotion, that we open the whole of our being to God; extending ourselves beyond the pain and chaos of this world. Wounds are often openings to the most beautiful parts of the soul, but if left unattended each wound becomes an internal scar. Grief is the glue that keeps us stuck in the past. Faith and vulnerability are the solvents that set us free. Prayer begins in the heart, thus it should be reclaimed as a spiritual compass and mending place for the spirit. Every grievance we hold removes light from this world. And every scar we nurture restores that light.

As a child, my grandmother encouraged me to utilize prayer as a vessel of spiritual comfort and protection. Supplication was a spiritual gift offer-



ing a direct pathway to divine mercy. In her life prayer was medicine, a consistent reminder that one should allow pain to visit, to leave its lessons, but never to overstay its welcome. In my youth, my reaction to suffering was to recoil and place armor around my heart. And the wounds I consistently refused to nurse, grew into scars. I struggled with focusing my attention on hope and possibility and instead became enamoured with the process of building protective walls. But it is impossible to selectively numb emotions. In an effort to shield myself from pain, I inadvertently created barriers shielding and inhibiting the possibility of joy and growth. The

“**If we desire greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability must be an essential component in our spiritual toolbox. Quieting the mind of past hardships, allows the heart to seek a spiritual practice which has the potential to draw us closer to our core, to humanity, to the earth, to all heavenly creatures that surround us**

process of getting to the other side of discomfort seemed impossible. I could visualize the steps but the path towards healing appeared difficult and out of reach. My fear of vulnerability was an anticipation of future pain. In time, I discovered that embracing vulnerability and overcoming the urge to numb difficult emotions increased my ability to nourish my spirit through prayer. Vulnerability is a pathway towards love, healing, and courage, a source of perseverance, and possibility.

We cultivate healing when we allow our most vulnerable parts to be seen. In the absence of fear, one can experience an awakening of self-com-

passion a sacred map revealing the importance of tenderness and kindness turned inward. It's important to remember that the unfolding of one's spiritual path is complex. We must also recognize that transformation is a process: in some areas, one may be able to overcome obstacles and experience liberation. In other areas, however, there may be unaddressed areas of pain and anxiety. We exist in an imperfect world, surrounded by imperfect beings, unpredictability, and adversity. There is much to contend with in this world, and our ability to prevent difficulty is quite limited. We simply lack the power to safeguard ourselves from every heartache. Knowing this should not compel us to build protective walls. Instead, we should aim to utilize prayer as both an invaluable instrument and strategy for deep healing. God is merciful, uncreated and not subject to change, thus it is eternally safe to use prayer to unpack our dreams, hardships, and tears.

If we desire greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability must be an essential component in our spiritual toolbox. Quieting the mind of past hardships, allows the heart to seek a spiritual practice which has the potential to draw us closer to our core, to humanity, to the earth, to all heavenly creatures that surround us. God beckons us to trust the process, to bind ourselves to faith. Its power lies beyond the material world, beyond what can be measured or counted by our limited vision. Prayer is a sacred tool, an unseen thread aiding us in our return to God.

The Quran lovingly reminds us, "Indeed, what is to come will be better for you than what has gone by" (93:4). Growth is an active process and beautiful are those who transform their scars into wisdom by kneeling in prayer.

---  
Amaaliah.com



# Teens should only use recreational internet, video games one hour daily: Study

Agencies

Parents, take note! A new study has found that middle-school-aged children who use the internet, social media, or video games recreationally for more than an hour each day during the school week have significantly lower grades and test scores. The findings of the study appeared in the journal titled 'Computers in Human Behavior'. The study was led by the Center for Gambling Studies at Rutgers University-New Brunswick.

Researchers said that the findings give parents and children a moderate threshold for using entertainment-related technology -- no more than one hour daily on school days and four hours a day on weekends.

"Interactive technology is widely used to promote children's educational access and achievement," said lead author Vivien (Wen Li) Anthony, an assistant professor at the School of Social Work and research associate at the Rutgers Center for Gambling Studies.

Anthony added, "During the COVID-19 pandemic, technology has been essential to facilitating remote learning. At the same time, there is a growing concern that excessive technology use, particularly for entertainment, may adversely affect children's educational development by facilitating undesirable study habits and detracting from time spent on learning activities."

The researchers, which include Professor Lia Nower of the Rutgers Center for Gambling Studies and a researcher from



Renmin University of China, analysed the China Education Panel Survey data, a national survey of educational needs and outcomes of children in China. Approximately 10,000 first-year middle school students

were surveyed and followed. Their average age was 13.5 years.

The results showed that children who used the internet, social media or video games for entertainment four or more hours daily were four times more likely to skip school than those who did not. Boys used interactive technology for entertainment significantly more than girls. Boys also performed worse and showed lower school engagement levels than girls.

"Such findings are critical, particularly in light of the recent movement toward online learning in countries throughout the world," said Anthony. "In a learning environment that integrates the internet, it is easy for children to move across educational and entertainment platforms dur-

ing learning without alerting teachers or adults to alternate activities."

Anthony said children in the study who used technology in moderation (i.e., less than one hour per day on weekends) experienced less boredom at school, potentially due to the positive effects of participation in social media, video games and video streaming such as peer bonding and relationship building. Using interactive technology for entertainment in moderation advanced children's cognitive development.

The findings suggest that parents place time limits on their children's interactive technology use, and that parents and teachers should help children to develop effective time management and self-regulation skills to reduce their reliance on technology.

## ‘Narcissism linked to cyberbullying, bullying offline’

Agencies

Narcissism is an important risk factor for both aggression and violence as an analysis of 437 studies showed that it is linked to online cyberbullying, as well as bullying offline.

The findings, published in the journal Psychological Bulletin, showed that the key component of narcissism is entitlement.

It also has two peripheral components—grandiose (those with high self-esteem) and vulnerable (those with low self-esteem).

The study found all of these components were linked to aggression.

"Individuals who are high in narcissism are not particularly picky when it comes to how they attack others," said researcher Sophie Kjaervik from The Ohio State University.

For the study, the team com-



bined and analysed data from many studies to provide a comprehensive view of this research area.

In this meta-analysis, they examined data from 437 independent studies with a total of 123,043 participants.

People higher in narcissism were not only more likely to lash out in anger, but were also more

likely to be "cold, deliberate and proactive" in their aggression.

They were more likely than others to be aggressive whether they were provoked or not, the study found.

But the risk for aggression was significantly higher when they felt provoked, such as being ignored or insulted.

### Indian Systems of Medicine & Homeopathic. Department of (AYUSH) District Anantnag. AYUSH Immune Booster Medicine Distributed at Village Hapatnard from Govt. ISM Dispensary Hapatnard Anantnag UT.



On 01/06/2021 Following the protocol of Ayush department Ministry of Ayush GOI and the order of Director ISM J&K Dr Mohan Singh just and by the guidelines of ADMO MADAM Dr. Nuzhat Bashir & District Nodal officer Ayush Dr. Mir Javid Hussain sahib an awareness programme and distribution of immune booster medicines was organized at at Village Hapatnard Anantnag from Govt. ISM Dispensary Hapatnard Anantnag 250 beneficiaries received immunity boosting drugs also were briefed about importance of Ayush immunity boosters in enhancement of human immunity to combat Covid 19 panoramic along other importance preventive measures.

mja

### Indian Systems of Medicine & Homeopathic. Department of (AYUSH) District Anantnag. AYUSH Immune Booster Medicine Distributed at Village Pachward from AYUSH Health & wellness Center Batkoot Anantnag UT.



On 31/05/2021 Following the protocol of Ayush department Ministry of Ayush GOI and the order of Director ISM J&K Dr Mohan Singh just and by the guidelines of ADMO MADAM Dr. Nuzhat Bashir & District Nodal officer Ayush Dr. Mir Javid Hussain sahib an awareness programme and distribution of immune booster medicines was organized at at Village Pachward from AYUSH Health & wellness Center Batkoot Anantnag about 407 beneficiaries received immunity boosting drugs also were briefed about importance of Ayush immunity boosters in enhancement of human immunity to combat Covid 19 panoramic along other importance preventive measures.

mja-r

## Office of the Executive Engineer, R & B Division Handwara.

### QUOTATION

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor J&K (UT) sealed quotation affixed with Revenue stamps worth Rs. 2/- are invited for the providing consultancy service, from registered consultancy firms, which should reach to this office on 08-06-2021 the same date or some other day convenient to the Executive Engineer in presence of the quotationers who may like to be present there. In case the last date of receipt of tenders happens to be holiday / hartal / curfew the same shall be received on the next working day.

S.No.	Particulars
1.	Providing Structural consultancy services for balance work with all structural drawings for Construction of 8x25m Span Bridge at Khan Tulwari Langate.

#### Terms and Conditions

- The opening authority reserves the right to accept or reject any quotation without assigning any reason thereof.
- The quotationers shall quote their rates clearly without any cuttings over writings or alternations.
- Tender fee for an amount of Rs 200.00 in shape of treasury chalan is to be enclosed with the bid.
- The quotation not fixed with revenue stamps worth Rs 2/- . Shall be rejected.
- The firm shall have registration with the statutory body on its panels and certificates to be submitted with the quotation.
- The firm shall have valid GST/CGST registration and PAN registration. Tax shall be deductible as per norms.
- The terms on account of work in question will be made to the successful bidder as and when the funds become available with the department for the said purpose.
- The 1st lower quotationer has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.
- In addition of above, the contract shall be governed by the terms and conditions as laid down in the PWD form 25 (Double)

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor J&K (UT)

No:1183-86  
Dated: 29-05-2021

DIPK-2338/21

Executive Engineer,  
R & B Division Handwara

#### Annexure "A" to Quotation No:1183-86 dated:29-05-2021.

#### Engagement of consultant for providing design consultancy services complete

Name of work: Providing Structural consultancy services for balance work with all structural drawings for Construction of 8x25m Span Bridge at Khan Tulwari Langate.

A	Structural consultants	
1	Engagement of consultants for providing the structural design of balance works of with all structural drawings for Construction of 8x25m Span Bridge at Khan Tulwari Langate as required in 4 sets in colour A3/A4 size complete as required .	@% of estimated cost/ workdone cost (which ever is less)

#### Note:

The consultant shall be accredited approved consultants duly registered with the statutory governing bodies and shall have to provide the design calculations.

## Office of the Executive Engineer, Electric Division-2nd, KPDCL, Rajbagh, Sgr ,190008. Tel/Fax 0194-2311374 Email ID:-xened2nd@gmail.com.

Ms. Fouzia Nazir; I/c Asstt.Engineer (Electric).  
D/o Mr. Nazir Ahmad Laharwal  
R/o Natipora Chanpora Nowgam.

No;- ED-II/Est/PF/739-42

Dated;- 31.05.2021.

### “Show Cause Notice”

Subject: Unauthorized absence from duties.

Reference: (i) AEE Hazuri bagh Sub divn's L/no's:- 978 ,1052-53 & 88-89 dated 25.02.2019 ,03.04.2020 & 11.06.2020.  
(ii) This office L/No:70-72 dated 16.04.2020.& 973-75 dated 06.07.2020.

(iii) Superintending Engineer O&M cr-2<sup>nd</sup> sgr's L/No;- 166-67 dated 23.04.2020 \* & 2335-36 dated 11.07.2020  
(iv) Chief Engineer ; D:KPDCL's L/No 40556-57 dated 09.03.2021.

\*\*\*

Whereas, you have remained unauthorizedly absent from duties w.e.f 01.11.2019 to till date with the intermediate period of the month of December 2019 treated on Earned Leave sanctioned vide worthy Superintending Engineer; O&M Cr-2<sup>nd</sup> sgr's Order No 121 of 2019 dated 7.12.2019.

Whereas, your SDO vide his office L/No: referred at (i) has intimated this office about the negligence being shown by you in resuming your legitimate duties and recommended disciplinary action against you as warranted under rules.

Whereas, you were provided an ample period of time to resume your legitimate duties and explain your position , which you have failed to comply with till date.

Whereas, the Higher ups vide their Office communications referred above have taken serious note of such callous and unbecoming attitude from a gazetted officer holding an important assignment in territorial Sub Divn, which has resulted in enormous administrative inconvenience.

Whereas, you have remained completely invisible and your whereabouts are not known since 01.01.2020 till date which tantamount to willful and unauthorized absence from legitimate duties and entails to initiate disciplinary action under rules against you.

Now, you are given last chance by virtue of this show cause notice to clarify your position within a period of three(3) days from the date of issuance of this notice and resume your duties forthwith, failing which it shall be presumed that you have nothing to say in your defence and this office shall be constrained to initiate disciplinary action against you as warranted under rules.

SD/-  
Executive Engineer;  
Electric Divn-IIInd, Sgr.

DIPK-NB-999/21

## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PHE DIVISION SHOPIAN

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E-NIT S. No.17/PHS of 2021-22 Dated:-

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor J&K, e-tenders on item rate basis are invited from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt, CPWD, Railways and other State/ Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S.No.	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees)	Time of Completion in (days)	Class of Contract	Head of Account
1	Providing water supply facilities to PS Ganzhama, PS Nolle Poshwari, UPS Ferripora, GPS Hakla Mohallah Shamsipora, Ringtragi, PS Zingeward, PS Thokarpura, PS Peerpora, GPS Karewa Manloo Pasto Check	12.78	1600	15 days	"CEE&DEE"	Under JJM Programme

Position of AAA:-Accorded, CE/PHE/DB/24951-57 Dtd:-03.02.2021

Position of Funds :- Available

- The Bidding Document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility, criteria, Specification, Bill of quantities (BOQ), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per the schedule of dates given below:-
- Critical dates:-

S.No	Description	Date			Time
		DD	MM	YYY	
1.	Date of Publish of NIT	31	05	2021	900 Hrs
2.	Period of downloading of bidder documents	31	05	2021	900 Hrs
3.	Bid submission Start date	31	05	2021	900 Hrs
4.	Bid submission End date	09	06	2021	1700 Hrs
5.	Date and time of opening of bids (online)	09	06	2021	1800 Hrs

- Bidders must be accompanied with cost of tenders documents in shape of treasury challan pledged in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Division Shopian (Account -0215).
- The date and time of opening of bids shall be notified on website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidder automatically through an e-mail message on their mail id. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same website in the office of, Executive Engineer PHE Division Shopian (tender receiving authority).
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of financial bids.
- 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](http://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 vendors.
  - The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
  - Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
  - It is mandatory for all bidders participating to submit all documents in terms of soft copies in e-tendering website and no documents in terms of Hard Copies shall be entertained. However, lowest bidder will be called for submission of Affidavit/ as well as participating tenderers/ bidders will be released after opening financial bids except 12.
  - Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.
  - The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.
  - 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 tender inclusive of all taxes and it should be saved with the same name as it contains.
  - Price escalation and all 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 up to 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 rates prevailing at the time of recovery.
  - Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on [www.J&Ktenders.gov.in](http://www.J&Ktenders.gov.in) portal to store such documents as are required.
  - Scanned copy of Valid Registration Card.
  - GST Registration Number
  - PAN Card
  - Affidavit/Treasury Challan
  - Bid Security Declaration
  - Originality of the up-loaded documents is sole responsibility of the contractor.
  - The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 05 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.
  - The bid(s) shall be opened online on above mentioned date or any other subsequent date in presence of the bidders who may wish to be present.
  - No claim shall be entertained on account of disruption of internet services being used by bidders and are advised to upload their bids well in advance to avoid any technical snags in last hours.
  - The tender/bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT.
  - All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double) Agreement Form.

No:- PHEDS/CS/958-71  
Dated:- 31.05.2021

DIPK-2289/21

SD/-  
Executive Engineer  
PHE Division Shopian



## Second Wave, Lockdowns Drag Down Auto Sales In May



India's automobile companies clocked in dismal sales in May as the country battered the second wave and various governments rushed to lockdown states to contain the spread. Auto majors such as Maruti Suzuki, M&M and Tata Motors reported a decline in sale in May.

The sales were drawn down as a spike in COVID-19 cases and lockdowns across various states hit dispatches.

### Maruti Suzuki

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Tuesday reported a 71 per cent decline in total sales to 46,555 units in May as compared to 1,59,691 units in April. The auto major had also shut production from May 1 through May 16 so as to divert oxygen from industrial use for medical purposes.

MSI said its domestic dispatches to dealers last month stood at 35,293 units, down 75 per cent from 1,42,454 units in April. Sales of mini cars, comprising Alto and S-Presso, declined by 81 per cent to 4,760 units in May as against 25,041 units in April this year. Sales of compact segment vehicles, including Swift, Celerio, Ignis, Baleno and Dzire, declined by 72 per cent to 20,343 units from 72,318 cars in April.

Sales of mid-sized sedan Ciaz, declined to 349 units as compared to 1,567 units in April this year. Utility vehicle sales, including Vitara Brezza, S-Cross and Ertiga, declined 75 per cent to 6,355 units as against 25,484 in April, MSI said. Exports in May were down 35 per cent at 11,262 units as against 17,237 units in April this year.

### Tata Motors

Tata Motors saw its total domestic sales decline by 38 per cent to 24,552 units in May as compared to 39,530 vehicles in April this year. The company had sold 4,418 units in May last year. The auto major said its passenger vehicle sales in the domestic market stood at 15,181 units in May, down 40 per cent from 25,095 units in April this year.

Commercial vehicle sales in the domestic market stood at 9,371 units, down 35 per cent from 14,435 units in April, it added.

### Bajaj Auto

Meanwhile, Bajaj Auto reported

114 per cent growth in its total vehicle sales at 2,71,862 units in May compared to the same month last year. The company had sold 1,27,128 vehicles in May last year, Bajaj Auto said in a statement.

The total domestic sales logged 52 per cent growth at 60,830 units as compared to 40,074 units sold in May 2020, the company said.

The total two-wheeler sales increased 113 per cent to 2,40,554 units in May 2021 from 112,798 units in the same month of 2020, it said.

During the month, the domestic two-wheelers sales stood at 60,342 units, a growth of 54 per cent over 39,286 two wheelers sold in May last year while exports grew 145 per cent to 180,212 units in the month as against 73,512 vehicles in May 2020.

The commercial vehicles sales, including exports, were 31,308 units in May 2021 as compared to 14,330 vehicles in the same month of 2020, registering a growth of 118 per cent.

### Toyota

Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) on Tuesday reported total sales of 707 units in May. The company had re-ported wholesales of 9,622 units in April and 1,639 units in May last year.

Even before the state-wide lockdown was declared in Karnataka, the company had announced its annual maintenance shutdown at its plant in Bidadi from April 26 until May 14, so as to enhance its operational efficiencies, the automaker said in a statement.

### M&M

Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) said its total sales declined by 52 per cent to 17,447 units in May as compared with April this year. The Mumbai-based auto major had dispatched 36,437 units to dealers in March this year.

Passenger vehicle sales in the domestic market stood at 8,004 units last month, down 56 per cent from 18,285 units in April 2021. Commercial vehicles sales declined by 53 per cent to 7,508 units in May as against 16,147 units in April this year.

The company said its exports last month stood at 1,935 units in May as compared with 2,005 units in April.

## Govt All Set To Implement Schemes Envisaging Industrial Growth In UT: Principal Secretary

KO NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR:- The PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Jammu and Kashmir State Industrial Development Corporation (J&K SIDCO), in an endeavor to foster growth of start-ups and entrepreneurship in Jammu and Kashmir, jointly organized a webinar on schemes of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Credit Rating and Alternative Source of Raising Finance for MSMEs of the Union territory.

Principal Secretary Industries and Commerce, Ranjan Prakash Thakur, who presided over the event, said that the Industries department is all set to implement Central Incentive Schemes, Land Allotment policy, industrial development scheme for the UT, rules and guidelines, Single Window clearances and related programmes amid strict observance of all preventive protocols and SOPs regarding Covid-19.

"Although the prevailing pandemic has slowed down the industrial progress but the department is working hard to tackle with the crisis simultaneously while ensuring growth of business in the UT", he maintained.

Thakur highlighted the significance of SIDBI's role towards developing and financing micro, small and medium enterprises and hoped that the financial institution would greatly help the MSMEs of J&K to grow to the fullest. "We are ushering in a new era of industrial revolution with launch of one of the most lucrative industrial schemes ever in the history of our country", he asserted.

Earlier, Senior Vice President PHDCI, Pradeep Multani, said that J&K has overcome many business challenges winning the market with active support from the government. He said that this webinar is just one step forward towards honouring the New Industrial Development Scheme of J&K. "We will explore the scope for increasing financing from alternative sources and submit any resulting proposals to the Department of Industries and Commerce of J&K", he added.

Managing Director, J&K SIDCO, Mohammad Haroon, said that SIDCO would be privileged to be associated with PHDCI J&K and organising more such interactive and infor-



mative webinars for much needed growth of MSMEs of the UT.

Haroon highlighted the credit rating problems being faced by MSMEs of J&K emphasizing the need of making substantial credit available for the entrepreneurs. He said that availability of Fintech, SIDBI and other alternate sources of finances for MSMEs is essential.

Former President and Mentor of MSME Mentoring & Guidance Centre, PHDCI, Anil Khaitan, mentioned about the alternate sources of funding having potential to significantly bridge the funding gap and are able to change the way the MSME sector accesses credit. He said that finance is the basic need of every company but due to lack of awareness, MSMEs are not able to avail the benefit of funding

schemes of government and banks. PHD Chamber has created a MSME Mentoring and Guidance Centre to enlighten MSMEs about such schemes and extend help to them to avail benefit of such schemes, he added.

Chairman PHDCI, Kashmir, Baldev Singh Raina, elaborated the key objective of the session stating that this would serve as a big platform for devising ways to foster the growth of start-ups and entrepreneurship in the UT. The webinar also aimed to disseminate and discuss various schemes and facilities introduced by the government as well as by SIDBI and NBFCs. The businesses in J&K need awareness and handholding to avail the benefits from various financial institutions of the country.

## Advisor Khan Pitches For Enhancing Economic Strength Of Artisans



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan, on Tuesday chaired a meeting of Handicrafts and Handloom department to get first hand feedback about its functioning and to explore ways and means for revival of Kashmir's art and craft.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Director Industries Kashmir, Director Handicrafts and Handloom Kashmir, Managing Director J&K Handicraft and Handloom, Director Finance Industries and Commerce, Director Planning Industries and Com-

merce and Managing Director SICOP.

While chairing the meeting, the Advisor directed the officers to strengthen the base level of the department and take measures for uplifting the economic conditions of artisans. He said that the endeavour of the department should be to initiate adequate steps for helping artisans in increasing their production and showcasing their products.

Advisor directed the officers to explore possibilities for creating opportunities for the artisans for showcasing their products. He further asked them to identify the areas where convergence with the other departments

or programmes for providing an immediate platform to artisans could be done. He asked for working out strategies to give a fillip to economic activities of the artisans and look for avenues which liberates them from economic distress. He said that urgent steps are needed to liberate the artisans from the clutches of the middlemen so that they get remunerative prices for their products.

He said that it is incumbent upon the government to resurrect the number of dwindling artisans in order to preserve traditional art and crafts. He said that this can be done by hand holding of artisans by providing incentives to the artisans, increasing market coverage and providing a platform to showcase their products.

The Advisor stressed upon the need for proper implementation of the Acts to safeguard the interests of the artisan community, by regularly monitoring the activities of the Handicrafts dealers to ensure sale of only genuine handicraft items to the Tourists/Customers.

## Petrol, Diesel Sales Drop 17% In May On Covid-19 Lockdowns

NEW DELHI: India's petrol and diesel sales fell by about 17 per cent in May from a month ago as restrictions clamped to curb the world's worst outbreak of coronavirus infections stifled demand.

Sales of petrol -- used in cars and motorcycles -- fell to 1.79 million tonne in May, the lowest in a year, according to the preliminary data of state-owned fuel retailers.

While the consumption was almost 13 per cent higher than demand in May 2020, it was 28 per cent lower than pre-COVID levels of 2.49 million tonne.

India was under one of the world's strictest lockdowns in May last year, which brought all mobility and economic activity to a grinding halt.

This year, though the infection rate is much severe, restrictions are localised.

Personal mobility is not as hampered as last year and more factories have remained open while cargo movement between states too hasn't been as badly affected.

Demand for diesel -- the most used fuel in the country -- fell to 4.89 million tonne in May 2021, down 17 per cent from the previous month and 30 per cent from May 2019.

With airlines continuing to operate at less capacity, jet fuel (ATF) sales in May were 2.48,000 tonne, down 34 per cent over April 2021 and 61.3 per cent over May 2019.



Jet fuel sales in May 2020 were 1,09,000 tonne.

Sales volume of cooking gas LPG fell 6 per cent year-on-year to 2.16 million tonne in May 2021 but was 6 per cent higher than 2.03 million tonne sold in May 2019.

LPG was the only fuel to have registered growth during the lockdown last year as the government gave free cylinders as part of the COVID-19 relief package.

India's new coronavirus cases have fallen from over 4 lakh to 1.27 lakh and deaths from the infection dropped to 2,795 from over 4,000 a few weeks back, according to health ministry data released on Tuesday.

"We were near pre-COVID level in March 2021, but new restrictions due to the second COVID-19 wave have temporarily reduced demand for both personal mobility and industrial goods movement," an industry official said.

"Local fuel consumption will start to look up this month when second pandemic wave is expected to weaken."

Declining fuel sales reduced crude intake by refiners, reducing the operating run rate by 85-86 per cent. -PTI

## Power Consumption Sees 8.2 Per Cent Growth In May Amid Slow Recovery In Commercial, Industrial Demand

NEW DELHI: Power consumption in the country witnessed an 8.2 per cent year-on-year growth in May at 110.47 billion units (BU), indicating slow recovery in commercial and industrial demand of electricity, according to power ministry data.

The slower pace of recovery in industrial demand of electricity in May can be attributed to local lockdown restrictions imposed by states to curb the spread of coronavirus amid the second wave of the pandemic, experts believe.

Moreover, the two cyclones that hit the east and west coast of the country in May resulted in power outages and lesser consumption due to rains in different areas of the country during peak summer season, they said.

They are hopeful that the commercial and industrial power consumption as well as demand would rise in coming days with many states easing local lockdown restrictions imposed to curb the second wave of coronavirus after the number of daily new positive cases of COVID-19 has started declining.

The power consumption in the entire month of May last year was 102.08 BU due to the impact of the lockdown imposed to curb the COVID-19 and had witnessed a year-on-year fall of nearly 15 per cent in May 2020.

Power consumption was 120.02 BU in May, 2019.

Therefore, power consumption in May this year has not recovered



as fast as it should have been, in view of lower base in 2020.

Last year, the government had imposed a lockdown on March 25, 2020 to contain the spread of coronavirus.

The lockdown was eased later in a phased manner, but had hit the economic and commercial activities and resulted in lower commercial and industrial demand for electricity in the country.

Power consumption in April, 2021, saw year-on-year growth of nearly 40 per cent to 118.08 BU.

Power consumption in April, 2020, had dropped to 84.55 BU from 110.11 BU over the same month in 2019, mainly due to fewer economic activities following the imposition of lockdown by the government in the last week of March, 2020, to contain the spread of deadly COVID-19.

Similarly, peak power demand met or the highest power supply in a day also slumped to 132.73 GW in April last year from 176.81 GW in the same month in 2019, showing the impact of lockdown on economic activities.

However, this year, peak power demand met improved to 182.55 GW in April. -PTI

## Indian Economy Grew Before Covid Second Wave Struck; Contracts 7.3% In FY21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

India's economy contracted by less-than-expected 7.3 per cent in the fiscal year ended March 2021 after growth rate picked up in the fourth quarter, just before the world's worst outbreak of coronavirus infections hit the country.

The gross domestic product (GDP) in Asia's third-largest economy grew by 1.6 per cent in the January-March period, up from 0.5 per cent in the previous quarter when India began pulling out of a steep pandemic-induced recession in the earlier six months.

GDP had grown by 3 per cent in the January-March quarter in the previous year.

The economy, which was facing a slowdown even before the pandemic broke out last year, contracted by 7.3 per cent during April 2020 to March 2021 fiscal (FY21), weighed down by a nationwide lockdown that pumelled consumption and halted most economic activities.

This is the first full-year contraction in the Indian economy in the last four decades since 1979-80, when GDP had shrunk by 5.2 per cent.

The economy had grown by 4 per cent in the previous 2019-20 fiscal. Prior to that, the GDP expanded by 8.3 per cent in FY17 before slipping to 7 per cent in the following fiscal and to 6.1 per cent in 2018-19.

According to data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Monday, India's real GDP contracted to Rs 135



lakh crore in FY21 (2020-21) from Rs 145 lakh crore at the end of March 2020.

To regain Rs 145 lakh crore size, the economy will have to grow by 10-11 per cent in the current 2021-22 fiscal but the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19 infections last month has disrupted the momentum of economic activity and many expect the GDP may not touch double-digit growth rate despite the low base.

Even though daily COVID-19 cases have come down from a peak of over 4 lakh to 1.5 lakh, a crash in consumer demand -- constituting over 55 per cent of the economy -- and unemployment soaring to near one-year high of 14.73 per cent pose fresh challenges. Analysts have warned of risks to growth from slow pace of the four-month-old vaccination programme.

Commenting on the GDP numbers, Chief Economic Adviser K V Subramanian said the impact of the second wave of COVID-19 on the economy is not likely to be large but it is difficult to predict if the country would achieve double-digit growth in the current fiscal.

The Economic Survey 2020-21 released in January this year had projected GDP growth of 11 per cent during the current financial year ending March 2022.

### SHORT TAKES

## Dir Tourism Visits Gulmarg, Reviews Status Of Departmental Assets, Facilities

KO NEWS SERVICE

GULMARG: Director Tourism Kashmir Dr. GN Itoo Tuesday visited Gulmarg and convened a meeting of concerned agencies to review the status of departmental and other assets at the world famous tourist resort.

Laying focus on strengthening of assets at the resort, Director Tourism emphasised upon executing agencies to ensure that all the pending tourism projects are completed at the earliest so that these are ready once the tourism picks ups again as the COVID situation improves.

He also sought immediate

repair works and restoration of the tourists infrastructure so that before tourism bounces back proper facilities are in place for the travellers.

Dr Itoo also informed the meeting that the department is celebrating World Environment Day across Kashmir during which awareness on protection of the fragile environment will be carried out. He directed the officers to involve the local population and stakeholders in the awareness campaigns and also conduct cleanliness drives at the resort.

The Director Tourism also reviewed the pace of vacci-

nation among tourism stakeholders and he was informed that around 90 percent of the hotel staff, tourist guides, poywallas, and other service

providers at the resort have been covered under the special vaccination programme.

While expressing satisfaction at the pace of the vaccination of people associated

with the travel and hospitality sector, Director Tourism Kashmir urged the officers and other staff to encourage the people to come forward for vaccination so that 100 per cent target is achieved.

Dr GN Itoo said hotel staff

and travel guides are the front-line workers in the tourism sector who need to be immunised and protected by vaccination and 100 per cent vaccination was also important for the revival of the tourism sector.

The meeting was attended by MD J&K Cable Car Corporation, Majid Khalil Drabu, CEO GDA, Inam ul Haq Siddiqui, AD Gulmarg besides other officers and staff members.

In a separate meeting with stakeholders, the Director Tourism impressed upon them to take the opportunity of present times and further improve upon the services quality of the service providers so that tourists leave back with sweet memories.

## Social Media Companies Begin Updating Names Of Grievance Officers In India

Social media companies including Twitter, Google and Facebook have begun updating the names of their grievance officers, as required by the new Information Technology Rules, 2021.

While Twitter India appointed Dharmendra Chatur as its interim resident grievance officer for India, based in Bengaluru, WhatsApp named Paresh B Lal as its grievance officer, based in Hyderabad.

"To contact the Grievance Officer, please send an email with your complaint or concern and sign with an electronic signature. If you're contacting us about a specific account, please include your phone number in full international format, including the country code," WhatsApp said on its website.

Google also said that "to serve any summons or notices in civil proceedings against Google LLC in India", Joe Grier, based in Mountain View, California can be contacted.



### Amid Suicides

that nothing can be fixed,” the mental health specialist continued. “But this cognitive distortion needs to be dealt with medically.”

This mindset can be fixed by medicalising suicide and creating awareness, he added. “At the end of the day, we should stop sensationalising suicide as it can trigger a chain of suicides.”

Notably, Jammu and Kashmir, according to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), recorded 5,943 suicide cases between 1990 and 2019. “MSF’s 2015 study revealed that 45 percent of Kashmiri population is in distress,” Dr.Yasir said. “It has been around six years since then too, with a lot of trauma in these years.”

As per the information sought under RTI Act, Srinagar-based law student, Badrul Duja, was informed by the J&K Police, in February this year, that from the year 2010 to 2020, Kashmir witnessed 3024 cases of suicide—with the pandemic year of 2020 leading the decade with 457 suicides.

“Clearly,” Dr Yasir said, “the uncertain situation has been escalated by Covid-19 pandemic.”

The doctor’s distress diagnosis comes when people are facing financial issues, employment blues, emotional stressors, change in family ties, domestic abuse and helplessness.

All these factors, mental health experts say, are contributing towards harming the mental health and creating a risk factor for suicide.

Demonstrating the same mindset, a man from Indira Nagar Sonawar lately tried to end his life by jumping into Jhelum near Abdullah Bridge. However, he was rescued by the river police.

“But it’s not possible for the police to stop these suicides every time,” a top police officer said.

“Parents, teachers, preachers and doctors should come forward to deal with the issue.”

Suicides, Dr. Yasir said, can be prevented through proper intervention.

“If anyone has any suicidal thoughts, s/he needs to seek help from a professional,” he said.

“They can share it with their friends or family, avoid isolation and keep themselves busy. Avoiding problems can burden you and lead to a bigger problem.”

That ‘bigger problem’ lately reared its ugly head when a boy walked inside a south Kashmiri orchard to record his pre-suicide video.

“I sacrifice my life for all the teachers who have not been paid for the last two years and I can’t tell you how much trouble I’ve had to this day which is why I was forced to take this step today,” the 24-year-old Kulgam boy said.

The cause of his suicide, as narrated by the deceased, was his father’s two-and-a-half year pending salary.

But while the majority of Kashmiris are currently asking—“Is it a way to deal with the problems?”—the mental health experts say the extreme step only adds more problems for the family and the society.

### J&K Govt To

measures in the district, an official spokesperson said. The LG, he said, called for institution- alizing the three-tier of patient care within the hospital by categorizing nurses in three modes, to be implemented across the UT.

“First category of nursing staff for registration and counseling of patients, second for timely medicines & injections, and third group for hourly monitoring of oxygen inflow to patients as per the requirement. This will ensure the best possible care for patients,” Sinha said, as per the official spokesperson.

He directed the Principal GMC, Anantnag and CMO to categorize the nurses into the above-mentioned modes to provide better care to the patients.

While taking a comprehensive review of testing and vaccination rate of the District, the LG, as per the official spokesperson called for scaling up of testing in Micro containment zones and areas with high positivity rate on priority to break the chain of transmission and provide required care to Covid positive individuals.

“Underutilization of Testing and Vaccination capacity is not acceptable. The Health Department and District Administration at all levels must work on a mission mode to ensure that testing and vaccination is being done at par with their available capacity to reduce the positivity rate,” Sinha said.

The official spokesperson said that the LG termed strong health care system at grass root level as key to tackling the ongoing pandemic and asked the concerned officials to ensure linkages of Panchayat Covid Care Centres with PHCs, besides availability of Doctors for consultation with the patients.

“Senior Medical faculty members, doctors and consultants must visit PHCs, CHCs and CCCs for proper monitoring of healthcare facilities,” Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

He further said that the LG stressed on the need to generate awareness among rural population about available health care facilities at Covid Care Centres and remarked that the information flow to the people must be a continuous process.

“He also underlined the need to encourage people, especially those who tested positive or having Covid symptoms to isolate themselves at CCCs for the safety of their family members, besides containing the impact of the virus,” he said.

“The Lt Governor asked the DCs and SPs to lead the containment activities in their respective districts and ensure effective implementation of containment measures and strict compliance of Covid protocols,” he added.

The LG, as per the official spokesperson also called for collaboration with PRIs, besides directing BDOs, Tehsildars and other Government officials for ensuring vaccination coverage as well as proper functionality of Covid Care Centres in Panchayats.

Meanwhile, the LG addressed the faculty members at GMC Anantnag, who are serving on the frontline of Covid-19 pandemic and encouraged them to continue working with the utmost dedication and zeal to effectively control the spread of Corona Virus.

During his words of appreciation for the Corona Warriors, the LG, as per official spokesperson remarked that – “The selfless determination of our medical fraternity to save lives makes them the greatest hero of our time”.

Sinha also interacted with Dr. Owais H Dar, Consultant Radiologist at GMC Anantnag. Dr. Dar selflessly served the people through online and tele-consultation while he was in quarantine.

“The Lt Governor also appreciated Shabina

Kouser, an MPFWH for her dedicated service. He asked the Health Department and District Administration to felicitate such Corona Warriors and acknowledge their contribution in the fight against Covid pandemic,” the official spokesperson said.

Earlier, the LG, he said, enquired about Covid care facilities at GMC Anantnag including availability of oxygen support beds, Oxygen Generation Plants, regular rounds of HoDs and senior doctors in Covid wards, the functionality of life-saving equipment, availability of tele-medicine services etc.

Dr. Shoukat Jeelani, Principal GMC, Anantnag informed the LG that the Hospital is having the capacity of 120 Covid dedicated beds with 40 ICU beds, the official spokesperson said.

He further said that Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr Piyush Singla while giving the overview of the Covid containment measures being taken in the district apprised the LG that 77% of HCV, and 61.78% above 45 years age-group have been covered with first dose of vaccine and 2377 Covid kits have been distributed in the District.

“Regarding Oxygen Supply and demand in the District, it was informed that Oxygen plants with a total capacity of 2350 LPM in GMC Anantnag and 500 LPM at Trauma Hospital Bijbehara are functioning properly, besides 1500 LPM shall be augmented through 1000 LPM Oxygen Plant at GMC and 500 LPM oxygen Plant at Trauma Hospital Bijbehara,” he said.

The DC, as per official spokesperson further informed that Covid Care Centres in all Panchayats of the District have been established and a 24x7 “Pukaar” helpline is functional in the District which serves a one point contact for the people to register their queries regarding Covid and other grievances for the routine issues.

“A team of 67 doctors and experts are deployed for providing telemedicine facilities which has been functioning since May 01, 2021 in the district and has provided telemedicine facilities to people via 8040 calls,” Singla said, as per official spokesperson.

Later, the LG inspected ‘Shifa’ multi-facility/ multipurpose mobile van which provide on-spot facilities viz RAT testing, Vaccination and distribution of masks & hand sanitisers to the general public especially in the rural and far flung area.

Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the LG, Pandurang K Pole, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, IGP Kashmir; Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, Director Health Services, Kashmir and other senior officers accompanied the LG during his visit.

### Bring Positivity

official spokesperson said. The meeting was attended by Director SKIMS Soura, all Deputy Commissioners, CMOs through video conferencing, Mission Director NHM, GM DICs, Incharge Isolation, DD Health, CMOs, Nodal Officer, Incharge CCRK and others.

At the outset, the official spokesperson said that the Div Com impressed upon making proper utilization of covid management resources for containment of spread of virus and better mitigation.

“He said that bed capacity should be put to use even at panchayat level. All facilities including ventilators at all health facilities are made functional for patient care,” the official spokesperson said,

He further said that the Div Com said that the facilities created for testing including RAT and RTPCR and vaccination should also be put in use in full capacity and putting these facilities in proper use shall enable to not only achieve progress in the vaccination but also help in bringing down the death rate in the valley.

“Stating that the positivity rate was still above 5 percent in most of the districts, DCs were instructed to focus on covid management instead of economical activities unless cases down to the comfortable level during gradual unlock period in their districts,” the official spokesperson said.

The Div Com, he said, emphasized on proper covid mitigation to bring down the positivity rate by to below 5 percent by next week and below 2 percent in a month. Pole, he said, also stressed on putting up all required facilities at artificial testing labs and directed SKIMS to ensure recruitment of lab assistants and data entry operators on a fast track basis.

As per the official spokesperson MD NHM deliberated on the progress made in the daily Testing, contact tracing, vaccination, positivity and recovery rate, random sampling and increase in red zone areas.

“Div Com emphasized on proper monitoring of home isolation patients, increase in vaccination of all including employees and submitting certificates to respective DDOs, furnishing of reports on covid packages, audit reports of fire and exigency of designates properties and timely rebuttal and correction of rumours spread on social media,” he said.

### Govt Fixes Rs 400

“In exercise of the powers conferred by section 2 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 (3 of 1897) and in partial modification of notification S.O 337 dated 29 th October, 2020, the Lieutenant Governor of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir hereby directs that no private laboratory shall charge any amount more than Rs. 400/(Rupees Four Hundred Only) for RT-PCR Test for COVID-19 inclusive of GST/ Taxes if any, cost involved in pickup, packing and transportation of samples, documentation and reporting in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir,” reads the order issued by Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education department Atal Dulloo.

### 32 Deaths, 1,895

officials said.

Out of the fresh cases, 633 were from the Jammu division and 1,262 from the Kashmir division, they said.

The officials said Srinagar district recorded the highest of 304 cases, followed by 218 in Jammu district and 185 in Pulwama district.

The number of active cases has dropped to 33,276 in the Union Territory, while 2,55,145 patients have recovered so far, the officials said.

The death toll due to the disease rose to 3,939 as 32 patients died in the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the officials said, there were 10 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black

fungus) in the Union Territory. (PTI)

### New Guidelines

Principal Secretary to the government, school education department, a day after LG took note of a six-year-old girl’s video message to Prime Minister Narendra Modi complaining of a huge burden of homework through online. The video moved Sinha who described it as a very adorable complaint and directed the department to come out with a policy within 48 hours to lighten the burden of homework on school kids.

According to the new guidelines issued for the Pre-Primary students, the School Education Department has set the cap of 30 minutes a day to conduct the virtual classes.

Similarly for the students up to 8th standard, the order issued by Singh says, “Online synchronous learning may be undertaken for not more than two sessions of 30-45 minutes each on the working days.”

The department also recommended that for the classes 9-12th, online synchronous learning may be undertaken for not more than four sessions of 30-45 minutes each on the working days.

Stating the specific guidelines related to Preschool students of Grades-1 and II, the government has asked the School Education Department to plan joyful learning experiences for digital and online learning as they do for face-to-face.

“Daily life experiences must be shared for enhancing their competency and interesting assignments shall be given to the children such as listening, and reading, stories followed by activities like drawing inferences, adding or changing the climax at the end, picture reading, art and craft, puzzles, simple observation projects and learning new words,” reads the order.

The School Education Department has also directed to organize brief and casual meetings with the parents and children through video conferencing occasionally and give them a chance to narrate their feelings and experiences

### PDP Leader Parra

who said some political functionaries were misusing their power and helping militants.

It was alleged that these politicians, under a criminal conspiracy, had established clandestine connections and relations with different Pakistan-supported militant and secessionist organisations operating in Jammu and Kashmir for a number of reasons.

It was also alleged in the case that the conspiracy was hatched for furthering the politicians’ clout among the local populace, countering the influence of rival political parties and their members, protecting their own financial and business interests and with medium-term motives of winning the trust of “the Pakistani establishment, dealing with subversion in Kashmir, including those in the United Jihad Council”.

These politicians have allegedly supported militants and secessionists, directly and sometimes through middlemen, by way of paying money and organising select physical attacks through militant elements, it was alleged. They also facilitated movements of militants and transportation of their arms and ammunition.

In furtherance of the criminal conspiracy, these “unprincipled political party functionaries” assisted and aided the militants and secessionists in intensifying the war against the Union of India with the main objective of ultimately making Jammu and Kashmir cede from the Union”, it was alleged in the case.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police had also carried out an Internet Protocol Detail Records (IPDR) analysis of Parra, the PDP youth wing president, to probe allegations that he was in touch with secessionists and militants across the border.

The IPDR helps track the details of a call or message generated by a phone device and includes details like the number from which the call was made, destination port, start and end date and time. Parra’s lawyer had denied all the charges during various court proceedings, and claimed that his client, who won the District Development Council elections last year, was being made a political scapegoat.

In March this year, Parra was chargesheeted by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and it was alleged that he had paid Rs 5 crore to the son-in-law of Hurriyat Conference leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani for keeping Kashmir in turmoil after the death in 2016 of Burhan Wani, who was then the poster boy of Hizbul Mujahideen militant group

The NIA accused Parra, who was arrested last November, of being involved with banned militant groups like Hizbul Mujahideen and Lashker-e-Taiba.

The NIA alleged that after the death of Wani in an encounter with the Army in July 2016, Parra got in touch with Altaf Ahmad Shah, alias Altaf Fantoosh, and asked him to ensure that the Valley was kept on the boil with wide-spread unrest and stone-pelting.

In January this year, Parra was granted bail by the NIA court, which said there was no reference to him in the original, as well as the supplementary charge sheets presented in July and October last year respectively.

However, he was arrested by the CIK wing in the case related to nexus between mainstream politicians and secessionists, and continues to be in jail since then. His bail was rejected by the NIA court in Srinagar.

### Hailstorm Damages

by the sudden change in weather system can only be quantified after a field survey in the affected areas. High speed winds and rains were witnessed in rest of the valley, the officials said, adding data regarding damage, if any, was being collected.

### Iffi Loses Battle

law graduate from the University of Kashmir and a trained Radiographer. Radiography brought him fame as he scanned thousands of people for various ailments at the popular Modern X-Ray Clinic opposite Neelum Cinema which had been founded by his late father Dr Hakeem Maqbool.

In 1997 when Kashmir Observer was established Iftikhar volunteered to be part of this new media project. He left the job at the clinic to his lieutenants and joined Kashmir Observer as its first General Manager. His foray into media scape was purely out of his passion for Kashmir. He remained associated with KO till he decided to shift to Delhi in 2007.

In the last few years Iftikhar, restless as he was, had been planning to return to his home. He was trying very hard to establish an ECCP facility here in Srinagar and had moved some machines for the purpose as well. But God almighty had destined something else for him. Rest in peace Iffi.

### Another Shell-Shocked

“The lady was brought in a critical condition as the shell splinters had severely injured her upper-body, mainly damaging the chest, head and her face,” a doctor who had treated the patient told Kashmir Observer.

She underwent a 10-point massive blood transfusion for 24 hours, as she had already lost a huge amount of blood to the explosion.”

On the morning of May 29, the news once again rattled the Sherkoot village.

“The lady identified as Sara Begum w/o Ghulam Ahmed Rather R/O Sherkoot, Handwara passed away at 05:00 am today,” an official from the SP Handwara office told Kashmir Observer.

At her home, Sara’s husband, a mechanic by profession, is inconsolable, unable to accept the tragedy that has maimed his fate.

“Her other six children have taken their mother’s and sibling’s clothes since morning and are not willing to part with them,” Bilal Ahmed, close relative of the family said by telephone. “The eldest son, who is in the army, wants to know when his mother will return home.”

Even though there were times when her family faced financial problems, the shell-consumed Sara had always put up a brave face and carried a jovial smile with herself, while her daughter was always respected for her compassion and brilliance.

“This isn’t just one family’s loss but an irreplaceable damage to every single person of our village,” Bilal said.

“Even though no relief can bring them back now, the government should provide assistance to the family living in penury,” Bilal added with a sense of grief.

At the same time, the wailing relative said that if there’re dead-shells in the forests frequented by villagers for firewood, then why do the army and police leave them unchecked?

“If these forests would’ve been marked as danger zones, maybe, our loved ones would have been alive,” Bilal said.

In a press release on May 26, the police said that a case under relevant sections of the law has been registered in the concerned police station and an investigation has also been initiated.

Kashmir has been enduring the deadly frontier flare-ups and explosive situations for years now. Since the fortification of Line of Control, the Indo-Pak belligerence has worsened, resulting in a huge number of casualties on both sides of the fence.

Before the LoC armistice of 2021, both the sides have been vehemently accusing each other of breaking the 2003 ceasefire agreement.

But it is not just the falling shells that have killed innocent civilians in the frontier areas, the littered shells have also proved to be lethal and have claimed many lives in these extremely sensitive areas.

Till 2015, around 187 casualties of the littered shell explosion have been reported in J&K, out of which 93 have been minors.

After becoming the latest victims of the littered shell, Sara and her daughter are now buried in a small graveyard on an elevated ground just near their home.

“Maybe,” lamented their relative, Bilal, “Sara was never meant to see her daughter as a bride.”

It’s been five days since Gulnaz succumbed to her injuries but her fiancé is reluctant to leave her home where for the first time he saw her.

Almost eight months back, Sara’s “hospitable” daughter was engaged to a Bandipora man and the couple was supposed to get married by the end of June this year.

But the travesty of nature was such that even before Shahid could see his fiancé as her spouse, the dead-shell devastated his life.

“Shahid is yet to come to terms with the befallen tragedy,” Abdul Hamid, a close relative of the family told Kashmir Observer. “He has hardly eaten anything since Gulnaz passed.”

When Shahid and his family had come to see Gulnaz, Sara has become anxious. She always wanted a sober person as her daughter’s better half. It wasn’t Gulnaz’s beauty that had lured the family but her hospitable nature and good oratory skills that left a lasting impression on Shahid’s family.

“It would take a long time for Shahid to come out of this shock now,” Abdul Hamid said. “Or maybe he may not.”

### Holy Quran’s Gojri

improvement he remained on the life-support system.

Considered as an authority is Islamic jurisprudence, he was an alumni of Darul Uloom Deoband and served as the patron of an Islamic seminary, Madrassa Markaz Maarif-ul-Quran located at Bhatindii in Jammu.

Several rounds of funeral prayers in small groups were held for the deceased at the lawns of the seminary and he will be laid to rest in a nearby graveyard later in the day.

A strong posse of policemen was deployed in the area to ensure there is no violation of Covid-19 guidelines, officials said. Besides translating the Quran into Gojri, he had also authored several booklets on Islamic teachings.

The death of the Islamic scholar was con- doled by various political, social and religious organisations, who termed his passing away as a big loss for the society.

Terming his passing away as an “irreparable loss”, Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President G A Mir said he was credited with first translating the Holy Quran into Gojri language, which was indeed a big contribution.

JKPCC chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said he was a learned scholar and always worked for peace and religious brotherhood.

J&K Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari, in his condolence message, said his demise has created a void in the society as he was an inspirational personality towards the right path of peace.

“His work and contribution to the society as an intellectual who translated the Holy Quran into Gojri Language and also authored several books will always be remembered,” he said.

The Gujjar community also expressed grief and sorrow over the death of the scholar.

### Soldier Dies Of

When they went there, they found him in a pool of blood with a bullet injury under his chin, the officials added.

Kumar, a native of Himachal Pradesh, was rushed to the nearby military hospital where doctors declared him dead, the officials said, adding police have started inquest proceedings.

They said the legal and medical formalities are underway and the body would be handed over to his unit shortly after the completion of process to facilitate his last rites at his hometown. (PTI)

### Homeless Beggar

He said a party of the Municipal Committee was deputed Tuesday morning to clear her ragged temporary shelter outside a veterinary hospital but they were surprised to find three plastic boxes containing notes of various denominations covered tightly in polythene and a jute bag full of coins.

As soon as the information was shared, I immediately deputed a police party along with a magistrate. After hectic efforts of several hours, the counting revealed a total amount of Rs 2,58,507, Samyal said, adding the money which was kept under lock in a trunk with full details would be handed over to its rightful owner on Wednesday.

The woman was living on alms and had saved the money in plastic the boxes, he said.

Her whereabouts are not known. Nobody knows from where she had come but she had been roaming in the vicinity of the veterinary hospital and bus stand for over 30 years, Samyal said.

The officer lauded the Municipal Committee employees for their honesty. (PTI)

### Bear Attack Leaves

the district hospital Handwara by locals for treatment. However, the doctors there referred him to Srinagar’s SMHS hospital for advanced treatment.

According to reports, the condition of the teenager was life threatening.

### Man Held With Fake

notes of Rs 2000 denomination from his possession.

“He has been arrested and shifted to Police Station Kralgund where he remains in custody,” the police spokesperson said.

Accordingly, he said, a case FIR No. 31/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Kralgund and investigation into the matter has been initiated.

### HC Seeks Govt’s

Jammu and Kashmir.

He has also sought a direction to the government to formulate a medical and life insurance policy for the welfare of the advocates and their family members practicing before the High Court and District Courts within Jammu and Kashmir.

“Since the pandemic started, many advocates (contracted) Covid and some were also hospitalized,” the petitioner said, adding, “To bear the medical expenses, they approached various members of the Bar for financial aid whereas there was no assistance by the (officials).”

On consideration of the matter, the Court observed that on May 5, it had issued notice to the officials for filing their response. However, the court said that response has not been filed.

Subsequently, the court directed senior Additional Advocate General to ensure filing of reply by or before next date of hearing.

“The Government shall come up with clear stand regarding release of the amount as financial aid to the lawyers on the patterns of already issued guidelines in the previous financial year, when similar type of lockdown/ restrictions were imposed on account of Covid-19 Pandemic,” the court added. (GNS)

### LoC Truce Holding

a responsible member of the comity of nations where we have displayed maturity, restraint and humanitarian outlook during the trying times of Covid pandemic,” he said.

India and Pakistan had on February 25 this year released a joint statement announcing a ceasefire along the LoC, following talks between their Directors General of Military Operations. The two countries had earlier signed a ceasefire agreement in 2003 but it was repeatedly violated.

Lt Gen Joshi said the direct benefactors of the fresh ceasefire understanding between the two countries have been the people residing along the Line of Control.

The most direct dividend of this CFU has been for the people residing along the LoC, who have reaped the benefits of peace and tranquility for last three months and have been able to go about their daily lives without the fear of imminent peril and danger,” the Army Commander said.

However, he said the ceasefire agreement will have no impact on the counter-militancy measures being undertaken by the state forces.

The ceasefire understanding has had no effect on our counter-militancy operations along the LoC or the hinterland, which continue unabated.

“The troops are maintaining their operational preparedness at 100 percent efficiency in order to ensure that the response to any misadventure by the adversary or militants would be met with a swift and punitive response,” the Army Commander said.

He said the understanding provided an opportunity for the troops deployed along the LoC to enhance defense preparedness and take force protection measures.

Giving details, he said that the year 2020 saw almost 5,000 ceasefire violations (CFVs). “In 2021, there were 413 violations in January and 315 CFVs till February 24,” he added.

“Our efforts to ensure zero infiltration is a synergised application of man and machine wherein technology-driven solutions have aided the troops to maintain a strict and continuous vigil along the LoC and also the anti-infiltration obstacle system,” Lt Gen Joshi said.

The armed forces as a vector of Comprehensive National Power (CNP) are aware of their duties and responsibilities and are committed to be the imposers of national will both in kinetic and non-kinetic domain, he said.



## ICC Gives BCCI June 28th Deadline To Decide On Hosting T20 World Cup



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The International Cricket Council has given BCCI time till June 28 to take a call on whether it would host the marquee T20 World Cup in India amid the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ICC Board met virtually on Tuesday with India being represented by BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah. The T20 World Cup is due in October-November this year.

As reported by PTI, the BCCI sought a month's time and the ICC board unanimously agreed to give that for a detailed assessment of the health situation in the country, which has been left battered by a second wave of the raging pandemic.

"Yes, the ICC board has agreed to BCCI's request and they will have time till June 28 to decide on hosting the T20 World Cup in India. They will come back to the board next month with a concrete plan," a source close to the ICC Board told PTI on Tuesday.

If the BCCI is unable to host the event in India given the looming threat of a third wave of the pan-

dem, the tournament will shift to the UAE after it gets done with hosting the IPL, which finishes likely on October 10.

BCCI may retain the hosting rights in that scenario. The BCCI is also mulling a couple of more windows in 2022 in case October-November is not feasible in India.

"The BCCI is very keen on organising a global tournament in India. They don't want to let it go. There are two more windows that are being explored by the ICC Board. One is February 2022 but then it could coincide with ICC Women's 50 over World Cup. So this could be a bit tricky," an ICC board member said.

"The other option that BCCI has is to try out in June just after the next IPL but then you have to find a cluster of cities where monsoons won't hit at that time. Also in four months, can you have another T20 World Cup in Australia?," the ICC board member questioned.

It is also learnt that BCCI has stated that the waiver of Rs 900 crore tax for the said event is being discussed with the government and the board will be kept updated about any developments.

## Good To Have Men's Team Around, Says India Women Captain Mithali Raj

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Travelling with the Indian men's team will be a good opportunity for the inexperienced women players to pick their brains on the rigours of Test cricket ahead of the one-off game against England starting June 16, skipper Mithali Raj said on Tuesday.

The women's cricket squad, which has been in quarantine in Mumbai, will be travelling to the United Kingdom with the men's side for a month-long series, on Wednesday.

Asked if it will be an opportunity to exchange notes, Mithali said: "Yes, I am sure the girls have been interacting whenever they cross paths, it is good to have them around because they have played a lot in UK."

"You can ask them questions and they can help out because most of

the girls are playing this format for the first time, so it can really help them if they talk to them and gain experience from their tours," she said during a virtual pre-departure press conference.

The one-off Test in Bristol from June 16 will be the first time in seven years that the women's team will play the longest format. It will be followed by two T20 Internationals and three ODIs.

The men's team will play the World Test Championship final against New Zealand from June 18 followed by a full series against England.

"I think it is great to play a Test, whether at home or away. If it continues then great, because it helps the players. Sometimes it is nice to just go without any baggage and play and enjoy the atmosphere," Mithali said.

## Climbers From Pahalgam-Based Mountaineering Institute Scale Mount Everest

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Braving all odds, three climbers from Pahalgam-based Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports (JIM&WS), on Tuesday successfully scaled Mount Everest.

The first of its kind expedition of JIM&WS was held in collaboration with Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) and successfully summited Mt Everest (8848.86m) at 0620hrs on June 1st.

Mohammad Iqbal Khan, Mahfooz Elahi, both residents of Jammu and Kashmir, and Chandra Singh Negi, a resident of Uttarakhand formed the core of the expedition which was led by Principal, JIM&WS, Colonel I S Thapa, an ace climber who has scaled Mt Everest twice.

While Iqbal Khan and Chandra Negi are employed with the Indian Army, Mahfooz Elahi is a civilian instructor at JIM&WS.

The expedition was the first time that the two mountaineering institutes (JIM&WS and NIM) have collaborated. It was also the first international expedition for



JIM&WS, which was formed in 1983 and trains students in mountaineering and skiing.

The expedition was flagged off on 1st April at Delhi by Joint Secretary, Armed Forces.

The team reached Everest base camp (5364m) on 12th April and after proper acclimatization, began climbing Mt Lobuche east (6119m) as part of the acclimat-

ization process. The team also successfully summited Mt Lobuche on 24th April, considered a tough peak of the Nepal Himalayas.

It was for the first time that the Flags of both National Institutes along with national flag were hoisted on an international peak. The expedition was supposed to take place in 2020 but had to be postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

## India Cricketers To Tour England With Families, No BCCI Official For WTC Final

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The families of players and support staff of both the Indian men's and women's cricket teams will be allowed to accompany them during their lengthy tour of England this month, a senior BCCI source revealed on Tuesday.

The BCCI had put in a request that the players be allowed the company of their loved ones given that they have to spend a considerable amount of time in a bio-secure bubble because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, it is learnt that none of the BCCI office-bearers, including president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah will be present for the World Test Championship final against New Zealand in Southampton from June 18-22, due to the strict quarantine rules of the country.

"Yes, it's good news that players will have their families during the tour of UK. Ditto for the women's team who can also have their families around. These are times when mental well-being of players is paramount.

"The BCCI understands that we need our players and support staff to be in a good head space," the source told PTI.

However, he also informed that Ganguly and Shah, who were originally supposed to be in England for the WTC final won't be going



there for the time being.

"As far as I know, the ECB didn't grant permission to them (Ganguly and Shah). Normally, administrators go before the Test match but as per quarantine rules, since they are not playing members, they would have had to undergo hard quarantine of 10 days.

"The team rules wouldn't have been applicable as far as president and secretary is concerned," the official further added.

The Indian men's and women's teams will be leaving for Southampton after their London touchdown.

While women play their one-off Test in Bristol from June 16-19, they will also do their hard quarantine in Southampton along with the men's contingent at Hotel Hil-

ton which is a part of the Hampshire Bowl property.

The women are supposed to travel to Bristol on completion of their hard quarantine in Southampton.

Both Indian teams have served a 14-day quarantine period (home plus hotel) in India and undergone six RT-PCR negative tests which allow them to board the charter flight to London on Wednesday.

It is expected that they will have three days of hard quarantine (room) and then they can use the gymnasium as well as start their skills (net) training.

The 24-member men's team is supposed to play an intra-squad three-day practice game to get into the groove.

IND Vs NZ, WTC Final

## Trent Boult Feels New Zealand Is In Great Place To Create History

Press Trust of India

**LONDON:** The qualification process for the World Test Championship final is still a bit of enigma for Trent Boult but the New Zealand pace spearhead is confident that his team is capable of creating history when it clashes with India for the inaugural title. The WTC final is scheduled to be held in Southampton from June 18-22.

spend time with his family after the suspension of the IPL mid-season.

However, the seamer, who will leave for the UK on Thursday, is hoping to be a part of the second fixture.

"Once I step foot in the UK, get that chance to smell the English fresh air and see the ball move around a little bit I'll definitely be excited," he added.

The left-arm seamer, who plays



"The way the group has travelled and performed around New Zealand and the world, the boys are in a great place to hopefully create a bit of history," Boult told reporters at the Bay Oval.

"Everything is feeling good with what lies ahead, a big stage for the World Test Championship final, and hopefully I can get over there and be part of that second Test (against England) as well," he added.

"I've taken a while to understand the process with qualifying, how everything works with the points, still think no one knows how that actually works, but to get into that final the excitement is ramping up now," Boult said.

Talking about the Dukes ball, which will be used for the WTC final, the 31-year-old said: "I haven't had too much experience with it, played a handful of Tests over in England. It reacts a lot differently, then you have to weigh in all these different venues."

"I'm sure the boys are very excited to get it in their hands and see it move around. Hopefully we can entertain you a little bit over the next wee while."

Ahead of the WTC final, New Zealand take on hosts England for a two-match red-ball series.

Boult, who has snared 281 wickets in 71 Test, will be unavailable for the first Test as he has opted to

for the Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League, is also optimistic about turning up for the second half of the currently-suspended T20 League in the UAE.

Last week, the BCCI approved the IPL's resumption in September in the UAE. The league was suspended last month after multiple cases of COVID-19 were reported inside the bio-bubble.

"Looks like it's moving forward to the UAE where it ran very nicely last year. So if I get the chance I'll be looking forward to finishing that campaign off nicely," Boult said.

"Things escalated pretty quickly over there. I was very grateful to get that opportunity in the IPL to play on that stage," he added.

New Zealand wicket-keeper batsman Tim Seifert was one of the players to contract COVID-19 during the IPL.

"What happened to Tim was really unfortunate. They guy was feeling very upset. You can imagine it would be quite an isolating feeling being there not really knowing how you'll get home and when. It's the risk of taking on this job."

"I've loved India with the culture and fans over there, but it was a different gravy this time. It was very quiet around the streets compared to that usual hum of going into the stadiums with the fans. It was definitely different," Boult said.

**EVERYTHING IS FEELING GOOD** with what lies ahead, a big stage for the World Test Championship final, and hopefully I can get over there and be part of that second Test (against England) as well."

## We Didn't Play Up To Our Potential In 2022 World Cup Qualifiers: Sandesh Jhingan

Press Trust of India

**DOHA:** Indian players should be brave enough to accept that the national football team did not play to its potential during the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, experienced defender Sandesh Jhingan said on Tuesday.

Already out of reckoning for a place in the next round of the World Cup qualifiers, India are currently placed fourth in the group with three points from five matches.

From the remaining fixtures, the side will hope to collect as many points as possible and finish third so that it can seal automatic qualification for the 2023 Asian Cup qualifying third round.

India are scheduled to play Asian champions Qatar on June 3, Bangladesh on June 7, and Afghanistan on June 15 with all three matches to be played at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium here.

"We can never take things for granted. The team needs to stay focussed on the job at hand. It hasn't gone the way it should have," said Jhingan, who has returned to the national team after more than seven months.

"I will be the first one to raise my hand and say that we haven't been able to play to our potential. It's not gone the way we all would have wanted it to go - especially after such a promising start.

"We need to be brave enough, raise our hand and take the blame for it. I reiterate, we haven't played to our potential."

Jhingan is back to the scheme of things after recovering from his knee injury.

"It's a relief. I am happy that I have been able to get back after the injury lay-off. A man's greatest honour is to represent his country. In



that sense, I am lucky, grateful and thankful whenever I get a call-up."

Jhingan had been sidelined by the injury since October last year, which forced him to miss the entire ISL season for Kerala Blasters FC. He sustained the injury ahead of the FIFA World Cup qualifier against Bangladesh in October 15 last year.

The talismanic India footballer said the team needs to learn from its mistakes going forward.

"It's a human tendency to remember and talk about the negatives. In Dubai, we drew Oman who are such a good side - that too with 10 debutants. People don't talk about how we came back from behind, and had it been a little longer, we could have won.

"I am a person who has believed in the process and the roadmap which (coach) Igor (Stimac) has laid down for us. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. But right through my career I have learnt that you learn more from your failures. You just need to stay positive and keep going," he said.

Asked about India's preparation for the upcoming matches, Jhingan said: "Anyone who understands football will know the importance

of a proper preparatory camp, and how important a friendly match is in preparation for a major tournament."

"Owing to the pandemic we lost out on friendly matches in Dubai which isn't ideal. But there are always two ways of looking at things. The easier option could have been to throw in the towel but the great squad which we have are there to fight."

By his own admission, he draws a lot of importance from the admiration he gets from coach Stimac, who considers him as an "Ironman".

"As an individual, it means a lot when you get so much confidence from your coach. Every time I have tried to improve as a player, he has always helped me. It motivates me to work hard. But it also hurts me that I couldn't play a part."

Jhingan said spending time in bio-bubble in the times of COVID-19 pandemic is tough, but for him national duty is paramount than anything else.

"After all, we are also human beings and not robots. Our families are back in India. But the call of the nation supersedes everything. As professional players when we signed contracts, we were aware of the obstacles that could have come our way," he concluded.

## Biggest Moment Of My Career: India's Newest Asian Boxing Champion Sanjeet Kumar

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** He took to boxing to stay away from "padhai likhai" and India's newest Asian champion Sanjeet's faith in his choice has paid off quite well as he revels in the glory of beating an Olympic medalist for the "biggest moment" of his decade-long career.

The 26-year-old from Haryana's Rohtak took down Kazakhstan's Vassiliy Levit, who is the 2016 Olympic silver-medallist and a two-time world bronze-winner, in the final of the just-concluded tournament in Dubai on Monday.

It was a revenge of sorts for Sanjeet (91 kg) as he had been knocked out by Levit in 2018 during the President's Cup in Kazakhstan.

"It is the biggest moment of my career although I am also a world championship quarterfinalist. To beat an Olympic medalist is a huge deal," Sanjeet told PTI before boarding his flight back home.

The enormity of his win can be gauged from the fact that Levit was chasing a fourth gold medal at the continental showpiece and has a total of five medals at this event.

The Kazakh has also qualified for the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

However, before the momentous evening in Dubai, Sanjeet's major accomplishments included winning a national championship gold medal in 2018, an India Open gold in the same year and also a victory in the now discontinued pro-style World Series of Boxing.

He has an unmissable pride for all his achievements and for how far he has come since venturing into the ring for the first time a decade back, inspired by his brother who is also his formative coach.

"I took to boxing after seeing my brother, he is my coach as well, it was in 2010. Actually, for me it was an escape from padhai likhai (studies). I was not interested and my parents really wanted me to focus on education," he recalled.

"So there was this early resistance from them but I was clear about what I wanted to do. Once I started winning medals at the state level, they came around too. They are proud of me," he said.

The Army man earned effusive praise from national coach C A Kuttappa, who has seen his progression from close range.

"He was all about power punches till a few years back and has come quite a distance since that crushing loss to Levit in 2018. We have worked on his speed in the ring and also his body punches," Kuttappa said.



In 2019, Sanjeet had made a mark at the world championships in Russia by reaching the quarterfinals before eventually losing on a split decision. For all the spunk he displayed in the Asian championships, Sanjeet is not in the reckoning for the Olympics in July-August. He could not make the team for the Asian Olympic qualifiers last year as he was on the sidelines because of a shoulder injury which needed surgery.

"That was just bad luck. He would have done well had he gone. Even if he had not qualified, he would have had the rankings to make it through now," Kuttappa said. But there are high hopes from him going forward.

"We have to be strict with him in training because he can slack off but he delivers when pushed. For now, he needs to improve on one count. Think on his own in the ring," Kuttappa said.

"He has this habit of looking towards the team corner when the going gets tough, he needs to be a proactive thinker while fighting. We will get there, he is learning," he added.

## Serena Williams Backs Naomi Osaka's Decision To Pull Out Of French Open



Agencies

**PARIS:** Serena Williams says she can identify with anxiety regarding news conference scrutiny, and has experienced it frequently after matches.

"Many of them I've been into where I've been - very difficult to walk in in those moments," she said. "But you know, it made me stronger."

Williams made her comments in a post-match news conference following her first-round victory Monday at the French Open. She spoke hours after four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka withdrew from the tournament, saying in a statement that she has dealt with long bouts of depression since winning a tumultuous final against Williams in the 2018 US Open. Last week Osaka said she would not participate in the standard post-match news conferences during Roland Garros, citing her decision as a mental health matter because media questions can create self-doubt.

"I feel for Naomi," Williams said.

"Not everyone is the same. I'm thick. Other people are thin. Everyone is different and everyone handles things differently.

"You just have to let her handle it the way she wants to and the best way she thinks she can. That's the only thing I can say. I think she is doing the best she can."

Naomi's decision to not speak to media due to mental health did not find acceptance with organisers of Grand Slam tournaments. She was fined \$15,000 for skipping media interaction after her first round win and was also warned of suspension from future Grand Slam events.













# Be healthy, be prepared!



## Bajaj Allianz Family Health Care Covers

-  In Patient Hospitalization Expenses
-  Pre & Post Hospitalization Expenses
-  Day Care Procedures
-  Hospital Cash Benefit
-  Road Ambulance
-  Organ Donor Expenses
-  Sum Insured Reinstatement Benefit
-  Preventive Health Check-Up
-  Ayurvedic / Homeopathic Hospitalization Expenses