



# PRECIOUS KASHMIR

Journalism With A Human Heart

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Advisor Baseer Khan reviews functioning of oxygen manufacturing plants



Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan today visited the oxygen manufacturing plants at Rangreth Industrial Estate and Sanatnagar Industrial Estate and directed the officers to ensure continuous supply of medical oxygen to various hospitals amid

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Fundamental Rights: An Introduction

The rights of individuals have long been an issue in South Asia. In 250 BC, in response to the Kalinga war between Asoka's empire and Kalinga Empire, the great Buddhist emperor banned torture. In 12th & 13th centuries, the Kandyan Kings of what is now Sri Lanka abolished capital parliament in their realm. The constitution of India 1950 is the supreme law of the land in India.

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DAK sounds alert over black fungus in COVID-19 patients

Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Monday said a rare but deadly fungal infection called mucormycosis is infecting COVID-19 patients. Sounding alert, DAK President and influenza expert Dr Nisar ul Hassan said if left untreated the disease can be fatal for COVID patients. "Cases of mucormycosis, commonly known as black fungus are being

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## With 73 fatalities, J&K records highest single-day COVID death toll

### 3,344 test positive, tally soars to 2,47,952



Nadeem Nadu

Srinagar, May 17: Jammu and Kashmir reported the highest ever single day spike in the number of covid-19 deaths as 73 persons

succumbed to the virus in the last 24 hours, officials said on Monday. Also, 3344 new covid-19 cases have been reported, 1418 from Jammu Division and 1926 from Kashmir, MORE ON PB

### After 25 days, India records below 3 lakh cases

New Delhi, May 17: India's case count fell below the 3-lakh mark for the first time in 25 days as it recorded 2,81,386 new Covid-19 cases, taking the total tally to 24,965,463 while 4,106 people succumbed to the disease in the said period, which pushed up the

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### Div Com reviews COVID-19 containment measures

Srinagar, May 17: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Pandurang K Pole Monday chaired a review meeting regarding the arising situation of Covid-19 in Kashmir division at Divisional Covid Control Room Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Medical superintendents and Nodal officers of Tertiary care hospitals of Kashmir along with Senior officers of the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir, Incharge CCRK and others con-



cerned. The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir reviewed the progress achieved in controlling the second wave of the Covid-19. During the meeting

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### Govt asks senior doctors to take frontline

Srinagar, May 17: Amid "increase in mortality rate" among the COVID positive patients, the authorities have ordered senior faculty members of GMC Jammu to make frequent rounds of wards where the COVID positive patients are admitted. In a communication to Principal Government Medical

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### Central team of doctors call for genome study

Jammu, May 17: The team of Doctors deputed by Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Monday called for conducting genome study in Jammu while observing that the high mortality here may be because of the double mutant Indian strain.

Addressing a press conference here today after visiting several covid care facilities in Jammu and Samba districts, the team advised for intensifying

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### 500 bed hospital to be operational by May 30 at Khonmoh: DC Sgr

Srinagar, May 17: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammed Aijaz Asad Monday said that district administration is working on war footing basis to break the chain of corona virus infection in Srinagar.

DC said this while giving a brief regarding the Covid-19 mitigation measures undertaken by the district administration Srinagar. Divulging the details, the DC said that the district ad-



ministration is making all out efforts to ensure strict adherence to Covid-19 SOPs including wearing of masks, hand hygiene and maintenance of social distancing. He said Corrona

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### Corona curfew continues in J&K, 169 arrested



Mubashir Aalam Wani

Srinagar, May 17: The Corona Curfew continued for the third straight week in Jammu and Kashmir in order to prevent the virus from spreading while police claimed to have arrested

169 persons in the last 24 hours for violating the norms.

Notably, Corona Curfew is in place across Srinagar district and other districts from April 29 evening and has been extended for the four times consecutively.

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## 2 militants killed in Khonmoh gunfight

### Five militants still active in Srinagar: IGP Kashmir

Srinagar, May 17: Two local militants affiliated with Al-Badr, a militant outfit were killed in an encounter that raged between forces and militants in Khonmoh area in Srinagar outskirts on Monday morning.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Vijay Kumar said that two Al-Badr militants have been killed in Khonmoh, Srinagar encounter and the slain duo are locals.

Talking to media persons at Pantha Chowk here, the IGP said that Srinagar police received a tip-off yesterday evening after which the lead was further developed. "Police, army and the CRPF laid a siege in Khonmoh area.



Two militants were hiding in the area. They were repeatedly asked to surrender, but they turned down all offers," the IGP said. "This morning, the encounter started and both the militants were killed. The slain duo is locals from Al-Badr outfit."

He said that Khonmoh and Khrew areas are connected with Tral belt of Pulwama district and this stretch usually witnesses militant movement.

IGP also said that there are five militants active in Srinagar who are being tracked

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## Govt orders transfers, positing of 33 KAS officers

Precious Kashmir News

Srinagar, May 17: Jammu and Kashmir government on Monday ordered transfer of 33 KAS officers in the interest of the administration with immediate effect.

According to an order issued here, Narinder Singh Bali, KAS, Special Secretary to the Government, Youth Services and Sports Department has been transferred and posted as Additional District Development available vacancy.

Muzaffer Ahmad Peer, KAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Ganderbal, against an available vacancy, reads the order.

Kanta Devi, KAS, Deputy Labour Commissioner, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Muzafferabad, against an available vacancy.

Pawan Kumar, KAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajouri, against an available vacancy. Akramullah Tak, KAS, Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Additional District



Development Commissioner, Budgam, against wavailable vacancy.

Jyoti Rani Slathia, KAS, Joint Director, Employment, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Reasi, against an available vacancy.

Sham Lal, KAS, Additional Mission Director, J&K Rural Livelihood Mission, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar, against an available vacancy. Sachin Dev Singh, KAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri, against an available vacancy. Dr. Ravi Kumar Bharti, KAS, Additional Secretary to the Government, Tribal Affairs Department has

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### Govt receives consignment of 7 Oxygen Generation Plants from Germany

Precious Kashmir News

Srinagar, May 17: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan on Monday received the consignment of 7 Oxygen Generation Plants from Germany, Frankfurt on behalf of Jammu and Kashmir government at Srinagar Airport.

Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, PK Pole and Chief Engineer, Kashmir (Mechanical), were also present on the occasion.

Advisor said that with the Commissioning of these 7 plants, the oxygen requirement in the hospitals of the J&K will almost be fulfilled and will cater to our daily requirements.

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### HC upholds J&K Bank's selection of 1500 BA posts

Srinagar, May 17: Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Monday upheld its single bench's verdict, dismissing petitions which had challenged Jammu and Kashmir Bank's re-notification for filling up of 1500 banking associates' vacancies.

On March 22 last, the court's single bench had dismissed petitions filed by at least 288 aspiring candidates who had participated in the selection process pursuant to a notification on 6 October 2018 and had challenged the bank's 15th April 2020 announcement cancelling the whole process. Subsequently, the bank had issued an advertisement

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### Aug 15: Govt to hoist Tricolour in J&K school buildings

Bhat Imran

Srinagar, May 17: The Jammu and Kashmir government has directed to hoist 'Tricolour' flag in all the schools at district and cluster level on August 15 in the Union Territory of J&K.

In an official communiqué, the government has passed the directions of hoisting the flag under the calendar of activities for celebration of 'Azadi Ka Maha Utsav'. The flag hoisting ceremonies will be conducted at

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### Ensure vaccination of inmates, staff on priority: Justice Magrey

Precious Kashmir News

Srinagar, May 17: The 11th High Powered Committee (HPC) meeting Monday passed a slew of directions for the release of jail inmates, except those involved in serious crimes, to decongest the prisons in the Union Territory of J&K.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, who is also Executive Chairman of J&K Legal Services Authority, for implementation of directions of the Supreme Court of India with regard to the containment of coronavirus in J&K prisons.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary Home Department, Shaleen Kabra; DGP Prisons, Dr B Srinivas; Member Secretary JK Legal Services Authority, MK Sharma and other concerned.

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### bottomLine

## ‘Cooperate with medicos, don’t blame them for COVID-19 miseries’

Afaq Bhat

Srinagar, May 17: Doctors and paramedical staff across Kashmir have been working overtime to handle the second wave of the COVID-19 in the Valley and people should cooperate with medicos rather than blame them for their miseries.

Some videos have gone viral on social media where the attendants can be seen accusing doctors of not treating their patients without the COVID test.

An analyst while talking to

Precious Kashmir said, "People should understand that doctors and paramedics are also human beings and they are frontline Covid warriors, they are not superhuman, nor are they virus proof. If we start losing them who will treat a common man?"

He said, "At present situation is grim in every district. The administration should make the Rapid Action Test (RAT) kits available in all the hospitals and health centers. This would make things easy for doctors treating the pa-

*"The administration should make the Rapid Action Test (RAT) kits available in all the hospitals and health centers. This would make things easy for doctors treating the patients."*

tients."

A medicos said, "Since the COVID-19 pandemic has hit Jammu and Kashmir we have been working 24x7 to provide treatment to the patients who are in distress. It's unfortunate

that some attendants get into an argument and scuffle with the medicos."

He said that these are tough times and we have to cooperate with each other to fight this virus. "This is not the time to

blame each other for our miseries. Entire world is battling COVID-19 and J&K is not the only place that has been hit by the pestilence," the medicos added.

An official said, "Most of the big hospitals in Kashmir

are accommodating the COVID-19 patients. High and low flow oxygen beds have been set up in the tertiary care hospitals and all possible efforts are being put to save the precious human lives."

He said that the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha is monitoring the situation personally and is taking feedback continuously. "The lockdown is helping in breaking the transmission chain. People have to cooperate with the administration and doctors. These are testing times and

we have to come out of it. We have to be firm and resilient," the official added.

An expert said, "We should understand that COVID is an emergency. As on date except for vaccines there is no protection for COVID-19 and doctors are aware of it that's why they are asking the patients to get a Covid test done before consultation."

He said, "We have to fight COVID-19. Fighting with each other won't serve any purpose. Doctors are our assets and we have to preserve them."



# Advisor Baseer Khan reviews functioning of oxygen manufacturing plants

Visits Hospitals and takes review of arrangements, augmentation of bed capacity and telemedicine setup in the hospitals

PRECIOUS KASHMIR NEWS

**SRINAGAR, MAY 17:** Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan today visited the oxygen manufacturing plants at Rangreth Industrial Estate and Sanatnagar Industrial Estate and directed the officers to ensure continuous supply of medical oxygen to various hospitals amid the COVID-19.

During his visit to the oxygen manufacturing plants, the Advisor said that the plants should be utilised to the optimum capacity as the medical oxygen is an important commodity in the fight against COVID. He said the demand should be met on regular basis and efforts should be put to enhance the productions.

Director Industries Kashmir while giving details about the functioning of oxygen generation plants said that they are reviving a defunct oxygen generation plant in collaboration with FCIK. He said that this would increase the cylinder capacity by 500 per day.

The Advisor directed the officers to make concerted efforts so that the defunct plant is revived in shortest possible time.

Advisor passed on spot directions to the district administration



to deploy adequate security to the oxygen generation plants. He also passed directions to the Chief Engineer PDD to ensure continuous power supply to the plants so that no disruption occurs and urged that the necessary back up should be provided to these units.

Advisor also visited the SMHS Hospital and Kashmir Nursing Home and reviewed the bed capacity and other facilities being provided to the Covid patients. He was informed that bed capacity has been increased by 20-30 percent in Government Medical Colleges, Associated Hospitals and SKIMS keeping in view the capacity of the oxygen generation plants.

The Advisor also directed the officers to ensure that Covid call centres are working round the clock. He reviewed the functioning of telemedicine at various hospitals and directed the officers to ensure that call centres are working round the clock to ensure that patients other than Covid are being given proper advice and treatment. He said that telemedicine is the safest interactive system between patient and doctor in these testing times.

Commissioner SMC informed about readiness of two wellness centres at Srinagar and said that all arrangements are being put in place to ensure their functioning as soon as possible.

Advisor laid special emphasis on adoption of COVID-19 appropriate behaviour and said that it is the best way to stop transmission of the virus and its variants and added that stringent implementation of COVID appropriate measures remain the key to stop virus transmission. He also added that physical-distancing measures and movement restrictions can actually restrict the COVID-19 transmission.

# Avail vaccination of two doses at interval of twelve weeks: Microbiologist

To mitigate the impact of third wave of virus, vaccination important for all

PRECIOUS KASHMIR NEWS

**SRINAGAR, MAY 17:** With prolific sampling of people for SAR COV2, the work pressure on GMC Microbiology Lab has also increased manifold but everything is being managed very diligently and smoothly by the concerned GMC administration and Laboratory Staff while working without relenting, said Dr Lenah Bashir, Lecturer Microbiology, Government Medical College, Srinagar.

She said the Microbiology Department is guiding physicians in diagnosis of the Covid Virus through testing the samples collected at GMC Microbiology Lab and other identified centers.

While mentioning the mild and severe symptoms of the disease, Dr Lenah said that cough, cold, loss of taste and smell, and fatigue are mild symptoms whereas breathlessness is a condition of severe infection. "Severe symptomatic patients should be shifted to hospital for treatment and monitoring".

Regarding infection detection, she said two types of swabs are collected including nasal and throat swab. She added that Rapid Antigen Testing or RT-PCR will identify the presence of infection. However, she stressed that any individual who will test negative through RAT testing should also go for RTPCR testing.

While sharing the details regarding availability of results, she said that RAT results are made available within fifteen minutes while RTPCR takes two days time due to its procedure and heavy load of samples. To cope up with the demand, the lab is working continuously without any break, to give results within least possible time.

Dr Lenah said that Real Time reverse transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT PCR) is the gold standard for SARS COV2 detection. "This molecular test targets more than one gene of SAR COV 2 i.e. N gene & RdRp gene", she informed about detection of multiple mutants by RTPCR. Moreover, she said "these targets are considered best for in-vitro diagnostic detection, hence, it will show similar sensitivity and specificity in such situation", she further added.

Regarding double mutant covid virus, she said that double mutant strains



of SAR COV2 are showing heightened infectivity and escape from the body's immune systems, hence increases lethal infections. "Previously infected people have a greater chance of re-infection due to double mutant", she said.

The Microbiology expert confirmed that vaccines are safe and requested people not to deny themselves of covid vaccination and avail the opportunity to get inoculated with two doses at the interval of twelve weeks. Depriving oneself of vaccination is an unwise decision some people make as they fall for misconceptions spread by Social Media, she said while dispelling unverified conceptions.

She maintained that adherence to SOPs and Guidelines by normal and symptomatic persons will help to control contagious Corona virus.

While speaking about the threat of third wave and mitigation measures for it, Dr Lenah Bashir emphasized on extended lockdown, Abiding of lockdown rules, Avoiding gatherings and mandatory masking. "More importantly vaccination is to be made available to all", she said. Besides, she said that hospitals have to be strengthened further.

Testing capacities have already been expanded and is being taken care of by the administration in terms of manpower as well as facilities, she maintained.

Regarding Black Fungus, she said, "it is a fungal infection which affects people with weakened ability to fight infections like diabetes, malignancy etc." and advised to strictly monitor blood glucose levels of such individuals and judicious use of steroids.

In this regard she said not to hesitate to seek medical attention and relevant microbiological investigations.

## CUK condoles demise of KU faculty members

**Precious Kashmir News**

**Ganderbal, May 17:** Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mehraj ud Din Mir, Registrar, Prof. M Afzal Zargar, Finance Officer, Prof. Fayaz A Nikka, faculty members and administrative staff of the Central University of Kashmir (CUK) condoled the demise of Prof. Ghulam Mohi ud Din Bhat, senior Professor, University of Kashmir and Head of the Electronics and Communication Engineering, at varsity's Institute of Engineering, Zakura, Dr. Mustahsan Farooq Fazili, Assistant Professor, Zoology Department, KU and the father-in-law of Mr. Abdul Rashid Bhat, Deputy Registrar, CUK.

In a condolence meeting held online with Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mehraj ud Din Mir in chair, the participants expressed sympathies with the bereaved families in this hour of grief and prayed for peace to the departed souls. They described the deceased faculty members as teachers par excellence.

**Soldier injured in 'accidental' mine blast**

**Kupwara, May 17, KNT:** An army soldier sustained injuries in an 'accidental' mine blast along Line of Control in North Kashmir's Kupwara district. Police sources told news agency Kashmir News Trust that a soldier while working on a fence at Golf11 post was injured after a mine exploded abruptly. The injured soldier was shifted to hospital for treatment. Sources identified the injured soldier as Libeno Lezung, affiliated with 35 Rashtriya Rifles deployed at Yed Aysni Hardal Company along Line of Control in North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

## Muslim volunteers bury Christian who died of Covid-19 in Kargil

**Kargil, May 17, KNT:** Amid Covid-19 scare, Muslim volunteers in Kargil region of Ladakh buried a Christian who died in hospital from Coronavirus.

Local sources told news agency Kashmir News Trust that an NHPC employee Samir Akaa from Ranchi Jharkhand posted in Kargil was tested Covid-19 positive and admitted at Covid-Care Hospital last week.

The infected employee was Christian by faith who succumbed to Covid-19 in the hospital at Kargil.

Muslim volunteers after receiving information about the death of a Christian stepped in and buried the deceased near Chaman Mode, adjacent to Muslim graveyard.

"We responded immediately regardless of the faith of the deceased after coming to know about the death of this man. We have seen many difficult situations, even cases where children refuse to touch their father's body," said one of the volunteers to KNT.

Nazir Mehdi Mohammadi, President Anjuman Jamiat-ul-Ulama Isna Ashriya Kargil shared some photographs of burial on his Twitter handle, thanking these Muslim volunteers for setting a great example for humanity. (KNT)

## Free ration distribution drive continues at Shopian

**Precious Kashmir News**

**SHOPIAN, MAY 17:** The Department of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) continues the distribution of free ration among the BPL and AAY Categories in the Shopian district as per the government directions and provisions of Disaster Management Act.

As the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic has rendered thousands jobless, the UT Government has decided to distribute 5 kg grains per soul free of cost to all the beneficiaries of the State National Food Security Act over and above their regular quota in May and June 2021.

In this connection, the FCS&CA Shopian has distributed 7658 quintals of food grains free of cost among the BPL and AAY Categories under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna (PMGKAY).

Besides, it was also given out that the department has distributed 10200 quintals of rice(NFSA), 350 quintals of Atta(NFSA), 4500 quintals of rice(JKFES), 200 quintals of Flour (PMGKAY) among the beneficiaries of Shopian district as on now.

The government is providing ration to the registered consumers at their doorsteps as per protocol to avoid public gatherings and observe social distancing during collection and distribution of the essentials.



PRECIOUS KASHMIR NEWS

**SRINAGAR, MAY 17:** Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar today assumed the charge of Mission Director, J&K Rural Livelihood Mission (RLM) popularly known as UMEED. Immediately after taking charge she convened a meeting of all the officers and officials and emphasised on implementation of all the aims and objectives behind the establishment of the Mission. On the occasion the Additional Mission Director, RLM Kashmir, Sajid Yehya Naqash threw light on the different components of the Mission.

The Mission Director stressed that the principle aim of the Mission is to aid rural women in securing the livelihood for themselves besides institution & capacity building of the aspiring entrepreneurs, lending financial services to them and convergence of different entrepreneurship schemes extended by various departments or government agencies by organising the aspiring women into Self Help Groups (SHGs). Pertinent to mention here that out of around 120 erstwhile blocks the Mission is under implementation in 96 blocks with 14 more blocks to be targeted this year. Almost



46000 SHGs comprising about 3.95 lakh rural women have been constituted under the Mission. These SHGs have been lended a credit amount of around Rs 600 crores with an interest subvention of Rs 1.04 crore. This accrued more than Rs 130 crores as savings for its members. These SHG members are also being provided with accidental and life insurance cover under PM Suraksha Bhima Yojana and PM Jeevan Jyoti Bhima Yojana. She emphasised that the Mission has a target of organising 85000 SHGs involving around 9 lakh rural households for which the total outlay of Rs 755.32 crores has been envisaged.

# Webinar organised on World Telecommunication Day

**Precious Kashmir News**

**Srinagar, May 17:** The Institution of Engineers (India), J&K State Centre, Srinagar, in collaboration with National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt of India, Dept. of Telecom, J&K LSA, Ministry of Communications, Govt. of India, SSM College of Engineering & Technology, Parihaspora, Pattan, National Informatics Centre-J&K and State Emergency Operation Centre, Srinagar on Monday organized a Webinar on World Telecommunication and Information Society Day.

As per a statement, the theme for the webinar was Accelerating Digital Transformation in Challenging Times. The Chief Guest was Dr. Kailash Chandra Pandey, Senior Deputy Director General, Department of Telecom, Ministry of Communications, Govt of India. Major General Manoj Kumar Bindal, Executive Director, National Institute of Disaster Management delivered the keynote address.

The Chief Guest Dr Kailash Chander Pandey said that digital technology plays the most important role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. He said that digital transformation

has created a value system and improved efficiency. It has helped in creating transparency and capacity development.

He said that a digitally empowered society is the aim of the Govt and it can bring about socio-economic transformation in India. He said that Artificial Intelligence can assist the Administrators in Decision-making. He said that the officers in the field need to ensure that there is no digital divide which can be an impediment and bottleneck, while implementing various policies of the government.

Major General Bindal said that the pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation process due to the challenging times and helped improve our efficiency. He said that the current difficult pandemic situation has accelerated different digital communication technologies for our benefit.

He said that the protocols and procedures will keep changing and digital transformation will usher in a culture of transparency, by enhancing efficiently and effectiveness. He said that the use of technology has helped improve the quality of life and human well-being and is being used by different stakeholders, for achieving the defined Sustainable Development goals.



He said that the global perspective has brought all the stakeholders together for effective use of technology to highlight the strengths and weaknesses, identify the issues and raise awareness. He congratulated the Institution of Engineers, J&K State Centre and NIDM team for holding webinars on various important topics and suggested that there is need to formalize the relationship with the two Institutions, by inking of an MOU, to continue the joint effort in future, as well.

Er. Narendra Singh, President, Institution of Engineers (India) conveyed his message for the success of the Webinar. The Resource Persons were Er. Radheysham Parmar, Dy. Director General, Dept of Telecom, J&K LSA, Er Mohammed Saleem

Khan Scientist "F", Additional State Informatics Officer-J&K, Er. Syed Irfan Yaqoob, Asst. Professor, SSM College of Engineering, Parihaspora and Sandeep Baruah, Scientist "F", Vigyan Prasari, Ministry of Science and Technology Govt of India.

The coordinators for the Webinar were Er. Aamir Ali Mir, Chairman IEI J&KSC and Dr. Amir A. Khan, Faculty NIDM. The programme was moderated by Er. M. Aaqub Sultana Waheed Deva, Honorary Secretary IEI J&KSC, Ms. Yogita Garbhal Young Professional NIDM, Mohammed Suhail Wani and Bilquees Dar, Consultants Disaster Management.

The Webinar was attended by over 200 participants from across the Globe, Council Members of IEI, Corporate Members of JKSC, students and staff from SSM College of Engineering and National Institute of Technology, (NIT) Srinagar and Officers and Staff of Emergency Operation Centre, Srinagar, besides Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) of J&K, including BSNL, Airtel, Reliance-Jio, Vodaphon.

Er. Aamir Ali said that the World Telecom Day is celebrated every year on 17th May to mark the founding of the International Telecommunication Union and signing of the first International Telegraph Convention in 1865.

He said that COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted lives across the Globe and thrown unprecedented challenges to existing systems, including public health delivery systems and livelihood of the majority of the population.

He said that Coronavirus is killing lakhs of people every day and people have been forced to learn new norms of COVID protocol i.e. social distancing, face masks, hand washing, quarantine, lockdowns, work-from-home, virtual meetings, cloud conferencing, webinars etc. He said that Telecommunication and Digital Transformation is helping in managing crucial data on fatalities, diagnosis, treatment of patients, managing distribution of vaccines or medicines and even disseminating government policies and SOPs.

Dr Amir Ali Khan, Faculty NIDM said that use of social media has revolutionized our lives, ICT tools are an important and integral part of Smart City concept. He deliberated on the advantages of ICT tools. Er Radheysham Parmar said that telecom and digital transformation is linked with every sphere of life. He said that Fiber optics are the most reliable medium and effective tool for accelerating the digital transformation.



# Hailstorm aftermath

## Fruit crops in twin Kashmir districts suffer over 40% losses: Govt

Owais Gul

Srinagar, May 17 (KNO): The fruit crops in twin districts of Kashmir have suffered over 40 per cent of losses with the department concerned stating that the report compiled will be forwarded to Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and Principal Secretary Horticulture department by today (Monday) evening.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the frequent hailstorm in the last couple of days caused extensive losses to the apple orchards and other fruit crops across the Valley, leaving the growers worried.

Manzoor Ahmad, a fruit grower from Kulgam district stated that the frequent hailstorm has left the entire community anguished as it has led to the huge losses yet again. “In the last couple of years, the growers have been suffering huge losses due to one reason or another,” he said.

Meanwhile, Director Horticulture, Kashmir Aijaz Ahmad Dar told KNO that South Kashmir’s Kulgam district and Handwara area in north

Kashmir’s Kupwara district have suffered 40 per cent losses due to the hailstorm.

“We have collected the data after assessment two to three days back. The fresh damage to fruit crops due to hailstorm has not been compiled yet. The previous data collected has been compiled and the report will be sent to Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir P K Pole and Principal Secretary Horticulture Navin Kumar Choudhary by today only,” he said.

The damage to fruit crops occurred almost everywhere in the Valley, but some pockets in Kulgam and Handwara have suffered extensive losses, which takes the figure up to around 40 per cent losses as per the assessment done so far.

He added that the losses to fruit crops in other districts vary as somewhere the damage is five per cent while at some places it is about ten per cent and not more than that.

Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO) Kupwara, Farooq Ahmad Tantry said that the apple orchards are mostly affected in the recent hailstorm while walnut crops suffered a bit less



losses as compared to the other crops.

“Almost all the fruit crops have suffered over 40 per cent losses in Handwara area of the district,” he said, adding that the figure of losses is less in other areas of the district.

Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO) Kulgam, Muhammad Iqbal Baba said that the worst hit villages in the districts include Awgam, Zazripora and Puniwah where damage to the maximum extent has taken place. Other areas where moderate hail-

storm hailstorm has been reported are Nowpora, Daderkoot, Checki Hanjan, Hanjan, Sheganpora, Sofipora, Akipora, Behibagh, Srandoo, Arreh, Mohammadpora, Tazipora, Khandypora, Batapora, Jadipora, Dipora, Shurath, Laroo, Kharvot, Sangus, Akipora, Awhatoo, he said.

The hailstorm yesterday (Sunday) caused damage to the crops in Sani-gam, Bogam, Tchengsar and Schuch, he said, adding that the field agency has been asked to prepare the damage

report in consultation with PRIs and revenue agencies and submit the same to his office for onward submission to higher quarters.

He said that according to the advisory related to post hailstorm sprays, the orchardists should make spray of fungicides (per 100 liters of water). In this connection, Zineb 68%+Hexaconazole 4% WP (100g) or Metiram 55%+Pyraclostrobin 5% 60WG or Mancozeb 75WP (300g) or Zineb 7WP (300g) can be used.

In addition to the above, the orchards may be sprayed with urea @ 2% (200g per 100 liters of water) 3 days after the above spray. The advisory asks for maintaining proper orchard sanitation and removing fallen leaves from the orchard, he informed.

Moreover, Dr. Lateef Ahmad, Scientist Agrometeorology an expert said that hailstorm is an instant climate phenomenon, saying that the marginal farmer or people having small fields can prevent the losses due to the hailstorm.

“Hail guns and anti-hail nets can help in preventing the losses to the fruits due to the hailstorm. Per shot

of hail gun costs Rs one lakh, which helps in converting the hailstorm into rains,” he said.

He added that anti-hail nets are also one of the tools to prevent the losses due to the hailstorm, adding that the anti-hail nets can help in preventing losses at small fields while the losses can’t be prevented at commercial land as it would take time to put up an anti-hail net over the land in a shortest possible after the weather forecast by the concerned agencies.

He said that the government should consider starting Agri Insurance for the farmers, saying that it could prove fruitful for them. He also stated that at present research is going on at NIT to come up with a sensor-based umbrella, which will help in preventing the losses.

Another expert termed the hailstorm as ‘global pandemic’, saying that putting up the hail nets on the crops spread over several acres of land is almost impossible, adding that one cannot put up the net over the huge land in a hurry rush after getting the latest weather advisory—(KNO)

# DAK sounds alert over black fungus in COVID-19 patients


Precious Kashmir News

Srinagar, May 17: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Monday said a rare but deadly fungal infection called mucormycosis is infecting COVID-19 patients.

Sounding alert, DAK President and influenza expert Dr Nisar ul Hassan said if left untreated the disease can be fatal for COVID patients. “Cases of mucormycosis, commonly known as black fungus are being reported in several states of the country among recovering and recovered COVID-19 patients,” he said.

Dr Hassan said chances of fungal infection increase in COVID patients, who are diabetic and are taking steroids. “Diabetes lowers the body’s immune defenses, COVID exacerbates it and then steroids act like a fuel to the fire,” he said.

He said COVID itself leads to lymphopenia, therefore predispos-



ing patients to opportunistic fungal infection. “The use of ordinary water in humidifiers which are used during oxygen therapy could be another factor,” he added.

DAK President said in order to prevent this life-threatening disease in COVID patients, doctors should use steroids judiciously and ensure there is no misuse of

steroid. “People who have diabetes should keep their sugar levels in control. And, use sterile water for humidifiers during oxygen therapy,” he said.

He said the fungus is ubiquitous and is found in soil, air and decaying food, adding despite being common in the environment, it does not cause infection in healthy humans.

However, he said when the body’s defenses have been weakened; the fungus gets a chance to infect with devastating results. “After inhaling fungus from the air, it can go into the nose, sinuses, eyes and brain leading to loss of vision and even death in some cases. It can also affect lungs,” Dr Hassan said.

He said symptoms include pain and swelling in eye or face, headache, nasal discharge and black crusts in the nose. “Treatment of mucormycosis involves removal of all infected tissue through surgery and following with antifungal amphotericin B,” he said.

“There is an urgent need to make people aware about the disease. A high degree of suspicion should be there with the doctors who are treating Covid patients and any nasal, facial and eye complaints should not be ignored because early detection and timely intervention holds the key,” he added.

Naveed Ul Haq

Budgam, May 17: Two minors fell unconscious on Monday afternoon at a marriage ceremony in Brenjan area of Chadoora in Central Kashmir’s Budgam district. However, a three-year-old boy succumbed at SKIMS Soura later in the evening, officials said here.

Sources said that two minor boys earlier suddenly fell unconscious and the duo was immediately rushed to sub-district hospital Chadoora, wherefrom they were shifted to SKIMS in a critical condition.

Sheikh Danish

Srinagar, May 17: Authorities on Monday said that 72 inmates have been tested positive for COVID-19 in Udhampur jail. Superintendent of Udhampur Jail, Harish Kotwal said that samples of inmates were collected yesterday and

However, an official said that one among the minor boys succumbed at SKIMS Soura and identified him as Shahnawaz Ahmad Dar (03) son of Mohammad Lateef Dar, a resident of Brenjan Chadoora.

Meanwhile, a police officer said that investigation was going on into the matter. Another minor boy, who is undergoing treatment at SKIMS has been identified as Rahil Ahmad Wagay (02) son of Manzoor Ahmad Wagay, resident of Fresdab Kanidajan area of Charar-i-Sharief. (KNO)

72 inmates test positive at Udhampur jail

72 out of 479 inmates tested positive for COVID-19. He added that the cases were detected through the Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) test on Sunday. Kotwal added that precautionary measures have been taken in the jail already while the medicines and other related things are sufficiently available in jail. (KNO)

# Arampora Tral sans basic amenities; Locals aghast, seek attention from authorities

Skinder Gulzar

Pulwama, May 17: (GNS) Hundreds of households here in Arampora Tral area are living without amenities including shortage of electricity and water supply amid dilapidated road conditions.

A delegation of locals told GNS that despite time to time appraisals, the authorities concerned are yet to budge, putting the local populace into huge inconvenience. “The shortage of water supply, erratic electricity schedule with shabby road conditions are collectively giving a tough time to the villagers”, they said adding that “Even the Back to Village (B2V) Programmes conducted on two instances

haven’t yielded anything.”

“The roads are so shabby that it gets inundated even at the slightest downpour, impeding the movement of vehicles and commuters”, they said.

“The frequent power cuts and acute shortage of drinking are making the things worse for hundreds of households in the village”, they said.

We are being deprived of the basic facilities even as having brought it issue into notice of the authorities concerned on several occasions. Reiterating their appeal, the delegation members urged the authorities to look into their genuine grievances to redress them on a fast-track basis as to alleviate their sufferings. (GNS)

Asif Iqbal

Srinagar, May 17: (GNS) ‘Meritorious candidates’ in Higher Education Department have strongly resented on what it calls arbitrary deferment of their counseling by authorities concerned into their engagement on academic arrangement basis for the current session.

A delegation of the agitated candidates told Srinagar-based news agency Global News Service (GNS) that J&K Higher Education Department had advertised a notification under order No. 58- JK (HED) of 2021: Dated: 25-02-2021 for the engagement of Academic Arrangement candidates in Kashmir Division for session 2021.

The merit lists were accordingly framed and uploaded on the website of GCW M.A. Road after 15-04-2021 by the Nodal Principal (GCW M.A. Road) for all advertised subjects according to the Guidelines advertised by J&K Higher Education Department and a notification issued by the Nodal Principal on 07-05-2021 in which it was conveyed that the counseling for the engagement of Academic Arrangement candidates will be held from 08-05-2021 purely on merit basis as per the list displayed on the college website, they said.

However, the counseling of meritorious candidates has been arbitrarily deferred by the Nodal Principal concerned, they said adding that “We are in a fix as to understand why the counseling has been put off?”

Most of the candidates currently engaged in the colleges on the basis of court orders are ‘ineligible’, sans required qualification (PhD or NET degree), they said.

However ironically such candidates have been pressing the department to continue their services despite they themselves having submitted an affidavit duly signed before 1st Class Judicial Magistrate on the pledge that ‘I will never claim the continuity of service in the department’ at the time of submission of application/joining, they agitated delegation members underlined.

Charging the authorities of connivance, they said that the department has continued with the services of these candidates for two years now, giving a blatant go by to the merit.

“We demand the prestigious Universities across Jammu and Kashmir to come forward to support the cause of PhD, NET-JRF and Post Doctorate candidates for the larger interests of meritorious candidates to imbue a confidence in an otherwise shattered

section of to be academicians”, they said.

Despite having common policies and common department of Higher Education for both divisions of the UT, the recruiting procedures are brazenly different with Kashmir violating the set norms every now and then, they alleged.

We the meritorious candidates have been sitting idle at homes for two years now despite with MPhil., PhD, SET/NET/JRF, and PDF degrees due to ‘abrupt changing policies of Higher Education’, they said adding that they could not be able to join the colleges because of the delay in the counseling and the attitude of the officials including Director Colleges, Nodal Principal, and other Higher Education officials.

Demanding the counseling purely on the basis of merit list already framed by the Nodal Principal be put into practice without any further delay, the agitated meritorious candidates further said that they be given an opportunity to serve the Higher Education Department effectively.

The candidates have in the meantime urged the authorities to make public as to why was the ‘counseling of meritorious candidates’ deferred. (GNS)

# DC reviews enforcement of Corona Curfew in Rajouri Township

RAJOURI, MAY, 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Rajesh K Shavan today conducted a tour of the Rajouri Township and its adjoining areas to review the implementation of Corona Curfew.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Sher Singh; Tehsildar Rajouri, Mohd Rafeeq and DySP Hqrs, Vinod Kumar accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the visit. During his visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the business establishments operating in the town and its adjoining areas. The Deputy Commissioner sought cooperation of the people from all walks of life to break the COVID transmission chain by taking vaccine doses.

# M Raju reviews formulation of Capex plan, other development activities in Jammu district

JAMMU, MAY 17: Commissioner Secretary Jal Shakti Department, M.Raju, (Incharge Secretary for Jammu district) today reviewed the formulation of District Capex plan and other development activities being executed under various schemes, here through video conference.

Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Anshul Garg gave a power point presentation on the development works and formulation of District Capex plan. After a detailed review, the Secretary asked the concerned officials to complete the ground work in order to implement Jal Jeevan Mission

smoothly.

He also asked the officers of PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control department to complete all the works by August 2021 under Languishing project.

M.Raju directed the officers of Social Welfare Department to include all the left out beneficiaries under the Social Security Schemes.

The Incharge Secretary also directed the SE Hydraulic to float the tender for completion of balanced works of Tawi Barrage within ten days. During the meeting, summer preparedness of PDD besides water supply from Chenab River was also

reviewed. The Incharge Secretary instructed the officers to include those works in District Capex which are recommended by DDC, BDC or PRI members. He said that priority should be given to ongoing works in the District Capex. M. Raju also enquired about the prevailing situation of Covid-19 in the district and asked the DC to take all possible measures to enhance related facilities and provision of relief to the people. CPO Yoginder Katoch, SE Hydraulic, SE PWD, SE PHE Urban, SE PMGSY besides senior officers of the concerned departments were present in the meeting.

Dir Health visits upcoming Covid hospital at Khanmoh

Srinagar, May 17: Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Rather on Monday visited the site of the upcoming Covid-19 hospital at Khanmoh and interacted with a team of officers from DRDO and officers of various executing agencies.

A spokesperson of Directorate of Health Services Kashmir said that the director visited the upcoming Covid hospital which would be having 500 bed capacity and would be completed in the shortest period of time.

“Director Health service Kashmir interacted with a team of officers from DRDO and officers of various executing agencies while reviewing the status of a 500 bedded hospital which

would be having 125 ICU beds. The Covid Care Hospital is under construction at Khanmoh Srinagar,” the spokesperson said. He said that the hospital is expected to start functioning in the 1st week of June with the support of Directorate of Health Services Kashmir and DRDO.

The director emphasized on timely completion of remaining work and assured all support to the team. He said that the hospital would be completed in the shortest period of time.

The director held an interaction and appreciated the role of engineers of DRDO lead by Anil Khurana, CCE estates North Chandigarh, Brijesh Kumar Maurya, Estate Manager, Zubair Ali, Scientist.

# Cop held with contraband in Kupwara

Accused disengaged: Senior Police Officer

Jahangir Lolabi

**Kupwara, May 17:** (GNS) A Special Police Officer (SPO) has been arrested with contraband in main town Kupwara, officials said on Monday.

The officials told Global News Service (GNS) that the accused identified as one Akhtar Hussain Mir of Izz Ghund Khumriyal was arrested after police intercepted a vehicle on receipt of a specific input. During searches of the vehicle bearing registration number JK-09B 6928, two corn sticks of cannabis besides a cutter were recovered, they said.

The accused was instantly arrested by Police Post Bazaar for further questioning, they said.

Meanwhile a senior police officer in the district confirmed to GNS the recovery of contraband from the accused cop. “The recovery was made last evening”, the official said adding that “After preliminary investigations, the accused has been indicted and has as such disengaged from services.” (GNS)

# Police foils black marketing of rice in Budgam

**Srinagar, May 17:** (GNS) Police on Monday said that it has foiled black marketing of Government rice by seizing illegally procured Government rice in Central Kashmir’s Budgam district. In a statement issued to GNS, the police said that acting on specific information that one person namely Abdul Rashid Sofi son of Mohammad Jamal Sofi resident of Harda Batapora has illegally procured Government rice and is selling in his private shop at exorbitant rates. Giving details police spokesperson said that on receipt of this information, Police party from Police Station Budgam raided the said location and recovered five quintals of Government rice from his shop. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody.

Accordingly, a case vide FIR number 136/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Budgam, he said.



JAMMU AND KASHMIR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

RESHAM GHAR COLONY, BAKSHI NAGAR, JAMMU-180001

Subject: Shortlisting/Rejection of the candidates for the post of Assistant Professor, Food Science and Quality Control in Higher Education Department notified vide Notification No.10-PSC(DR-P) of 2017 dated 27.10.2017.

Notice Dated:- 12-05-2021

1. Whereas, the J&K Public Service Commission, vide Notification No. 10-PSC(DR-P) of 2017 dated 27.10.2017, invited online application forms from the permanent residents of Jammu & Kashmir for 15 posts of Assistant Professor, Food Science and Quality Control in Higher Education Department, possessing the prescribed qualification, i.e. Master's Degree level in the relevant subject from an Indian University, or an equivalent degree from an accredited foreign University. In response to the said Notification, the Commission received 196 application forms; and
2. Whereas, the verification/scrutiny of the documents was conducted by the Screening Committee constituted for the purpose and some candidates were found deficient in respect of some Documents. Accordingly, vide Notice dated 24.05.2019. The said candidates were advised to submit the deficient documents; and
3. Whereas, in response to the above Notice, the deficient documents were received from some of the candidates, which were further verified/scrutinized for short-listing of the candidates; and
4. Whereas, it was noted that there is no clarity on equivalence of various degrees with the minimum prescribed qualification; and
5. Whereas, the matter was taken up with the Higher Education Department for clarification; and
6. Whereas, the Higher Education Department furnished the Minutes of the Equivalence Committee held on 10.09.2020. As per the decision of the Equivalence Committee, the M.Tech Degrees obtained in Food Technology, Technology and Management, Food Engineering, Agriculture and Food Science, Horticulture (Food Science), Food Science (Food Safety and Standard), Agriculture Process and Food Engineering, Food Safety and Quality Assurance, Horticulture (Post Harvest Technology), PG in Bio-Technology, Master's in Home Science (Food Science and Nutrition), Master's in Nutrition and Dietetics, M.Sc in Post Harvest Technology, PG in Dietetics and Food Service Management, M.Tech in Food Engineering and Technology are not equivalent to the qualification prescribed for the post viz. Master's Degree in relevant subject i.e. Food Science and Quality Control ; and
7. Whereas, shortlisting of the candidates has been done on the basis of the decision of the Equivalence Committee and as per provisions of Rule 51 of J&K Public Service Commission (Business and Procedure) Rules, 1980, as amended from time to time, which provides for weightage to be given to the Academic Performance, outreach and extra-curricular activities, special attributes and teaching skills constituting 57 points (on pro-rata basis i-iv only) with the break-up tabulated as under:-

i)	10th Class	02 points
ii)	12th Class	03 points
iii)	UG	06 points
iv)	PG	25 points
v)	JRF	02 points
vi)	M.Phil	03 points
vii)	PH.D	06 points
viii)	Post Doctorate (Minimum one year)	03 points
ix)	Distinction in NCC (holder of "C" Certificate)	02 points
x)	Distinction in Sports certified by the Secretary, J&K State Sports Council to be an outstanding sports person in terms of Sports Council to be an outstanding sports persons in terms of J&K (appointment of outstanding sports) Rules, 1998	01 point
xi)	Gold Medal	01 points
xii)	Teaching Experience at the level of post applied for or immediately above or below (in Gazetted Cadre) 0.25 points for each completed quarter of the Academic Session to the maximum of 03 points	03 points
	Total	57 points

8. Whereas, the Rule 51 of J&K Public Service Commission (Business & Procedure) Rules, 1980, as amended from time to time, further provides for the short-listing of eligible candidates to be called for interview in the ratio of 1:3 and as such 27 candidates under OM category for 09 posts, 09 candidates under RBA Category for 03 posts, 03 candidates under SC Category for 01 post, 03 candidates under ST category for 01 post and 03 candidates under ALC category for 01 advertised post are required to be called for interview/viva voce; and
9. Whereas, after compilation of the data with respect to the above weightage points and the ratio to be adopted for short-listing of candidates for interview, the cut of merit under OM Category is 27.17; and
10. Whereas, the ratio of 1:3 could not be followed in respect of categories of RBA & SC due to less number of eligible candidates in these categories; and
11. Whereas, no candidate under ST & ALC categories is eligible for the post of Assistant Professor, Food Science & Quality Control.
12. Now, therefore, the following candidates are hereby shortlisted for the post of Asst. Professor, Food Science & Quality Control for appearing before the interview board.

S.NO.	REG NO	NAME OF THE CANDIDATE	PARENTAGE	CATEGORY	TOTAL MARKS
1.	17011007000116	ASIMA JAN	MOHD YOUSUF SHAH	OM	34.15
2.	17011007000097	ASWINI KUMAR SINGH JASROTIA	SANTOSH SINGH JASROTIA	OM	33.03
3.	17011007000104	GULZAR AHMAD NAYIK	MOHD SHAFI NAYIK	OM	32.87
4.	17011007000091	KHALID MUZAFFAR	MOHD AMIN RATHER	OM	32.73
5.	17011007000015	HARMEET CHAUHAN	JASWINDER PAL SINGH	OM	31.25
6.	17011007000121	ROMEE JAN	GHULAM MOHAMMAD DAR	OM	30.94
7.	17011007000112	HARLEEN KOUR	JASWANT SINGH	OM	30.69
8.	17011007000094	NAFIYA QADIR	GHULAM QADIR	OM	29.43
9.	17011007000060	SAHARA SAYEED	MOHAMMAD SAYEED KHAN	OM	29.32
10.	17011007000074	SAJAD AHMAD MIR	MOHAMMAD AKRAM MIR	OM	29.07
11.	17011007000113	REHANA AKHTER	NOOR MOHAMAD	OM	28.89
12.	17011007000023	TABASUM MAQBOOL	MOHMAD MAQBOOL DAR	OM	28.85
13.	17011007000098	SUMAIRA HASSAN KHAN	GULAM HASSAN KHAN	OM	28.79
14.	17011007000100	OMAR BIN HAMEED	ABDUL HAMEED ZARGAR	OM	28.70
15.	17011007000077	SHALLU	KAMAL LAL	OM	28.48
16.	17011007000179	AMREEN	AB QAYOOM WANI	OM	28.43
17.	17011007000084	GAZALA AKHTAR	GH MOHAMAD KHAN	OM	28.41
18.	17011007000079	SAJAD AHMAD SOFI	NAZIR AHMAD SOFI	OM	28.34
19.	17011007000014	DEEPIKA NANDA	ASHOK KUMAR NANDA	OM	28.28
20.	17011007000109	AMINAH BINT AL HUDA	AGA SYED AHMAD ALMOSVI	OM	28.07
21.	17011007000133	AMEETA SALARIA	GURDIAL SINGH SALARIA	OM	27.87
22.	17011007000093	JASMEET KOUR	GURCHARAN SINGH	OM	27.86
23.	17011007000086	WAQAS NABI BABA	LATE GH NABI BABA	OM	27.81
24.	17011007000024	TARIQ AHMAD GANIE	MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL GANIE	OM	27.81
25.	17011007000056	BHARATI SHARMA	SODAGAR MAL KHAJURIA	OM	27.46
26.	17011007000034	SHUAIB MOHAMMAD DAR	FAROOQ AHMAD DAR	OM	27.25
27.	17011007000064	SHOWKET AHMAD PALA	GH NABI PALA	OM	27.17
28.	17011007000117	SAJAD AHMAD RATHER	GHULAM MOHD RATHER	RBA	32.66
29.	17011007000059	MANZOOR AHMAD SHAH	GH MOHI U DIN SHAH	RBA	30.86
30.	17011007000114	SHAIQ AHMAD GANAI	MOHD AFZAL GANAI	RBA	28.91
31.	17011007000063	MOHD SHAFI	GH MOHI UD DIN	RBA	25.71
32.	17011007000089	BINDIYA SHARMA	OM PRAKASH SHARMA	RBA	22.75
33.	17011007000155	MONIKA HANS	HANS RAJ HANS	SC	29.66
34.	17011007000013	RENU BHARTI	RAM LAL	SC	24.43

Simultaneously, the candidature of the candidates mentioned below is hereby rejected for the reason indicated against each:-

S.NO.	REGNO	NAME OF THE CANDIDATE	PARENTAGE	CATEGORY	REASONS FOR REJECTION
1.	17011007000040	TAJINDER SINGH	YESHPAL SINGH	ALC	MSC BOTANY WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
2.	17011007000138	TAWHEED AMIN	MOHD AMIN MALLA	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
3.	17011007000192	JASIA NISSAR	PEER NISSAR AHMAD	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
4.	17011007000068	SADAF NAZIR	NAZIR AHMED WANI	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
5.	17011007000195	BAZILLA GAYAS	GAYAS UD DIN SHAHMIRI	OM	NOT SUBMITTED THE DEFICIENT DOCUMENTS
6.	17011007000010	FARHAN MOHUDDIN BHAT	GHULAM MOHUDDIN BHAT	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
7.	17011007000012	KULSUM JAN	NISSAR AHMAD NAJAR	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
8.	17011007000173	HUMA MUKHTAR	MUKHTAR AHMAD SHAH	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
9.	17011007000055	SYED INSHA RAFIQ	SYED RAFIQ AHMAD	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
10.	17011007000017	TASEEM AHMAD MOKHDOMI	B A MOKHDOMI	OM	MSC IN BIO-TECHNOLOGY WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
11.	17011007000143	RUKHSAAR SAYEED	MOHMAD SYED SHAH	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
12.	17011007000008	NADIRA ANJUM	ALTAF HABIBULLAH	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
13.	17011007000066	UZMA ALTAF	MOHD ALTAF MISGAR	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
14.	17011007000045	RAFEYA SHAMS	SHAMS UDDIN MIR	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
15.	17011007000188	NADIYA RASHID MALIK	ABDUL RASHID MALIK	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
16.	17011007000148	MEHNAZA MANZOOR	MANZOOR AHMAD BHAT	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
17.	17011007000035	SHAYEEB AHMAD BHAT	GHULAM AHMAD BHAT	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
18.	17011007000181	DR LUBNA MASOODI	ABDUL MAJEED MASOODI	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
19.	17011007000029	TABEEN JAN	KHURSHID AHMAD WANI	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
20.	17011007000106	FARAH NAQASH	GHULAM HASSAN NAQASH	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
21.	17011007000036	MAEENA NAMAN SHAFIEE	SHAHID NAMAN SHAFIEE	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
22.	17011007000039	MOHD KHALID GUL	GH MOHD RATHER	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
23.	17011007000196	TERHEENA AHAD	ABDUL AHAD WANI	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
24.	17011007000047	KAISER YOUNIS	MOHD YOUNIS RATHER	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
25.	17011007000037	INSHA ZAHOOR	ZAHOOR AHMAD GANDROO	OM	M.TECH DEGREE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
26.	17011007000083	TAHIYA QADRI	MOHAMMAD YOUSUF QADIRI	OM	MSC HORTICULTURE (FOOD TECHNOLOGY)WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
27.	17011007000006	ANIKA FAYAZ	FAYAZ AHMAD ALAKABAND	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
28.	17011007000151	FOZIA HAMEED	AB HAMEED SHAH	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
29.	17011007000139	MS AWSI JAN	ASSADULLAH DALAL	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
30.	17011007000120	MIRZA TAJAMUL HUSSAIN	MIRZA AKHTAR HUSSAIN	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
31.	17011007000009	KAUNSAR JABEEN	GHULAM MOHI UD DIN SHINWARI	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
32.	17011007000005	SHEMLAH FAYAZ	FAYAZ AHMED SHAH	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
33.	17011007000108	BEENA MUNAZA	SHABIR AHMAD KHAN	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
34.	17011007000135	OMEERA AYOUB	MOHD AYOUB DAR	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
35.	17011007000200	DR ARCHANA BHAT	RAJESH K SHARMA	OM	POST GRADUATION IN DIETETICS & FOOD SCIENCE MANAGEMENTWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
36.	17011007000038	MUDASIR AHMAD MALIK	MOHD SHAREEF MALIK	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
37.	17011007000004	MASRAT MAQBOOL	MOHD MAQBOOL BHAT	OM	NOT SUBMITTED THE DEFICIENT DOCUMENTS.
38.	17011007000146	OMAR BASHIR	BASHIR AHMAD	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.

39.	17011007000065	NADIA BASHIR	BASHIR AHMAD	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
40.	17011007000095	QURAAZH AKEEMU AMIN	MOHD AMIN BHAT	OM	MSC IN HORTICULTURE (POST HARVEST TECHNOLOGY)WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
41.	17011007000156	MIFFTHA YASEEN	MOHD YASEEN DAR	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
42.	17011007000122	SADIYA JAVAID	JAVAID HUSSAIN QADRI	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
43.	17011007000043	KHAN NADIFA JAN	MOHAMMAD NAJEEB KHAN	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
44.	17011007000119	QUDSIYA AYAZ	AYAZ HUSSAIN NENGROO	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
45.	17011007000182	SEHREEN NASEER	NASEER AHMAD BHAT	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
46.	17011007000048	ISHRAT MAJID	ABDUL MAJID THOKUR	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
47.	17011007000125	SADAF PARVEZ	PARVEZ AHMAD DAR	OM	NOT SUBMITTED THE DEFICIENT DOCUMENTS.
48.	17011007000189	KHUSHNUMA MAQBOOL	MOHD MAQBOOL SHEIKH	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
49.	17011007000049	SYED MANSHA RAFIQ	SYED RAFIQ AHMAD	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
50.	17011007000101	YASIR REYAZ	REYAZ UL REHMAN	OM	M.TECH DEGREE (FOOD TECH & MANAGEMENT)WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
51.	17011007000118	MOHMAD SAYEED BHAT	GHULAM RASOOL BHAT	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
52.	17011007000044	OVAIS SHAFIQ QADRI	MOHD SHAFIQ UL REHMAN QADRI	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
53.	17011007000007	AAYEENA ALTAF	ALTAF HUSSAIN BEG	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
54.	17011007000061	SHUMAILA JAN	NISSAR AHMAD NAJAR	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
55.	17011007000042	SUHEELA BHAT	MOHD ISMAIL BHAT	OM	M.TECH DEGREE. WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
56.	17011007000003	IRSHAD MAAJID TAILY	AB GANI TAILY	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
57.	17011007000161	SHAFAT AHMAD KHAN	SHOWKAT AHMAD KHAN	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
58.	17011007000019	UMAR ZAHOOR	ZAHOOR AHMAD SHAH	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
59.	17011007000075	SYED AAFIA ISHRAT	ISHRAT SHAKEEL	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
60.	17011007000128	ANJUM AYOUB	MOHD AYOUB PARAY	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
61.	17011007000153	SUHEEL AHMAD BHAT	GULAM QADIR BHAT	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
62.	17011007000011	KHALID BASHIR	BASHIR AHMAD NAIKOO	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION
63.	17011007000165	NUSRAT AJAZ	AJAZ AHMAD BHAT	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
64.	17011007000147	TEHSEEN MASOOD	MASOOD AHMED	OM	PG IN HOME SCIENCE WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
65.	17011007000169	ALTAF HUSSAIN BHAT	WALI MOHD BHAT	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
66.	17011007000085	DUWA	NISAR AHMAD SHAH	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
67.	17011007000130	MUDASIR AHMAD SHAGOO	GH MOHD SHAGOO	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
68.	17011007000163	HILAL HASSAN	GH HASSAN WANI	OM	WITHOUT NET/SET/SLET/PHD
69.	17011007000167	MAAJID AHMAD JAN	NAZIR AHMAD JAN	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
70.	17011007000194	FURHEEN AMIN	MOHAMAD AMIN KHAN	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
71.	17011007000166	MANSOOR WASIM MIR	GH RASOOL MIR	OM	WITHOUT NET/SET/SLET/PHD
72.	17011007000032	TAHIYA QADRI	MOHAMMAD YOUSUF QADRI	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
73.	17011007000145	YASIR ALI ARFAT	MASTER ALI MUHAMMAD	OM	MSC IN BIO-TECHNOLOGYWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
74.	17011007000017	SAHREEN NAZIR	DR NAZIR AHMAD NAZIR	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
75.	17011007000096	ISHA GUPTA	RAVI KUMAR GUPTA	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
76.	17011007000150	AUNJUM REYAZ	REYAZ UL RAHMAN	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
77.	17011007000028	BASHARAT YOUSUF	MOHAMMAD YOUSUF MIR	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
78.	17011007000134	ASHAQ HUSSAIN NAJAR	WALI MOHD NAJAR	OM	MSC IN TOXICOLOGYWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
79.	17011007000026	NISAR AHMAD MIR	AB RASHID MIR	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
80.	17011007000174	SHAFIA ASHRAF	MOHAMMAD ASHRAF BHAT	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
81.	17011007000115	ANSHUM SHARMA	ASHOK KUMAR	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
82.	17011007000140	MS AMBREENA NAZIR	NAZIR AHMAD MIR	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
83.	17011007000132	MOHAMAD MASROOR ALI	ALI MOHMAD WANI	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
84.	17011007000160	RUKHSANA RAHMAN	AB RAHMAN	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
85.	17011007000168	RAVINDER KOUR	BACHAN SINGH	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
86.	17011007000102	NIDHI SHARMA	CHET RAM SHARMA	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
87.	17011007000067	YASMEENA AMIN	MOHAMMAD AMIN GANAI	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
88.	17011007000183	ARCHANA BHAT	RATTAN LAL BHAT	OM	MSC IN DIETETICS AND FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENTWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
89.	17011007000002	HAROON MAQBOOL WANI	MOHMAD MAQBOOL WANI	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
90.	17011007000164	MONIKA PANDITA	SHUBAN JI PANDITA	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
91.	17011007000149	FIRDOUS JAN	MIR AB REHMAN DAR	OM	PG DEGREE IN DIETETICS & FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENTWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
92.	17011007000185	ROHINI ANAND	SHAM SUNDER ANAND	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
93.	17011007000144	BUSHRA MUZZAMIL	NAZIR AHMAD NADEEM	OM	SET CERTIFICATE AFTER CUT OFF DATE.
94.	17011007000171	MALIK ABDUL ROUF	MALIK SAIF UD DIN	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
95.	17011007000018	NAZIA NAZIR	NAZIR AHMAD WAGAY	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
96.	17011007000154	KANCHAN SHARMA	BABU RAM SHARMA	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
97.	17011007000159	BILAL AHMAD BHAT	MOHMAD ABDULLAH BHAT	OM	PG DEGREE IN VETERINARY SCIENCEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
98.	17011007000191	NAZIA NISSAR	NISSAR AHMAD BABA	OM	PHD DEGREE AFTER CUT OFF DATE
99.	17011007000123	ASIR GANI	MR ABDUL GANI SHAH	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
100.	17011007000131	MEHRAJ AHMAD	GH MOHIUDDIN KUCHAY	OM	MSC IN BIO-CHEMISTRYWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
101.	17011007000172	BASHIR AHMAD SOFI	GH AHMAD SOFI	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
102.	17011007000021	REHANA RASHID	AB RASHID ZARGAR	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
103.	17011007000180	GUNJAN SHARMA	JAGDISH CHANDER SHARMA	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
104.	17011007000025	FARHAT SHARIEF	SHARIEF UD DIN MASOODI	OM	MSC IN HOME SCIENCEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
105.	17011007000076	SHALINI SHARMA	KUNDAN LAL SHARMA	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
106.	17011007000069	SHIVANGI GUPTA	MANMOHAN GUPTA	OM	PG IN NUTRITION & DIETETICSWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
107.	17011007000090	ANISA ANJUM MALIK	MOHD YAOQB MALIK	OM	MSC IN AGR(P/POST HARVEST TECH) WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
108.	17011007000092	AFSHAN	AHMADULLAH TAK	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
109.	17011007000199	MOHSIN BASHIR	BASHIR AHMAD SHEIKH	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
110.	17011007000110	SHAFIYA RAFIQ	RAFIQ AHMED SHEIKH	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
111.	17011007000157	SAIMAT UL FATIMA	NAZIR AHMAD WANI	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
112.	17011007000099	SHILPA SHARMA	SUDERSHAN KUMAR SHARMA	OM	PG IN HOME SCIENCEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
113.	17011007000142	RAFIA RASHID	RASHID UD DIN	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
114.	17011007000111	RAYEES UL ISLAM	GH MOHI UD DIN	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
115.	17011007000198	NAFISA JABEEN	MOHAMMAD AFZAL BHAT	OM	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
116.	17011007000136	FAYAZ AHMAD SHEKH	MOHD ABDULLAH SHEIKH	OM	NOT SUBMITTED THE DEFICIENT DOCUMENTS & MASTER DEGREE IN VETERINARY SCIENCE.
117.	17011007000137	SIYAM FARHAT	FARHAT HUSSAIN	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
118.	17011007000124	ARJUMAND NISAR	NISAR AHMAD TAK	OM	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
119.	17011007000105	SAJAD AHMAD WANI	AB RASHID WANI	OM	PHD NOT IN RELEVANT SUBJECT
120.	17011007000022/17011007000062	AMIR GULL	GH MOHD MOHAND	OM	PHD NOT IN RELEVANT SUBJECT
121.	17011007000016	MUDASIR AHMAD BHAT	ABDUL GANI BHAT	OM	PHD IN (HORTICULTURE) FOOD TECHNOLOGYWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
122.	17011007000050	FARHEENA IFTIKHAR	IFTIKHAR AHMAD WANI	RBA	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
123.	17011007000082	RAYEES AHMAD BAKSHI	HAMIDULLAH BAKSHI	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
124.	17011007000027	MUDASIR YAQOOB	MOHD YAQOOB	RBA	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
125.	17011007000170	QAYOOM SIDIQUE BAHAR	MOHD SIDIQUE BAHAR	RBA	M.TECHWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
126.	17011007000041	MUNEEB AHMAD MALIK	SHABIR AHMAD MALIK	RBA	NET CERTIFICATE AFTER CUT OFF DATE
127.	17011007000152	NASEER AHMED	MOHD SHARIEF	RBA	PHD DEGREE AFTER CUT OFF DATE
128.	17011007000190	SYED SHUHLA NAZIR	AEJAZ AHMAD MALIK	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
129.	17011007000201	SHAMID SIRAJ SHAH	SIRAJ UD DIN SHAH	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
130.	17011007000178	SUMAIRA JAN	MANZOOR AHMAD DAR	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
131.	17011007000020	BILAL AHMAD MIR	MANZOOR AHMAD MIR	RBA	M.TECH DEGREEWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
132.	17011007000088	AAFAQ ASHRAF	MOHD ASHRAF MALIK	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
133.	17011007000078	SHOWKAT AHMAD MIR	ALI MOHD MIR	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
134.	17011007000080	AUROOSA JAVID	SHAFIE AHMAD SHAPOO	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
135.	17011007000177	TAJALLAY SHARIEF	JAVIED U DIN SHAH	RBA	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
136.	17011007000126	JAMEEL AHMED	MOHD SAYEED	RBA	PG IN GEOGRAPHYWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
137.	17011007000046	REETU BALA	DARSHAN LAL	SC	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
138.	17011007000158	JAVED IQBAL	BARKET HUSSAIN	ST	PG IN BIOTECHNOLOGYWHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.
139.	17011007000141	TSERING NORZOM	PUNTSOG DORYJ	ST	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
140.	17011007000070	AAMIR HUSSAIN	SHABIR HUSSAIN	ST	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
141.	17011007000052	YASMIN KOSER	ABDUL RASHID	ST	NOT POSSESSING NET/SET/SLET/PHD
142.	17011007000051	TARIQ AHMED MAGREY	GH QADIR MAGREY	ST	PG IN APPLIED GEOLOGY WHICH IS NOT A RELEVANT QUALIFICATION.



# No Black Fungus case detected in in recent months: Top Medico



## PRCIOUS KSHMIR NEWS

**JAMMU, MAY 17:** As if the Covid pandemic wasn't enough, another scare has gripped the public. An infection by the name of Black Fungus is targeting people in some parts of the country after recovering from Covid-19, and if not treated in time, it is as deadly as its name. Thankfully, Head of Ophthalmology Department at Government Medical College Jammu, Dr Satish Gupta has assured that nothing much is lost and that Black Fungus has always been there.

Dispelling the apprehensions, the HoD said, 'So far we have not witnessed any case of Black Fungus Infection in the recent months. The only patient we have had came

in the month of November, last year, and was successfully treated. I request all those recovered from Covid-19 to keep cautious and continue observing Covid appropriate behaviour'.

Dr Satish Gupta said that Black Fungus usually targets Covid-recovered persons with uncontrolled diabetes or those who have administered prolonged or unsupervised dosage of steroids. 'Cancer patients, those who have undergone organ transplant and people with weak immunity are more susceptible to Black Fungus' he added.

The doctor advised the public not to confuse Conjunctivitis with the Black Fungus Infection and said, 'Conjunctivitis is a routine infection

and is easily curable; while the latter has recently caught public's attention due to Covid and needs timely intervention'. He particularly advised the susceptible population to keep diabetes under check and warned all against unsupervised use of steroids.

The symptoms of Rhino-ocular Cerebral Mucormycosis, the medical term for Black Fungus Infection, includes stiffness or blood stained/black discharge from nose; pain, bulging (proptosis), restriction in movement, drooping of eye/s, swelling, black lesion around eye/s and loss of vision; and death if in case the infection reaches brain.

The doctor appealed the public to keep following Covid appropriate behaviour so as to avoid Covid and post Covid issues altogether.

Dr Satish Gupta informed that all Covid-related queries and doubts can be cleared on the helpline number 0191 2571616. Public can also call Divisional Control Room at 0191-2520982, 2549676, 2674444, 2674115, 2674908. 'Moreover, J&K Government has started a live phone-in health programme on Gulistan channel which is aired twice daily- from 8:30 am to 9 am and 8:30 pm to 9 pm. Eminent doctors respond to public queries during the programme. Anybody from the public can call on the above-mentioned Divisional Control Room phone numbers and seek information related to Covid treatment, home isolation and other non-Covid health problem', he said.

## Farmers in Kulgam accuse pesticide shop owner of selling 'sub-standard' pesticides, demand cancellation of license

**Kulgam, May 17:** Some farmers from South Kashmir's Kulgam district while accusing a pesticide shop owner of selling sub-standard pesticides appealed government to cancel the license of the shop owner.

These farmers from Zeban Yaripora village of Kulgam told Reporters that the pesticides they purchased from a shop instead of controlling disease, developed more scab.

These farmers alleged that they are buying pesticides from a shop known as

'Alfalah Pesticides' in Kulgam. The shop according to them is owned by one Muhamamd Yousuf Nalkoo alias Yousuf Zebayan, a resident of their own village.

These farmers as per news agency Kashmir News Trust claimed that recently they bought 'Nativo' high drug pesticide from the said shop but their apple orchards have developed more scab instead of controlling it.

Pertinently, Nativo is a new combination fungicide

containing Tebuconazole and Trifloxystrobin. Nativo is a systemic broad-spectrum fungicide with protective and curative action which offers not only a disease control but also improves quality and yield of crop.

"This pesticide is very useful in controlling scab but the pesticide we bought increased the scab in apples. We appeal District Administration to cancel the license of this shop owner and check the quality of the pesticides he is selling to farmers," they said. (KNT)

## On instructions of Tourism Secy, technical team inspects Gulmarg Golf Course

Precious Kashmir News

**SRINAGAR, MAY 17:** On the instructions of Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Sarmad Hafeez, a team of experts from Royal Springs Golf Course visited Gulmarg today to take stock of the condition and readiness of the Golf Course there.

The team of experts held a comprehensive discussion with the Chief Executive Officer, Gulmarg Development Authority, Inam ul Haq Siddiqui. They also visited the Golf Course and inspected the turf as well.

It may be mentioned here that as soon as snow at Gulmarg melted, the Tourism Department has made preparations for keeping the Golf Course there in a state of readiness. As soon as the Covid situation

improves and Covid SoPs permit, the Golf Course is planned to be made functional for hosting golfing of national and international activity. The team of experts assured the CEO, GDA of continued technical assistance from them in bringing this historic golf course back to its pristine glory.

Work in this regard has already been started by the Department at the Golf Course. Considered among the highest green courses in the world, Gulmarg Golf Course was built in 1890 and the first golf championship was organized there in the 1920s. The addition of Gulmarg Golf Course, which has not been fully operational for a few years, to the Golfing circuit is expected to give a fillip to the golfing activity from this year.

## Rs 1.2 crore fin asst disbursed to regd workers: DC

**UDHAMPUR, MAY 17:** Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Indu Kanwal Chib today disbursed financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 1.20 crore (One Crore Twenty Lakh Only) @ Rs 1000 each to 12000 active registered construction workers of the District Udhampur. The financial assistance of Rs. 1000 is being provided to each worker for the Month of May and June by the UT Government to help them to tide over difficulties amid the Covid Lockdown.

Assistant Labour Commissioner, Pradyot Gupta informed that the financial assistance has been provided by the Labour Department under Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board (JKBOCWBB) for the Month of May. He added that the amount was released to the construction workers through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode. The move has been made following the announcement made by Lt. Governor, J&K, Manoj Sinha for providing financial assistance.

## Multi-specialised District Covid team forms foundation for effective Covid containment Doda

**DODA, MAY 17:** Dedicated and countless hours of round the clock working by a multi-specialised District Covid team over last one year has laid a strong foundation for the effective Covid management in this hilly district.

String of measures and initiatives have been taken by the District Administration to tackle the situation in effective and efficient way. The composition and constitution of District Covid team/cell is result of a meticulous selection.

Since last year, the team headed by Epidemiologist Umar Anayat Khan and comprising Block Medical Officer, Dr Mashhood Zargar, Faizan Ali Trambo MPMHW (Distt. Media Coordinator) of Ghat Block and Umar Mughal (DEO) from office of Chief Medical Officer are working without a single day break in managing the Covid-19 and its related affairs on daily basis.

The team also forms one of the core groups of the District Covid Task Force (DCTF) working in close coordination with it to chalk out the framework and measures which are implemented at the grassroots



level to safeguard every individual amid this Covid-19 pandemic scare.

The data management which includes daily COVID-19 bulletin, daily reporting on vaccination, testing, status of positive cases, home isolation, surveillance, identification of potential hotspots, framing of SOPs, imparting training to the field functionaries, dissemination of accurate information, addressing grievances of COVID-19 patients/general public, guiding people regarding the do's and don'ts and preventive measures to be taken to contain the spread of COVID-19 etc

form the day to day task of the team.

Adding to this when there was shortage of qualified staff to perform testing, the members of the team volunteered and performed around 2000 RAT tests till now both in town area and far off villages of the district.

In recognition of his work, the head of the team, Epidemiologist Umar Anayat Khan was conferred Covid warrior award by LG last year at Srinagar. The other members were also felicitated by the Divisional and District Administration for their selfless service amid Coronavirus threat.

## Asha workers demand release of 3 months pending salary

**Bandipora, May 17, KNT:** Asha workers in Bandipora district are yet to receive their salaries for the past three months. A group of Asha workers stage a peaceful protest in Sumbal Block of North Kashmir's Bandipora district urging government to resolve their issue and release the wages which they have not received from past three months.

"Coming from economically poor background, we continue to work without getting

our salaries. For many of us, salary is the major source of income," rue the Asha workers.

One of the Asha workers told KNT that they are performing duties in this pandemic and still not being paid. "We are being called Covid-Warriors but not being paid. From three months we have not received a penny," she said.

The protesting Asha workers urged the concerned department to release their pending salaries. (KNT)

## Div Com directs for close check on overcharging of essential medicines

'Sufficient stock of covid related drugs including Remdesivir available'



## PRCIOUS KSHMIR NEWS

**JAMMU, MAY 17:** Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Dr Raghav Langer today reviewed the stock and supply position of essential drugs, pulse oximeters, here at a meeting of Drug Controllers and Wholesale dealers of Pharmaceuticals.

The meeting was attended by UT Drugs Controller J&K, Lotika Khajuria; ADC Jammu, Deputy Director Health Services, Assistant Controllers Drugs, besides President, Secretary and other members of Jammu Pharmaceutical Distributors Association and other concerned.

At the outset, the Div Com reviewed the stock position of covid related drugs, Bipap & High flow Masks, Sanitizers, covid related medical equipments (oximeters, oxygen concentrators etc). It was informed in the meeting that sufficient stock of essential drugs is available and supply is also being maintained.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned to ensure that there was no shortage of covid related drugs, masks, sanitizers, oximeters etc. He also passed directions for ensuring close check on overcharging for essential medicines, masks and oximeters.

The Drugs Controller informed that sufficient quantity of Covid related drugs are available. She informed that over 11,500 vials of Remdesivir are available in the Jammu division and they are also receiving regular weekly stocks.

It was also informed in the meeting that Pulse Oxymeters and Oxygen concentrators have been notified as Drugs under the provisions of Drug Control order DPCO, 2013 w.e.f April 1, 2020. It was further informed that the MRP of Pulse oximeters and oxygen concentrators shall be monitored under para 20 of DPCO, 2013. The government shall monitor the MRP of all the drugs,

including non scheduled formulations and ensure that no manufacturer increases the MRP of a drug more than 10 percent of MRP during preceding twelve months.

The Drugs Controller has also issued a circular that any person found violating the provisions of Para 20 of DPCO shall invite action under Essential Commodities Act 1955.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the Drug Control Department to constantly review the compliance status of prices fixed by NPPA (National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority) and under the Medical Devices Rules, 2017.

On the directions of the divisional administration, the Drug control Dept has notified helpline nos 0191-2538527, 9796011065, controllerdrugsfoodjk@gmail.com to address various queries and facilitate public during the pandemic situation.

## Covid-19 infected non-local labourers escape from rented accommodation

**Pulwama, May 17, KNT:** At least 18 non-local labourers, among which 8 were tested Covid-19 positive escaped from a rented building in the middle of the night in Dadsara area of Tral town of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

A couple of days ago, 8 labourers living in a rented building were tested positive for Covid-19 in Dadsara area. They were advised to quarantine themselves. However, during the intervening night of May 16 and 17, 18 labourers including the 8 infected ones escaped from the rented building.

"We had requested administration to quarantine these labourers at some designated government building, but our requests were ignored. We don't know where these infected labourers are right now," said a local Shabir Ahmed to news agency Kashmir News Trust.

Another local said that district administration has been informed about the incident and they were told that Surveillance team has been activated to trace these labourers.

Tehsildar Dadsara Sajid Ahmed feigned ignorance about the incident, but said he will ascertain the facts. (KNT)

## Man injured in 'Baghdadi restaurant' fire incident succumbs



**Srinagar, May 17, KNT:** One among the three persons injured in Baghdad Restaurant fire incident at Shalteng area in Srinagar outskirts in the first week of the current month succumbed to his injuries.

Pertinently, three civilians were injured after Baghdad Restaurant caught fire. Fire had broken out in the upper part of the three-storey restaurant. The gas cylinders present in the Restaurant exploded one after another, making it difficult for fire-fighters and locals to douse the fire.

At least three persons had sustained injuries while one of them was wounded due to gas cylinder explosion.

Official sources told news agency Kashmir News Trust that among the trio, succumbed to his injuries. The deceased has been identified as Ishfaq Ahmad Ganie, a resident of Shalteng area.

Over two dozen gas cylinders went off while many more cylinders were taken out and shifted to other places. "How the Restaurant owner was allowed to dump large number of gas cylinders is a million-dollar question, to which locals demand answer," a local told KNT.

## 'I always try to be passionate towards patients' Paramedic battles Covid surge with indomitable spirit

**SAMBA, MAY 17:** Facing a deluge of very sick patients and overfilled hospital, Samba Staff nurse Anuradha Choudhary said she keeps her growing fear at bay by focusing on her patients as the coronavirus pandemic rages around her.

Anuradha Choudhary works as a staff Nurse in the Accidental Hospital Ghagwal, Samba district and provides care to patients in the hospital. Although only 31, she has been in the job for a decade.

"I have been working for so long and now because of Covid situation it has become very challenging for us to operate but still we try to give good care" she said.

"We feel very good doing this but sometimes we also feel scared. How-

ever, despite all that we try to forget everything else, keep nourishing nice feelings in our hearts and try to be passionate towards the patients."

Wearing a white protective suit and mask, Anuradha gently holds the hand of an elderly woman resting on a bed and monitors her oxygen level.

Her family is supportive of her work, she says, but she is afraid of bringing the virus home. "Sometimes they feel scared that I work in such risky conditions and then come home in the evening... but they still support me and I also feel good that they appreciate me for working in this field."

"Our workload has gone up five times. All the nurses are now put-

ting in extra hours of work. We always come on time, but we are never able to leave on time," she said.

Speaking about the workload, said "I've been a nurse for long and worked in the past during disasters which would bring an influx of patients to emergency, but what is unfolding now is unprecedented. Now I'm so tired at the end of the day, that I can fall sleep anywhere. I don't even need a bed."

"Nursing is described as the noblest profession in the world and 'we are called sister' for a reason. Our patients think of us as family" she said with a smile.

"Whenever a new patient is admitted to hospital, a nurse is the first person they meet and they form

a special bond with us. The covid patients coming in the hospital are very afraid, so we try and motivate them," Anuradha said.

She also feels proud when her acquaintances appreciate her work. "A neighbour recently told me that earlier she used to light one clay lamp every day at dusk to pray for the long life of her family. Since the outbreak of the virus," she tells me, she lights an extra lamp for my wellbeing. And that makes my job, and life, worthwhile" she said with twinkling eyes.

Anuradha asks everyone to continue taking precautions and doing their part. "This is real, and we need to take this seriously. Your protection isn't just for yourself, it's for the people around you and



those you love. Wear a mask and wash your hands.



## Black fungus: care and don't panic

Covid has been making deeper inroads into urban and rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir along with most parts of India. The pestilence has claimed many lives, around 900 people alone in Jammu and Kashmir in little over a fortnight. Around 70000 people have been infected during the time also. The virus has been ravaging even as 70%-80% of those affected with it recover on their own without many side-effects. About 20%-30% of patients affected with symptomatic Covid-19 might require hospitalization. Among them, the condition of some can get worse and require treatment in an intensive care unit (ICU). Worst case scenario has been for the people with comorbidities such those having uncontrolled diabetes, heart or respiratory diseases and malignancies. Older age and obese people do not fare good either.

Amid all this, there is new fear— contracting a severe disease-mucormycosis. Also known as 'black fungus', is not any new infection but the number of cases has increased due to Covid-19 in India, according to the Director AIIMS Randeep Guleria who also warned against the spread of the “rare but dangerous fungal infection.”

As per experts, at higher risk of contracting the disease are those having poor immunity, uncontrolled diabetes. Other risk factors include steroid treatment and among other people prone to it are those having malignancies, HIV/AIDS and those who have been treated with medicines such as deferoxamine for iron overload conditions. This disease as per the experts can affect the face, infecting nose, orbit of eye, or brain, which can even cause blindness. Other forms of the fungus include the pulmonary form in which the lungs are mainly involved and less commonly disseminated mucormycosis, where it spreads throughout the body. Government of India, in an advisory issued on May 9, said the black fungus may turn fatal if uncared for. It also said the infection mainly affects people who are on medication that reduces their ability to fight environmental pathogens. With Covid-19 cases increasing, it's paramount that protocols of infection control practices are followed at hospitals. Scrupulous hygiene and care of the equipment inside the ICU should be done in order to reduce the risk of fungal and other infections. It is also very important for those with diabetes to keep their sugar levels under very good control. If steroids have to be used, their judicious use is recommended and for as short a period of time as possible, strictly at the advice of the doctors.



Rayees Ahmad Wani

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Article 19, Right to freedom, is one more prominent fundamental right. It provides various freedoms. Freedom of speech expression, assembly, association, movement, residence & profession. However none of these rights is absolute. Each may be curtailed by law in the interest of the general public, security of the state & public order.

Lessons from the Law

# FUNDAMENTAL Rights: An Introduction



The rights of individuals have long been an issue in South Asia. In 250 BC, in response to the Kalinga war between Asoka's empire and Kalinga Empire, the great Buddhist emperor banned torture. In 12th & 13th centuries, the Kandyan Kings of what is now Sri Lanka abolished capital parliament in their realm.

The constitution of India 1950 is the supreme law of the land in India. It establishes the basic frame work of the Government, delineating the division of power between the Central & State Government, & establishes the functions of various governmental organs, including the judicial system.

The part III of the constitution guarantees an array of fundamental rights. Individuals can enforce these rights in courts when they are violated by the action or inaction of a government authority or official, but not when they are violated by other private individuals or companies. However certain fundamental rights are enforceable against private individuals as well. Article 14, Right to Equality, is the basic Fundamental right enshrined in the constitution. The core of the Article 14 is 'Equality before law'. Every person in India regardless of his or her socials, political, or economic position is equally subject to the jurisdiction of the courts, 'Equal protection of laws' is the twin sister of 'Equality before law'. It means that every person should enjoy the protection of the law without adverse discrimination or special treatment. 'The more simple way to put it is, the law will provide like treatment for people in similar circumstances'.

Article 19, Right to freedom, is one more prominent fundamental right. It provides various freedoms. Freedom of speech expression, assembly, association, movement, residence & profession. However none of these rights is absolute. Each may be curtailed by law in the interest of the general public, security of the state & public order.

Article 20 guarantees certain protections against conviction for offences. It says that a person can only be convicted of an offence if the act charged against him or her was an offence centes the law on the date of the commission of act. It further provides that person shall be punished for the same offence more than once. It also provides protection against self-incrimination, protecting an accused person from being compelled to be a witness against him or herself.

Article 21 is one of the most important constitutional provisions. It confers on every person right to life & personal liberty, & the Supreme

Court has interpreted Article 21 to be very broad in scope. Article 21 has been interpreted to guarantee right including rights of prisoners, the right to legal aid, the right to speedy trial & the right to claim compensation for the violation of the rights in Article 21.

Article 22, deals with protection against arrest & detention, & is important for its direct & immediate bearing on the rights of the accused & detainees in Indian law. It provides that a person who is arrested be informed, as soon as may be, of the charges against him or her & provided with the right to obtain counsel. Furthermore, it provides every person who has been arrested with the right to be produced before the nearest magistrate within twenty four hours of arrest. Article 23 lays down prohibition of traffic in human beings & forced labour.

The last but not least, Article 32, provides 'Right to constitution remedies'. Article 32 confers the right to take proceedings in the Supreme Court for enforcement of fundamental rights. It empowers the Supreme Court to issue direction orders or writs, including the writ of habeas corpus. Article 226, empowers the High Courts to make such orders for the enforcement of fundamental rights.

# INDIAN art community to raise funds for Covid relief via auction

Siddhi Jain

(Author can be contacted at [siddhi.j@ians.in](mailto:siddhi.j@ians.in))

Amid the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country, the Indian art community has united to raise funds to assist with the ongoing relief efforts through 'Art Rises for India', a 24-hour online fundraiser auction hosted by Saffronart from May 19-20.

According to a statement from the auction house, Art Rises for India features over 120 works of modern and contemporary South Asian art, all of which have been generously donated by artists, gallerists, collectors, and patrons to support the cause.

All the proceeds from the auction, including the reduced buyer's premium, will be donated to grassroots non-profit organisations such as Goonj, Hemkunt Foundation, YUVA, Dastkar, FICA, Khoj, Street Survivors, Aangan and Charaka, which are working on the ground to provide medical support and daily subsistence to those in need.

The highlights of the fundraiser auction include an untitled work by Amrita Sher-Gil, and a watercolour on paper by Ganesh Haloi, both estimated at Rs 8-10 lakh each; a 2015 oil on canvas by A. Ramachandran, estimated at Rs 7-9 lakh; Gieve Patel's bronze and wood sculpture Eklavya estimated at Rs 6-8 lakh; as well as significant works by Ram Kumar, Krishen Khanna, K.G. Subramanyan, Thota Vaikuntam and Sudhir Patwardhan, among other artists.

The contemporary section includes a 2017 work on paper by Imran Qureshi titled 'When I Thought of You', estimated at Rs 7-9 lakh; N.S. Harsha's 'Beginning' (2019), estimated at Rs 5-7 lakh; a set of two works by Rana Begum, estimated at Rs 3-5 lakh, as well as works by Vivan Sundaram, Alyssa Pheobus Mumtaz, Rathin Barman, Natessa Amin and Gigi Scaria,



among others, said the auction house.

Saffronart CEO and Co-founder Dinesh Vazirani said, "We are living in unprecedented times. The harsh reality of the deadly second wave of the COVID-19 virus has compromised the lives of millions across India. All of us have been touched by this tragedy in some way."

"We, the Indian art community, have decided to join forces in raising funds to assist the NGOs doing critical work at the grassroots level, which includes providing medical support, basic amenities and sustenance to daily labourers, migrant workers, street survivors, artists, artisans, craftspeople, and anyone in need."

"This online fundraiser auction has come together thanks to the generous donations of several artists, gallerists, and collectors. As we did with our COVID-19 Relief Fundraiser Auction last year, we hope to raise a significant corpus of funds and do our small part in helping those in need."

Saffronart had previously conducted a Covid-19 Relief Fundraiser Auction in April last year, a Kerala Flood Relief Fundraiser Auction in August 2018, and had partnered with the Kochi Biennale Foundation for an auction to support flood relief in January 2019.

In 2014, Saffronart hosted an auction on its sister website StoryLTD.com, which aimed to help rebuild homes and lives of those affected by the floods in Jammu and Kashmir, and a charity auction in 2008 in aid of victims of severe flooding in Eastern India.

The no reserve online auction will take place on [saffronart.com](http://saffronart.com) from May 19-20.

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Pankaj Chaturvedi

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Being in the frontline for last one year in Mumbai, I have been witness to death, disability, disaster and despair. I have lost several of my own near and dear ones. However, the issue is much larger than what the editorial conveys. The solutions are much more complex than one can imagine. It is time for an end game and not the blame game.

LANCET editorial on India's fight against Covid biased and misguided

I read the editorial in The Lancet titled 'Indias Covid-19 emergency published on May 8, 2021. Let me quote from the article, "India will see a staggering 1 million deaths from COVID-19 by Aug 1. If that outcome were to happen, Modi's Government would be responsible for presiding over a self-inflicted national catastrophe." It is reminiscent of news reports in the British colonial era in India. To justify their forceful occupation of India, there was an orchestrated attempt of the western media and their political leadership to portray India as the country of fakirs and snake charmers that didn't deserve independence. When India's Independence Bill was being debated in the British Parliament in 1947, Winston Churchill had angrily remarked, "Power will go into the hands of rascals, rogues, and freebooters."

While the Covid crisis is indeed alarming in India, the article is suitable for a politically motivated tabloid rather than a reputed academic journal. As an Indian, I felt indignant with the vitriolic rant leading to poor portrayal of my country. Being in the frontline for last one year in Mumbai, I have been witness to death, disability, disaster and despair. I have lost several of my own near and dear ones. However, the issue is much larger than what the editorial conveys. The solutions are much more complex than one can imagine. It is time for an end game and not the blame game.

In order to create a sensation, the editorial mentions statistics of mortality and morbidity to suit the purpose. Mark Twain had once described three grades of lies – "Lies, damned lies, and statistics!"

Let me present the Indian statistics in a different manner. The USA with a population of 0.3 billion has lost 0.6 million citizens, Brazil with its 0.2 billion population has lost 1.5 million lives, the UK with its population of 0.06 billion lost 127,000 citizens and France with a population of 0.06 billion lost 106,493 of its citizens.

India, with its 1.3 billion population, has lost 262,000 Indians and I accept that the numbers are likely to rise further. One may argue about under reporting in India due to low Covid testing in many parts of the country. Therefore, let's look at the case fatality ratio (CFR) – the number of deaths divided by the number of confirmed cases.

India's CFR of 1.1 per cent is less than that of the US, France, Italy and Germany. India's Covid-19 recovery rate is among the highest in the world. However, this cannot be a reason for any complacency.

The US started vaccination on December 14, 2020 and vaccinated 256 million people to date. The UK started its vaccination drive on December 21 and vaccinated 53 million till now. Australia started on February 22 and vaccinated 2 million till today.

India started its vaccination drive on January 16, 2021 and has vaccinated 180 million citizens as of today, which is nearly 9 per cent of its entire population.

There are more reasons to appreciate the Indian government. It lifted the ban on export of HCQ and exported HCQ and Paracetamol during the height of the epidemic. Despite shortage of vaccines in India, our government had the magnanimity to export 66 million doses abroad on humanitarian grounds.

The editorial makes several contradictory remarks and one of them says that the "local governments have begun taking disease-containment measures, but the federal government has an essential role in explaining to the public covid appropriate behavior".

The fact is that the government has launched a massive multi-pronged Covid awareness campaign and developed a dedicated portal to share all the statistics – <https://www.mygov.in/covid-19>.

I am also surprised that the author is unaware of the several viral genome sequencing data published by the Indian labs. Needless to say, this virus keeps mutating very frequently just like any other influenza virus. Contrary to the claims in the editorial, the central and state governments regularly conduct press conferences to share the emerging data or newer information.

In India's federal structure, as per the Constitution, health care is a state subject. I do agree that dramatic reduction in the Covid case load during the winter led to a false belief that the pandemic was getting over.

I also agree that many states were not prepared for the second wave that turned out to be a Tsunami. Even if they had planned, it would be impossible to create an efficient system in less than six months.

States like Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Delhi that have better health-care systems suffered the most. If we take example of the worldwide mortality, the countries with the best health care infrastructure (the US, France, Italy etc.) seemed to have the highest mortality. In short, biology trumped technology and pharmacology.

With virtually no effective medical treatment currently available, state and central governments have resorted to lockdown multiple times in this entire pandemic. The arm chair critics may not realize that lockdowns are politically challenging decisions. Let us not forget that these measures have profound socio-economic impact that may turn out to be more hazardous than Covid itself especially among the impoverished groups.

I am appalled by the editor's statement that "government's attempts to stifle criticism and open discussion during the crisis are inexcusable".

I am confident that the editor has never watched the Indian television debates where such criticisms are made. In fact, the vehement criticism of the Indian vaccines by some political parties made some gullible citizens believe that the vaccines were useless, leading to lukewarm response in the beginning.

Now let's discuss about the large political rallies and failure of the Election Commission of India in deferring the polls. The editor blamed the Indian government for failing to heed the warning of the second wave of the pandemic. If that is the case, predictions are being made of a much larger third wave in India. Will the editor please let us know when India could have conducted the elections safely? Is the author aware of the consequences of indefinite postponement of elections in the politically sensitive states of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala?

I agree that the Kumbh Mela shouldn't have been held this year and it could have



been the super spreader event. Kumbh Mela is one of the largest voluntary religious congregations of human beings on earth that happens every 12 years in the months of January to April. Let me share some more information to put things in perspective.

The entire Kumbha area was spread over 150 sq km and over 9 million people voluntarily visited it between January and April 2021. The maximum number of people visiting the Kumbh area on a single day was 3.5 million. On that day of peak foot fall, the population density in the Kumbh area was estimated as nearly 23,000 people per sq km.

With nearly 17 and 13 million population, respectively, Delhi and Mumbai are India's two largest cities. The population density of Mumbai is approximately 30,000 per sq km, of which nearly 40 per cent live in the slums. That means Mumbai and many metropolitan cities lives with Kumbh like situation every day. Dharavi, a locality in Mumbai, is Asia's largest slum that has a population density of nearly 277136 per sq km. Compare it to London that has a population density of 6000 people per sq km.

Mumbai's local trains, the life line of the city, carry 7.5 million people (population of Hong Kong) every day with nearly 6,000 passengers packed into a 12-car rake during the peak hour. When the lockdowns were lifted during the pandemic (February and March, 2021), nearly 4 million passengers travelled every day in the Mumbai local trains.

While the developed world may look down upon these as uncivilised conditions, it probably gave this population a distinct advantage. In August 2020, a seroprevalence study reported presence of antibody among 54 percent of the slum population and 16 percent of the non-slum population.

The study concluded that asymptomatic spread of the infection led to significantly lower infection fatality rate among slums compared to non-slums. The reasons why slum dogs fared better than the millionaires were because of the population density, poor hygiene and non-adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour.

Similar high prevalence of protective antibodies was reported in the other parts of India as well – Delhi (56 per cent), Mumbai (up to 75 per cent), Hyderabad (54 per cent) and Bengaluru (57.9 per cent).

In contrast, the highest level of antibody achieved in New York, London and Paris was 20 per cent, 13 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively. Is Indian's high level of herd immunity responsible for the low case fatality rate?

Herd immunity (also called population immunity) is due to the presence of antibodies that occurs when a population acquires it through either the infection (asymptomatic or symptomatic) or vaccination.

While I admit that allowing infection to ravage the population is not the best way to achieve Herd immunity, it is also true that long term safety and efficacy of the vaccine is presently unknown.

Murmurs are already happening in the scientific community that the concept of natural herd immunity is being actively suppressed to promote vaccine companies. Having said that, with vaccine as the only hope to combat the spread, it is time to make it more affordable and accessible.

Ironically, while thousands are dying every day, Word Trade Organization has failed to prevail upon member countries to waive patents and intellectual property rights linked to vaccines and technologies. The waiver is being fiercely opposed by many developed countries such as the UK and the European Union. Even an international association of pharmaceutical manufacturers warned WTO that waiving the patents and copyrights will be counter-productive and dangerous.

Politicians have become the favourite punching bags for the journalists who are desperate to hit the headlines. Bad journalists always scour through the speeches of politician and pick up the most sensational sentence to create a narrative that suits them.

With hopelessness all around, society tends to hold the political leadership as the ultimate cause of their miseries. I agree that political leaders are accountable and they cannot shift the blame for this failure. However, there are many stakeholders in this pandemic whose accountability needs to be questioned. How about those researchers whose misleading recommendations were later proven to be ineffective or even harmful? What about those journals who shortened the publication pipeline to improve citation index only to end up with substandard articles? We can't forget the retraction of an article from a reputed journal claiming effectiveness of HCQ.

We still remember the allegations of pharma industry – journal nexus in publishing pharma funded studies of questionable benefits. What about the pharma companies who failed to communicate about lack of efficacy or appropriate usage while selling lopinavir, ritonavir, oseltamivir, remdesivir, interferons, tocilizumab, hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin etc? Will the scientists, institutions and the rich nations apologize to the world for holding on to the patents/copyrights of the lifesaving drugs and equipment while thousands die every day?

The Lancet editorial made a ludicrous statement that the "government has seemed more intent on removing criticism on Twitter than trying to control the pandemic". It is obvious from my narration above that India has done the best it could do.

The Lancet editorial seemed to be solely for the media attention and trending on twitter while maligning India globally. In the word of German Scholar, Max Mueller, "If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions, I should point to India." Wait till India recovers, it will lead the world soon.

Courtesy: IANS

Vishnu Makhijani

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"Time to meet your inner black box," writes Gupta, who, in 2009, at the beginning of the Barack Obama administration, withdrew himself from consideration as the US Surgeon General for professional and personal reasons.

TIME to sharpen your inner black box

His three teen and preteen daughters find it hilarious that their father has written a book about memory; they believe he "literally" can't remember anything". His wife, after reading the manuscript of the book, reminded him that she was, in fact, his truest love. He wisely conceded this point.

"Our brains sculpt who we are and the world we experience...Neuroscientists have their work cut out for them because the brain continues to mystify as if it were a distant planet light years away," writes Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN's Emmy Award-winning Chief Medical Correspondent, in "Keep Sharp - Build a Better Brain at Any Age" (Headline Publishing Group) that also contains a brain training programme at whose core is the S.H.A.R.P. protocol.

The brain is "arguably the most enigmatic 3.3 pounds of life. Researchers even found a new kind of neuron recently -- the rosehip -- and still don't know what it does. It seems to exist only in human brains but not in rodents, which may explain why so many mice brain studies never translate to humans. Our brains can be extraordinarily selfish and demanding as well. Of the total blood and oxygen that is produced in our bodies, the brain steals 20 percent of it, despite being only roughly 2.5 per cent of your body weight. There can be no life without a brain".

"Time to meet your inner black box," writes Gupta, who, in 2009, at the beginning of the Barack Obama administration, withdrew himself from consideration as the US Surgeon General for professional and personal reasons.

Along the way, he debunks common myths about ageing and cognitive decline, explores whether there's a 'best' diet or exercise regimen for the brain, and explains whether it's healthier to play video games that test memory and processing speed, or to engage in more social interaction.

Discover what we can learn from 'super-brained' people who are in their 80s and 90s but show no signs of slowing down - and whether there are truly any benefits to drugs, supplements and vitamins. Gupta also addresses brain disease, particularly Alzheimer's, and answers all your questions about signs and symptoms, and shows you both how to ward against it and how to care for a partner in cognitive decline.

The key to moving ahead, the author writes, is mastering the S.H.A.R.P. protocol: Slash the sugar, Hydrate smartly, Add more omega-3s from natural sources like wild cold-water fish, Reduce portions, Plan meals ahead.

Once you have done so, you're ready for the 12-week regime that will help you achieve five important goals:

\* Move throughout your day and build an exercise routine into your life.

\* Find new ways to stimulate your brain through learning and challenging your mind.

\* Prioritise getting restful, routine sleep at night and incorporate daily de-stressing practices into your routine.

\* Introduce a new way of nourishing your body.

\* Connect authentically with others and maintain a vibrant social life.

So, let's get down to brass tacks.

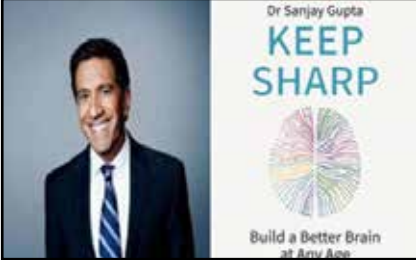
"I've designed this programme to be as practical and easy to follow as possible. Most important, it will end up being tailored and highly individualised for you," Gupta writes.

Weeks 1 and 2: Dive into the five.

Move More; if you already exercise regularly, keep it up but try something different to surprise your body and use new muscles.

Love to Learn by participating in cognitively stimulating activities.

Sleep hygiene; if you get fewer than six hours of sleep per night, you can start by increasing this to at least seven hours - the



bare minimum if you want to have normal, healthy functioning physiology from your brain on down.

Eat Sanjay Style. As the author explains, he eats "only when the sun is shining". Some have called this chrono eating - 'chrono' meaning relating to the body's sense of time and its circadian rhythm throughout the twenty-four hour solar day. I believe when you eat is also important, not just what you eat".

Connect with People; elevate your social life. For those who feel isolated, call someone you haven't spoken with in a while and invite a friend over for dinner.

Weeks 3 and 4

Add more to your routine by choosing at least two of the following options: A 20-minute power walk after lunch most days of the week, have at least two of your meals each week feature cold water fish like salmon or trout, download a meditation app and use it daily, avoid colas.

Weeks 5 and 6

Add more to your routine by choosing at least three of the following options: Start a gratitude journal and list at least five people or situations you are grateful for, add 15 more minutes to your exercise routine, try a yoga or Pilates class, avoid all processed foods, add a relaxing activity to your bedtime routine such as engaging in mindfulness meditation.

Weeks 7 and 8

Add more to your new routine by check-

ing off all five of the following ideas: Look for opportunities to volunteer in your community, schedule a check-up with your doctor if you haven't had one within the year, write a handwritten letter to a younger loved one in the family, read a book in a genre or subject area that interests you but that you're not used to reading.

Weeks 9 and 10

Ask yourself the following questions and adjust accordingly based on your answers: Am I getting at least 30 minutes of exercise at least five days a week, am I learning something new that challenges my mind and demands developing different skills, am I getting more restful sleep on a regular basis and managing stress better, am I following the S.H.A.R.P. dietary protocol, am I connecting with friends and family members regularly?

Week 11

Think about how you'd want your family members to deal with a diagnosis of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

Week 12

Make a list of all things you've done differently these past several weeks and ask yourself: What worked? What didn't work? Where can I improve? Then use the week to plan ahead.

"Keep the big picture in mind at all times. This will help you not only maintain a healthy lifestyle but also get back on track if you occasionally cheat. It's a cliché, but it's true. Progress is better than perfection," Gupta writes.

"There will always be a place for good old-fashioned habits like eating more vegetables and working out regularly. But for those time-tested habits coupled with what's in store for us tomorrow will ultimately make for the best life - one that we will want to remember and will be able to remember. Keep sharp," Gupta concludes.

Courtesy: IANS



With 73

taking the overall tally to 247952. Regarding the deaths, they said, 54 were reported from Jammu Division and 19 from Kashmir Valley, taking the fatality count 3222.

Among the victims include Dr. Mustahsan Farooq Fazili, Assistant Professor, Zoology Department, KU and Mohammed Yaseen Bhat, a retired SSP (Incharge DPT) besides a 23-year-old youth from Qamarwari Srinagar.

Providing district wise details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 495 cases, Baramulla 118, Budgam 376, Pulwama 145, Kupwara 124, Anantnag 228, Bandipora 137, Ganderbal 82, Kulgam 164, Shopian 57, Jammu 613, Udhampur 228, Rajouri 106, Doda 90, Kathua 115, Samba 89, Kishtwar 27, Poonch 56, Ramban 43 and Reasi 51.

A number of these cases were confirmed at diagnostic laboratories of SKIMS Soura, CD hospital and GMC Anantnag.

The SKIMS cases include male (38) from BSF Kupwara, male (42) from Malikpora Kupwara, male (36) from Malikpora Kupwara, male (24) from Malikpora Kupwara, male (48) from Gulgam, male (19) from Marhama, male (25) from Laderwan Kupwara, male (75) from Warsun Kupwara, female (38) from Saiwan Kupwara, male (38) from Dardpora Kupwara, male (08) from Dardpora Kupwara, female (28) from Sheikhpora heril Kupwara, male (28) from Hangha, male (30) from Babgund Langate, male (49) from Sagipora, male (26) from Chowdary Bagh Srinagar, female (55) from Rajbagh, male (41) from Mattan, female (65) from Hyderpora, male (27) from Kanitar, male (37) from Soura, male (14) from Sgr, male (27) from Soura, male (60) from Lalbazar, female (75) from Buchpora, male (31) from Nowhatta, female (38) from Hawal, male (50) from Kakapora, male (38) from Bemina, male (49) from Pandach, female (50) from Zakura, female (47) from Kawdara, female (06) from Soura, female (60) from Hawal, male (45) from Soura, male (40) from Lalbazar, male (27) from Soura, male (40) from Nagbal Ganderbal, female (50) from Bagi mehtab Sgr, female (40) from Soura, female (66) from Soura, male (36) from Anchar Soura Sgr, male (64) from Ahmed Nagar Sgr, male (29) from Alsteng ganderbal, male (37) from 90Ft Soura, female (32) from Daggora Sgr, female (42) from Barzulla, male (12) from Sgr, male (55) from Panzinara Sgr, male (70) from Nagbal Ganderbal, male (32) from Sumbal Bandipora and female (65) from Hyderpora.

The CD cases include female (60) from Pastuna, female (19) from Rathsuna, male (30) from Dobipora, female (22) from Chattabal, female (65) from Zoonimar, male (35) and female (04) from Bemina, male (24) from Srg, female (45) from Sopore, female (40) from Khankah, male (25) from Karan Nagar, female (38) from Chattabal, male (40) from Nawabazar, two females (20, 45) from Nowhatta, female (42) from Khan-yar, female (28) from Nawabazar, female (55) from Budgam, male (78) from Ganderbal, two females (55, 29) from Hyderpora, male (12) from Awantipora, male (40) from Parraypora, male (30) from Tengpora, male (28) from Soura, female (50) from Habakadal, male (70) and female (42) from Srinagar, male (NA) from Bemina, female (13) and male (10) from Tulsibagh, male (63) and females (70, 30) from Lal Bazar, male (44) from Eidgah, male (60) from Fatehkadal, two females (30, 35) from Natipora Srg, male (34) from Bemina, male (26) and two females (23, 24) from Srg, female (48) from Mehjoor Nagar, male (80) from Pulwama, male (47) from Alochibagh, male (50) and female (40) from Rajbagh, female (25) from Batmaloo, male (50) from Qamarwari, male (44) from Lal Bazar, two males (58, 30) from Kachnambal, male (22) from Khanan, male (37) and female (30) from Satrina, male (55) from Khalmulla, female (35) from Nowbug GBL, female (11) from Buserbug, male (35) from Shuhama, male (47) from Surfraw Kangan, female (25) and male (30) from Zarigund, two females (06, 16) from Uricharsoo Pul, female (30) from Dadoora Pul, male (63) from Kadalbal Pampore, male (35) from Panthachowk, male (48) from Pahoo, male (33) from Lasjan, female (60) from Lethpora, male (28) from Konibal, female (26) from Galendar, male (22) from Drangbal Pampore, male (24) from Zewan, female (40) from Khrew, female (55) from Hatiwara, female (55) from Frestbal Pampore, female (48) from C B Nath Pup, female (26) from Bellow Pul, male (25) from Chandpora Pul, male (29) from Pulwama, three females (40, 50, 54) and two males (56, 46) from Khrew, two males (32, 25) from Shar, female (09) from Samboora, male (30) from Malangpora, female (30) from Gudroo, female (24) from Dalipora, female (24) from Koil, male (29) from Urwan, female (23) from Sirnoo, female (56) from Trichal, male (32) from Dangerpore, male (21) from Murran, male (36) from Pulwama, female (29) from Sharshali, male (45) from Drach Pul, female (32) from Pulwama, male (29) from Shirmal Shopian, female (30) from Uzrampathri, male (22) and female (28) from Bathnoor, male (33) from Amlar, male (25) from Dobiwan, male (55) from Batmaloo, male (34) from Habak, female (60) from Gurez, male (60) from Qamarwari, male (65) from Pampore, male (50) from Natipora, female (30) from Bemina, female (32) from Sanat Nagar, two males (40, 70) from Ahan, female (25) from Kurhama, male (51) from Beehama, male (35) from Gula-bagh, female (30) from Sopore, three males (36, 21, 18) from Surfraw Kangan, female (53) from Pulwama, male (30) from Chanapora.

The GMC Anantnag cases include male (30) from Changoo, male (55) from Kreeer, male (40) from Verinag, male (27) from Hallan, male (30) from Omoh, female (30) from SBI Verinag, female (60) from Nowgam, male (47) from Naidpora, female (45) from Hiller Qxd, male (37) from Malikpora Verinag, three males (60, 56, 32) from Nowgam, male (28) from Mehmoodeabad, male (30) from Hiller Shahabad, male (32) from Halsidar, female (38) from Fethpora, male (30) and two females (60, 30) from Hakura, male (40) from Naidpora, female (34) from Peertakia, female (28) from Waterhall, male (20) from N Marg, female (35) and male (25) from Laisipora, female (70) from HM Guri, male (20) and female (50) from Waripora, two males (35, 06)

from Gopalpora, three males (08, 40, 22) from Waripora, female (28) from Gardwani, female (45) from Ahmadabad, female (24) from Bagbal, female (35) and male (55) from Gondwand, male (32) from Khull, male (60) from Ahmadabad, female (50) from Avil, female (30) and male (45) from Kowserbal, female (48) from Gopalpora, male (17) from Waripora, female (22) from CR Pora, male (27) from DH Pora, male (48) from Pushkreeri Srigufwara, male (45) from Zadi-pora Khanabal, female (22) from Anantnag, male (35) from Bogund Kulgam, male (35) from Uranhall Ang, male (20) from Harnag, two females (45, 32) from Mattan Chowk Ang, male (50) from Bogund Kulgam, male (55) from Reshi Colony Danter, female (48) from Harnag, male (36) from Mehadora, from Anchidora, male (04) from Tooru Devipora, male (38) from Malaknag Ang, male (62) from Sarnal, male (23) from Soaf, male (16) from Bidder, male (16) from Kachwan, male (55) from Nazuk Mohalla, female (35) from Janglat Mandi, male (31) from Sarnal Bala, male (35) from Dadoo, male (45) from Sarnal Payeen, male (40) from Lalipora, male (43) from Kadipora, male (50) from Janglat Mandi, male (23) from Anantnag, male (35) from Gadiseer, female (20) from Brinti Batpora Dailgam, male (21) from Dehruna, male (33) from Khanabal, female (04) from Qazibagh, female (14) from Shirpora, female (32) and male (30) from Uranhall, female (71) from Batengoo, male (30) from Gopalpora, female (55) from Vessu, male (30) from Kamad, female (46) from Manzgang, female (40) from Khanbal, female (40) from Batengoo, male (70) from Bul Bul Nowgam, male (53) from Larkipora, male (30) and female (40) from Donipawa, male (53) from Shirpora, female (50) from Shanker Pora, female (30) from Mattan, male (43) from Shangus and male (44) from GMC Anantnag.

Moreover, they said, 4042 more COVID-19 patients have recovered, 1082 from Jammu Division and 2960 from Kashmir Division. There are 50852 active cases—20716 in Jammu and 30136 in Kashmir, they added. (GNS)

After 25

death toll to 274,390, the Union Health Ministry update showed on Monday.

A total of 2,07,95,335 people have recuperated from COVID-19 so far. There are 36,18,458 active cases in the country as of date, which comprises 14.66 per cent of the total caseload, the data indicated.

The top five states which have registered the maximum cases are Maharashtra with 34,389 cases, followed by Tamil Nadu with 33,181 cases, Karnataka with 31,531 cases, Kerala with 29,704 cases and Andhra Pradesh with 24,171 cases. 54.37 per cent of the new cases are reported from these five states, with Maharashtra alone responsible for 12.22 pc of the new cases. 4,106 deaths have been reported in India in the last 24 hours.

Maximum casualties reported in Maharashtra (974), followed by Karnataka with 403 daily deaths. As per the government data, 6,91,211 people were vaccinated on Sunday, taking the total number of people vaccinated to 18,29,26,460. The CoWIN digital portal has been reconfigured to reflect the change in dose interval of Covishield vaccine to 12-16 weeks. However, the already booked appointments for the second dose of Covishield will remain valid and will not be cancelled by CoWIN. Beneficiaries have been advised to schedule appointments for the second dose of Covishield according to the enhanced gap between the two doses.

Coronavirus cases rise unabated across the globe with 163,701,233 infected by the deadly contagion. While 143,311,567 have recovered, 3,392,802 have died so far. The US remains the worst-hit country with 33,713,438, followed by India, Brazil, France and Turkey. However, in the past seven days, India has added the highest number of fresh cases at 2,387,154, followed by Brazil (439,985) and the US (231,419). (UNI)

Div Com

the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir stressed upon the optimal use of Oxygen at these tertiary care hospitals by ensuring the proper monitoring of Oxygen delivery at these points. The Divisional Commissioner stressed upon further augmenting the skilled man power at SKIMS Medical College Bemina, SKIMS Soura and GMC Srinagar at an earliest in order to deliver the quality health care to the patients at these tertiary care hospitals.

He directed the concerned officers to ensure patient analysis on a daily basis, so as to shift the mild to moderate patients of Covid-19 from these tertiary care hospitals to Level II hospitals for further management which will help in better bed utilization at these hospitals.

He directed Nodal Officers of these tertiary care hospitals to further enhance the bed capacity at their respective hospitals keeping in view the increase of Covid-19 cases.

Director Health Services Kashmir was directed for pooling of logistics and staff at appropriate centres for their better utilization in mitigating the Covid-19 pandemic.

Govt asks

College Jammu, Atal Dulloo (IAS), Financial Commissioner, Health & Medical Education Department, has ordered the ensuring supervision of the patients by the senior Faculty members. “As you are aware that mortality rate in COVID positive patients has increased and there is need for reducing the same which requires immediate corrective measures,” he said in the communication. “It is desirable that the senior Faculty members of the concerned departments of your institution be directed to increase their presence by making frequent rounds of wards, where the COVID positive patients are admitted, so that such patients are properly looked after and treated, which will help us in reducing the mortality also,” the communication added. (GNS)

Central

testing in the areas witnessing huge surge in cases. “There is need to increase testing in such areas and the samples, as per the protocol, be sent to Delhi for genome study” the team of

doctors said and assured that the results would be shared with the UT within a week's time.

The Visiting team comprising Dr. Mahesh Waghmare, NCDC, Dr. Pranay Verma, Joint Director NCDC & Dr. Navneet Sharma, Professor Internal Medicine, PGI, Chandigarh also called for strict enforcement of COVID Appropriate Behaviour in the public places.

They further advised for intensifying the surveillance of the home isolated cases, so that patients are shifted to the hospital well in time when required. Efficient Triage facility and framing of discharge policy was also emphasized for better patient management and adequate bed availability. Earlier, the team, after arriving here on Sunday, visited GMC Jammu and had a threadbare discussion with the Doctors, besides visiting the isolation wards. On day two, the team visited District Samba and inspected the containment and micro containment zones & met with surveillance teams working at the grass-roots level. Later in the afternoon, they held a virtual meeting with IDSP teams of 10 districts of Jammu Division. The meeting was also attended by Choudary Mohammad Yasin, Mission Director NHM, J&K, Dr. Renu Sharma Director Health Services Jammu and the Chief Medical Officers of all districts.

500 bed

Curfew has yielded good results so far and decline in Covid positive cases has been seen.

DC hoped that district administration with support of general public would overcome the situation that evolved due to the 2nd wave of Covid-19.

He said on the directions of Lieutenant Governor, Covid Relief of Rs 1,95,93,000 has been released in favour of 19593 Building and other Construction Workers in Srinagar district, besides various other measures have also been taken to strengthen the system to fight the war against Covid-19 and in this regard bed capacity is being augmented at various health facilities and Covid care centers in the city.

Besides these, sufficient availability of oxygen supply has been made by commissioning medical oxygen plants at various health facilities, while more oxygen plants would be added soon to further strengthen the oxygen support system.

He also informed that district Administration Sringar has started Community Triaging for effective Covid-19 management and in this regard Community Triaging teams are going door to door for better supervision of Covid-19 management at zone-level.

DC also said that under DRDO a 500 bed hospital is being constructed at Khonmoh in Srinagar which shall be made operational by May 30 to further increase the bed capacity in district.

Corona curfew

The government has announced Corona Curfew in Srinagar and other 19 districts of Jammu and Kashmir till May 24, 2021.

Eye-witnesses informed that police and paramilitary troops were deployed although in large number to enforce the lockdown restrictions. The barricades and concertina wires were erected at many places and bridges to thwart the public movement, they said.

Meanwhile, all the shops and business establishments barring emergency services remained closed throughout the day in Srinagar and other districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

Meanwhile, as per a statement, during the last 24 hours, police have arrested 169 persons, lodged 79 FIRs and also realized fine to the tune of Rs 110,660 from 789 people for violating the guidelines and rules throughout Kashmir valley. The special drive against the violators of Covid-19 guidelines and rules continued throughout all the districts of Kashmir Valley to ensure that people adhere to SOPs and guidelines envisaged by the government to curb COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, police urged people to cooperate in containing the spread of Coronavirus by following the SOPs, guidelines and protocols for the safety of the people. “The special drive shall continue throughout the districts of Kashmir Valley to strengthen the safety measures,” police said. (KNO)

2 militants

while there is a vast network of Over Ground Workers (OGWs) in the district of which many were arrested while C-category OGWs are being counselled and handed over to their families. “There were six active militants in Srinagar of which one was recently killed in Kokernag (Anantnag) gunfight. Now there are five local militants still active in Srinagar who would either be killed or apprehended,” IGP Kashmir said. He said that there is a vast network of OGWs active in Srinagar district of which many have already been arrested and booked under PSA and many are still on the police radar. “There are C-category OGWs who are being counselled and handed over their families,” the IGP said.

Asked whether there was any foreign militant active in Srinagar, he said inputs about the movement of foreign militants continue to pour in but as of now “no foreign militant is permanently active in Srinagar district.”

To a query that IEDs are turning out to be a major challenge for security forces, the Kashmir police chief said that security forces are effectively dealing with the IED threat as evident with the recent seizure of 10-kg IED material in Shopian followed by the detection of another one by the army. “We are aware of the IED threat and are effectively dealing with the same by timely detection,” he said. (KNO)

Govt orders

been transferred and posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Doda, against an available vacancy.

Shabir-ul-Hassan, KAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Budgam, against an available vacancy. Navdeep Wazir, KAS, Deputy Secretary to the Government, Tourism Depart-

ment has been transfetred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Udhampur, against an available vacancy. Ashwani Kumar, KAS, Deputy District Election Officer, Kathua has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Samba, against an available vacancy. Bilques Jan, KAS, Deputy Director, ICDS, Social Welfare, Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Ganderbal, against an available vacancy. Ideel Saleem, KAS, Deputy Director, Tourism, Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Anantnag, against available vacancy. Ashok Kumar, KAS, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Katra holding additional charge of Sub-Registrar, Katra has been transferred and posted as Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Jammu, against an available vacancy.

Sohan Lal, KAS, Deputy Director, Rural Sanitation, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Kathua, against an available T vacancy.

Minakshi Vaid, KAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Jammu, against an available vacancy. Mohammad Rashid, KAS, Deputy Director, Employment (Central), J&K has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Rajouri, against an available vacancy. Sandeep Seointra, KAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Kathua, against an available vacancy. Gulzar Ahmad, KAS, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Srinagar has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Baramulla, against an available vacancy.

Swaran Singh, KAS, General Manager, J&K Road Transport Corporation, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Ramban, against an available vacancy.

Syed Altaf Hussain Musvi, KAS, Deputy Secretary to the Government, Youth Services and Sports Department has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Bandipore, against an available vacancy.

Mohammad Ashfa, KAS, awaiting orders of adjustment, has been posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Doda, against an available vacancy.

Rizwan Asgar, KAS, Collector, Lakes and Waterways Development Authority, Srinagar has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Shopian, against an available vacancy.

Nazwan Nazki, KAS, Deputy Director (Administration) in the Directorate of Social Welfare, Kashmir is transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Pulwama, against an available vacancy. Shurjeel Ali Naiku, KAS, Deputy Director, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Kulgam, against an available vacancy.

Mir Zahida, KAS, Deputy District Election Officer, Budgam has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Budgam, against an available vacancy.

Shabir Ahmad Wani, KAS, Deputy Secretary to the Government, Horticulture Department has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Kupwara, against an available vacancy.

Shafiq Ahmad, KAS, Deputy Director, District Employment and Counselling Centre, Rajouri has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Poonch, against an available vacancy. Zakir Hussain, KAS, Deputy District Election Officer, Reasi has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Kishtwar, against an available vacancy.

Deebah Khalid Peer, KAS, Deputy Director, Handicrafts, J&K has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Srinagar, against an available vacancy.

Aijaz Ahmad Shah, KAS, Deputy Director, Urban Local Bodies, Kashmir holding additional charge of Deputy Director, Rural Sanitation, Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Pulwama, against an available vacancy.

Johar Ali, KAS, Sub-Registrar, Srinagar (West), has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Kupwara, vice Bashir Ahmad Bhat, KAS, who has been asked to report to the General Administration Department for further posting.

Govt receives

Among the 7 plants, 5 will have a capacity of 1000 LPM each while the two plants will have a capacity of 1500 and 600 LPM.

The Advisor thanked the Prime Minister, Lieutenant Governor, Air Force by whose efforts the oxygen generation plants have been received within two days only which otherwise would have taken 2 months.

He said that the supporting infrastructure for the oxygen plants is almost ready and it is expected to be installed and to be commissioned within a few days of time.

The advisor said that medical oxygen has become an important commodity in the fight against this pandemic and with the commissioning of these oxygen generation plants, the oxygenated bed capacity of the hospitals will be greatly enhanced.

He said that the government is keeping a keen eye on the developments and is taking adequate steps to augment its capacity.

HC upholds

notice (no. JKB/HR-Rect-2020-27 & 28) on 1 January 2020, inviting applications from the desirous candidates for the posts.

In their appeal against the dismissal of petition by the single bench, the appellants—prospective candidates—said that they applied for the posts pursuant to the advertisement notice on 6th October 2018. The examination was conducted online, but before completion, the se-

lection process as a whole was cancelled, they said. They contended that the action on part of the bank infringes their legal rights and the same was also “arbitrary”.

“The cancellation of the selection process was challenged by the appellants by invoking the extraordinary jurisdiction of the Court. The writ Court dismissed the petition recording that as the petitioners were only prospective candidates, they have not acquired any indefeasible right to seek selection/appointment on the basis of the advertisement alone and therefore the cancellation of the selection process do not infringes any of their legal right,” a division bench of Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul.

“There is no arbitrariness in the cancellation of the selection process as the court records that it stands admitted to the appellants that the respondents (bank) had the authority to cancel the selection process.”

The division bench observed that the stand of the bank that the recruitment process in question had gone wrong “stands substantiated by the records.”

“The respondents (bank) have construed the recruitment district wise and framed the merit list accordingly. Moreover, the respondents have not applied a rule of reservation in selection process which certainly was incurable,” the court said, adding, “Therefore, the cancellation of selection process is justified and is not arbitrary.”

As regards the argument that reservation is not applicable, the court said it is a debatable point.

However, the court said that in such circumstances if the process as a whole has been cancelled it cannot be said to be illegal or arbitrary. (GNS)

Aug 15:

district and cluster level on August-15. A Top official in the administrative department confirmed that Tricolour directives were made by the government. “This is not the order of the School Education Department but the government wherein directives have been made to hoist Tricolour in all government buildings including in school buildings,” the official said.

The communiqué reads that it had planned to organize the dance competition for the students of class 9-12 with a theme ‘Ek Bharat Shresht Bharat from April-04 to May-01.’

In the calendar of activities for celebration of Aazadi Ka Maha Utsav, the government has said that essay writing competition with a theme ‘unity in diversity and Atmnirbhar Bharat’ was also scheduled till May 29 followed by Music competition with a theme ‘Mother language’, role plays with a theme heroes of independence and Independence day quiz with a theme India’s freedom struggle. (KNO)

Ensure

The Committee was constituted by the Jammu and Kashmir government following an order by the Supreme Court on March 23, 2020 and May 07, 2021, directing the States and the UTs to decongest jails to ensure social distancing among the prisoners.

At the outset, the Committee appreciated the efforts of the prison department for not only managing the COVID-19 breakout in the prisons but also for maintaining hygiene in the jail premises. The Members of the Committee discussed and deliberated upon the proposed category of prisoners, who may be considered for grant of interim bail for 90 days in view of the present circumstances. The Committee decided to release all the jail inmates who were earlier released on parole or on interim bail for 90 days as per the directions of the Supreme Court in March 2020. Justice Magrey directed the Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority to coordinate with the other two members of the Committee to find out the category of convicts/UTPs who can also be released pursuant to the directions of the Hon’ble Supreme Court. Such an exercise shall be completed within a week and the report be placed before the Committee. Justice Magrey directed the DGP (Prisons) to coordinate with the Health department to ensure vaccination of jail inmates as well as staff on priority. Besides this, the Committee directed the jail authorities to take appropriate steps by ensuring that the inmates and the staff wear masks and maintain social distancing and by keeping the frequently visited areas like kitchen, bathrooms etc. hygienic to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, further directed the Legal Service Institutions across the UT of J&K to provide the services of Panel Lawyers to the inmates who are eligible to be released from the custody by moving applications on their behalf.

It also called for the additional release of prisoners on paroles or interim bail orders for which DGP Prisons and member Secretary JKLSA were asked to workout modalities within the stipulated time.

The Committee also suggested the creation of additional accommodation or temporary accommodation within or outside jail complexes for ensuring strict adherence to Standard Operating Protocols (SOPs) of COVID-19 issued by the medical experts.

Further, the high powered committee also decided to discontinue all the visits of outside visitors including NGOs but while doing so the families of the jail inmates will have excess to meet the prisoners by use of virtual mode or by phones.

Frequent sanitization of jails and better medical facilities were also decided to be ensured in all the jails of J&K.

The Committee decided to accelerate to hold awareness campaigns among jail inmates regarding SOPs to prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee further decided to ensure safety of prisoners by frequent testing and complete vaccination of jail inmates along with the jail staff. It also called for measures like transportation of released inmates by providing them proper transport facilities in view of Corona curfew.



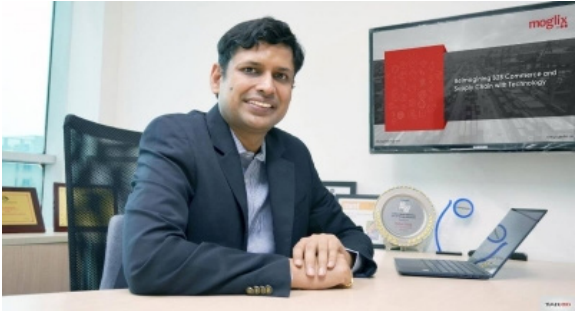
# Ratan Tata-backed Moglix becomes new unicorn from India

Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: Ratan Tata-backed Moglix on Monday announced that it is the first industrial B2B commerce platform in the manufacturing space in India to become a new unicorn with raising \$120 million in fresh funding which took its valuation to \$1 billion.

The Series E funding round was led by Falcon Edge Capital and Harvard Management Company (HMC), and also saw participation from existing investors Tiger Global, Sequoia Capital India and Venture Highway.

"We started six years ago with a firm belief in the untapped potential of the Indian manufacturing sector. We had the trust of stalwarts like Ratan Tata, and a mission to enable the creation of a \$1 trillion manufactur-



ing economy in India," said Rahul Garg, Founder & CEO, Moglix. Ratan Tata, the Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, had invested an undisclosed amount in the B2B marketplace in 2016.

The latest round of funding takes the total funds raised by Moglix to \$220 million.

Moglix is building an operating system for manufacturing that provides its customers a full stack ser-

vice covering procurement, packaging, supply chain financing and highly integrated software.

Founded in 2015 by IIT Kanpur and ISB alumnus Garg, it provides solutions to more than 500,000 SMEs and 3,000 manufacturing plants across India, Singapore, the UK and the UAE.

Several manufacturing majors such as Hero Moto Corp, Vedanta, Tata Steel, Unilever and PSUs such as

Air India and NTPC procure indirect material through the Moglix platform.

"Moglix's distinctive customer value proposition and ROI are visible in its outstanding customer and revenue retention numbers. We believe Moglix is now well poised to scale and we are thrilled to back the company in the next phase of its growth," said Navroz D. Udwadia, Co-Founder of Falcon Edge Capital.

Garg said that in these unprecedented times, the company has pledged support and disruptive thinking to help solve the challenge of effective distribution and sharing of oxygen concentrators covering 1 million people in the country.

"Globally, we have also been instrumental, in this and the last year, in streamlining the PPE supply-chain and distribution across 20+ countries," he informed.

# Samsung's US chip plant investment may be in offing: Report

Indo-Asian News Service

Seoul, May 17: Samsung Electronics may unveil its plan later this month to build a new chip factory in the United States, industry sources said on Monday, as the South Korean tech giant tries to cope with rivals' capacity expansions.

Speculation has run high that Samsung would reveal its US investment upon the summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and US President Joe Biden to be held in Washington on Friday.

Samsung, the world's largest memory chip producer and No. 2 foundry firm, has been mulling building a \$17 billion foundry factory in the US, with Texas, Arizona and New York mentioned as possible candidate sites, reports Yonhap news agency.

Kim Ki-nam, who heads Samsung's chip business, is expected to visit the U.S. as a member of President Moon's business delegation for the summit and may confirm the plan after meet-



ing with U.S. officials, sources here said.

Samsung was the only South Korean firm to join a White House online meeting last month to discuss global semiconductor shortages. The company has report-

edly been invited again to a virtual meeting to be hosted by U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo on Thursday.

The tech giant already runs a chip facility in Austin, Texas, but the need for

additional U.S. investment emerged after its rivals moved ahead for capacity expansions.

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co (TSMC) recently announced that it will invest \$100 billion over the next three years for capacity expansion.

The world's top contract chip maker already unveiled last year it would set up a \$12 billion plant in Arizona, but speculation has been growing that the company may build five additional fabs with advanced nodes.

Intel, the world's largest semiconductor seller, also announced that it will invest \$20 billion to expand its chipmaking capacity and teased its re-entry to the foundry business.

Samsung's US investment will also be in line with its vision of becoming the world's No. 1 player in the logic chip and foundry sectors by 2030. The company last week said it will spend an additional 38 trillion won to expand its previous investment plan of 133 trillion won unveiled in 2019.

# Synechron to hire up to 2,000 professionals to boost India plans

Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: Digital transformation consulting firm Synechron on Monday announced plans to hire up to 2,000 professionals to boost its India operations in Pune, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Chennai.

Additionally, the company said it will also look at fulfilling open positions across the US, Europe, Middle East and the APAC regions.

"We are witnessing huge growth in India this year specifically in digital transformation initiatives across various BFSI clients. Although our focus is to hire people with strong domain knowledge, we will still be looking at dedicated professionals in the range of 4 to 10 years of relevant experience," informed Hareesha Pattaje, Managing Director and Delivery Head India, Synechron.

The key skills the company is currently looking at include Java full stack, angular/react, Cloud and DevOps, data engineers, UI/UX specialists, automation engineers, agile coaches and business analysts.

"We are also leveraging our internal talent, who are frequently cross-skilling and upskilling themselves, to be placed in appropriate roles," Pattaje added.

Synechron recently made two back-to-back acquisitions over a short span of six months.



The first acquisition was Citihub Digital, a technology consulting firm for the financial services industry, and the other was Attra, an Australia-based technology services and solutions provider focused on the banking, finance and payments industries.

"Synechron has always been proactive with solutions to cater to our global clients, who are looking strongly at digital transformation to enable their end customers to transact more effectively and intelligently," said Faisal Husain, Co-founder and CEO, Synechron. The company, which saw its global operating locations increasing to 22 in 2021 from 18 in 2020 with over 10,000 employees producing over \$650 million in annual revenue, is seeking to hire talented professionals across levels.

# TAIPA writes to CMs for priority vax for telecom workers

Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: The Tower and Infrastructure Providers Association (TAIPA) has written to the chief ministers of the states and union territories urging for the priority vaccination for the telecom infrastructure field engineers and technicians under frontline workers category.

In a statement the telecom infrastructure body said that the whole country is facing the second wave of Covid-19 which is more intense than the previous one.

In this regard, Taipa has written to the chief ministers addressing that the telecom infrastructure provider industry have huge manpower consisting of frontline workers (technicians and field engineers) who have been working tirelessly during lockdowns to maintain the telecom services. T.R. Dua, Director General, TAIPA said, "It is crucial to note that even in absence of any vaccination, the frontline



telecom workers have continued to perform their routine activities such as O&M of telecom infrastructure, diesel filling at sites, fault repairs etc, under duress, psychological pressure and also despite grave risks posed to them and their families."

They have been working in the toughest of times across all types of zones including the Covid-19 hotspots, and it is essential that they are accorded 'frontline workers' status for priority in Covid-19 vaccination, he said.

Some of the states including Goa and Uttarakhand have already announced and started vaccination of telecom personnel on priority under frontline worker category.

# Credit card expenses by Indian subsidiary of a multinational corporation liable to GST

Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: Credit card expenses made by employees of an Indian subsidiary for furtherance of business here would come under the purview of Goods and Service Tax (GST) with applicable 18 per cent rate.

According to a recent ruling by Tamil Nadu Appellate Authority for Advance Ruling (AAAR), any expenses made by employees of an Indian subsidiary of a multinational corporation that is later reimbursed by the overseas holding company qualifies as service and hence needs to be taxed under GST here. The AAAR termed reimbursement of credit card expenses made by employees of Indian subsidiary by the overseas holding company as advance for any such service extended by its Indian operations. As business services are taxable, so such expenses would attract 18 per



cent tax. The AAAR ruling came on case concerning ICU Medical India LLP, a subsidiary of ICU Medical Inc.

Apparently, the holding company had provided credit cards to the employees of its Indian subsidiary for business expenses that were required to be made in India and abroad. Any such expenses made was later reimbursed by the holding

company. The AAAR termed such transition to qualify as supply of service. Further, the said services qualify as import of services and therefore the subsidiary is liable to pay 18% GST. The AAAR ruling would set the precedent for applicability of GST on all such similar transaction between the parent overseas entity and its Indian subsidiary.

# Bank NEFT transfers will not be operational coming weekend



Indo-Asian News Service

Mumbai, May 17: If you planning an online money transfer using the banking system between Saturday midnight and Sunday, you are well advised to either cancel or postpone such transfers.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday said that due to NEFT system upgrade, this service will not be available from 00:01 hrs to 14:00 hours on Sunday, May 23, 2021.

This would mean that during this period any money transfer involving NEFT system would not be available for use by bank customers. But, the RTGS system will continue to be operational as usual during this period.

It may be mentioned that a similar technical upgrade for RTGS was completed on April 18, 2021.

A technical upgrade of NEFT, targeted to enhance the performance and resilience, is scheduled after the close of business of May 22, 2021. Accordingly, NEFT service will not be available from 00:01 hrs to 14:00 hrs on Sunday, May 23, 2021," an RBI communication to banks said. The communication advised banks to inform their customers to plan their payment operations accordingly.

# Are OMCs shifting to alternate day fuel price revision mechanism?

Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: Oil marketing companies seem to be moving towards a revised fuel price revision mechanism, shifting to the practice of changing petrol and fuel rates every alternate day rather than undertaking changes on a daily basis.

In the last few days, pump prices of petrol and diesel have been revised every alternate day but the practice had not helped consumers as even under this system prices have only moved up making the fuel dearer.

On Monday, OMCs kept retail price of petrol and diesel unchanged. So petrol still costs Rs 92.58 per litre and diesel Rs 83.22 per litre in Delhi, the same as previous day.

Across the country as well, the petrol and diesel price prices remained static on Monday but its actual retail prices varied depending on the level of local levies in respective states.

The price pause on Monday came after petrol and diesel prices were raised by 24 and 27 paise per litre, respectively, on Sunday. Prior to Sunday, there was no price revision on Saturday. Similarly, while fuel prices were raised on Friday, it remained unchanged in the previous day.



"It seems oil companies are giving a sense of relief to consumers as fuel prices are not being raised on a daily basis. But still prices are not actually falling but being raised on very alternate day too this month," said an oil sector expert not willing to be named.

He said that the practice of daily price revision, started after deregulation of petrol and diesel prices few years had been done away by OMCs for past several months giving clear indication that administrative price regime is still

working for the sector.

Under daily price revision, OMCs revised petrol and diesel prices every morning benchmarking retail fuel prices to a 15-day rolling average of global refined products' prices and dollar exchange rate. However, in a market where fuel prices need to be increased successively, alternate day price revision seems to be the flavour.

It is worth noting that with 9 price increase in May, the retail price of regular petrol has already reached closer to Rs 99 a litre in Mumbai. Petrol prices are already over Rs 100 per litre in several cities in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Premium petrol has been hovering above that level for some time now.

Petrol prices have increased by Rs 2.03 a litre Delhi in May in the nine increases so far. Similarly, diesel prices have risen by Rs 2.49 per litre in capital this month. IANS had reported earlier that OMCs may begin increasing the retail price of petrol and diesel post state elections as they were incurring losses to the tune of Rs 2-3 per litre by holding the price line despite higher global crude and product prices.

With global crude prices at around \$ 69 a barrel mark, OMCs may have revise fuel prices upwards again if there is any further firming up.

# Max Life launches new pension plan with guaranteed financial protection

Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: Max Life Insurance Company on Monday announced the launch of 'Max Life Saral Pension', a Non-Linked, Non-Participating Single Premium, Individual Immediate Annuity Plan.

The plan guarantees a regular stream of income in one's golden years, offering customers a chance to maintain their lifestyle pre and post retirement with the assurance of guaranteed income as long as the policyholder lives.

The product has been launched at a time when a large section of the society is showing an inclination towards securing their future financial stability. According to the findings of Max Life's recent survey 'India Protection Quotient 3.0' in association with KANTAR, it was revealed that in the backdrop of Covid-19, around 52 per



cent of urban India is saving for 'retirement/old age security.'

Commenting on the launch of the product, Prashant Tripathi, MD & CEO Max Life Insurance said, "Our latest offering, 'Max Life Saral Pension' plan is in line with IRDAI's vision for insurers to introduce a simple, immediate annuity product that can offer apt and standardized features for an individual's post-retirement financial convenience. We hope that this much needed and impactful product will help Indians achieve financial independence, and enjoy a comfortable lifestyle during their retirement years."

Available to customers in the entry age group of 40 to 80 years, there are two options available under the policy. i.e. single life and joint life annuity. 'Max Life Saral Pension' further offers customers the flexibility to choose from any of the four annuity payout modes available - monthly, quarterly, half yearly or yearly. The product

also offers a 'Surrender Benefit' - an option to surrender on diagnosis of Critical Illness - if the annuitant or spouse or any of the children of the annuitant is diagnosed with any of the covered critical illnesses as specified (under the plan), then the annuitant will have an option to withdraw 95% of the purchase price (Single Premium) as surrender benefit.

Under single life annuity, a fixed income guaranteed at the policy inception will be paid to the annuitant throughout life; income payment will cease on the death of the annuitant and 100 per cent of the purchase price shall be paid to the nominee on death of the annuitant.

Under the joint life option, a fixed income guaranteed at the policy inception will be paid as long as at least one of the annuitants is alive. Income payment will cease on death of the last survivor and death benefit, 100 per cent of the purchase price shall be paid to the nominee on death of the last survivor (annuitants).



# At UNSC, India condemns rocket attack that killed Indian nurse

Indo-Asian News Service

**United Nations, May 17:** While mourning the death of an Indian nurse in Israel, India's Permanent Representative T. S. Tirumurti on Sunday condemned the rocket attacks from Gaza that killed her.

Speaking at a rare Security Council meeting held on a Sunday, he, however, also reiterated India's support for the Palestinian cause and condemned the retaliatory attacks by Israel.

Soumya Santosh, who is from Kerala, was killed in Ashkelon inside Israel by the rocket launched reportedly by the Iran-backed Hamas organisation from Gaza last week. She was working as a caregiver for the elderly.

The Council met in a virtual session as the situation in the Israel-Palestine-Gaza region spiralled into a violent crisis, with reports that before the session, Israeli air strikes had killed at least 40 people, some of them children.

At least four people were killed in Israel as some Hamas rockets pierced Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile defence system.

Referring to Santosh, Tirumurti said: "India has also lost one of her nationals living in Israel in this rocket fire - a caregiver in Ashkelon. We deeply mourn her demise along with all other civilians who have lost their lives in the current cycle of violence."

"The indiscriminate rocket firings from Gaza targeting the civilian population in Israel, which we



condemn, and the retaliatory strikes into Gaza, have caused immense suffering, and resulted in deaths," he said.

While reiterating New Delhi's "strong support to the just Palestinian cause and its unwavering commitment to the two-State solution", Tirumurti also expressed "strong condemnation of all acts of violence, provocation, incitement, and destruction".

He called for an immediate de-escalation of the situation to stop "any further slide to the brink" and the resumption of dialogue between the parties to the conflict.

He said that Jerusalem has a special place in the hearts of Indians and added that attempts should not be made to change the status quo in East Jerusalem and its neighbourhood.

He mentioned the presence of an India-associated in Jerusalem's old city. New Delhi had restored the Al Zawiyya Al Hindiyya, the

Indian hospice associated with Indian Sufi saint Baba Farid, he said.

The holy places in Jerusalem, including the Haram al-Sharif, also known as the Temple Mount, that is sacred to Muslims, should be protected, he added.

The triggers for the current wave of violence is the attempt by some Israelis to evict Arabs from homes in East Jerusalem and the entry of Israeli security forces into the Temple Mount.

At the UNSC session presided over by China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Secretary General Antonio Guterres said: "Fighting must stop. It must stop immediately. Rockets and mortars on one side and aerial and artillery bombardments on the other must stop. I appeal to all parties to heed this call."

"It has the potential to unleash an uncontrollable security and humanitarian crisis and to further foster extremism, not only in the Occupied Palestinian Terri-

tory and Israel, but in the region as a whole," he warned.

He drew attention to the Israeli bombing of the offices of the US news agency Associated Press and Qatari TV network Al Jazeera in Gaza City and said: "Journalists must be allowed to work free of fear and harassment."

"I am appalled by the attack on a refugee camp in Gaza, in which 10 members of one family were killed. Humanitarian installations must be protected," he said, but added: "Israeli civilians live in fear of rockets launched from Gaza."

Holding the meeting on a Sunday itself showed the isolation of the administration of US President Joe Biden which had vainly tried to stop the Council from discussing the situation. After blocking a session on Friday, it was forced by other members to agree to the meeting on Sunday.

Biden is facing a split in his party over his Israel policy with a vociferous group

of Democrats condemning his backing for that country, even as many in the party continue their strong support for Israel.

US Permanent Representative Linda Thomas-Greenfield said that "the United States has been working tirelessly through diplomatic channels to try to bring an end to this conflict" and is "intensively engaged with Israeli, Egyptian, and Qatari officials, as well as the Special Coordinator (of the UN, Tor Wennesland) and his team - all of whom are working to define and establish conditions for a sustainable calm".

In a break from the four years of former President Donald Trump, she, however, called for an end to "evictions" - including in East Jerusalem - demolitions, and settlement construction east of the 1967 lines".

"Critically, all parties need to uphold and respect the historic status quo at the holy sites," she added.

Without condemning any of the attacks by either side, Thomas-Greenfield said: "We've also been alarmed by violence impacting journalists and medical personnel, whose roles are crucial and must be protected and respected."

"It's time to end the cycle of violence. The United States calls on Hamas and other Palestinian groups in Gaza to immediately halt rocket attacks and other provocations. We also are deeply concerned about the ongoing intercommunal violence within mixed communities in Israel. We urge all parties to avoid actions that undermine a peaceful future."

## Presidential campaigns start in Syria

Indo-Asian News Service

**Damascus, May 17:** Syrian presidential campaigns have officially started as posters of President Bashar al-Assad and the two other candidates filled the squares and streets in the capital Damascus.

Under the theme "Hope is in Work", Assad launched his campaign on Sunday where his posters, most of which were presented by Syrian businessmen and celebrities, filled the main streets in the capital city and other provinces, reports Xinhua news agency.

His two competitors, Mahmoud Muri and Abdullah Saloum Abdullah, have got fewer posters in comparison due to the popularity of the incumbent President.

Muri, a lawyer and a member of the Syria-based opposition, has started his



campaign under the banner "Together", with a prominent slogan speaking about the need to "release all political detainees".

For Abdullah, the third candidate who was also a member of the Syrian parliament and a former state minister, his campaign features slogans about investments.

The election, scheduled to be held on May 26, comes seven years after the last polls took place in the war-torn country.

Syrians abroad will vote on May 20.

In the uncontested 2000 and 2007 elections, the incumbent leader who took office following the death of his father Hafez al-Assad, received 97.29 per cent and 97.6 per cent support, respectively.

Amid the raging conflict, Bashar al-Assad was sworn in for another seven-year term in July 2014 after another non-democratic election gave him 88.7 per cent of the vote.

## UK further eases Covid-19 restrictions

Indo-Asian News Service

**London, May 17:** People in England, Scotland and Wales can now sit indoors in pubs and restaurants and can hug each other again, in the biggest single lifting of coronavirus restrictions since the start of the UK's successful vaccination campaign.

While bars and restaurants in England and Wales are reopening their indoor seating areas for the first time in months on Monday, Scottish venues where this was already possible can now serve alcohol indoors again, reports dpa news agency.

Larger groups of people in the three nations can also meet socially: for indoors the limit in England is now up to six people or two households; for outdoors the maximum is 30.

After consistent guidance since spring last year to avoid direct contact with people not in their own family or so-called "support bubble", UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson advised citizens that they can now make

their own "informed decisions" and be "cautious" when it comes to hugging loved ones.

Other recreational venues such as cinemas, museums, theatres and concert halls are also allowed to reopen in England, Scotland and Wales, although there are capacity limits on large events.

A highly anticipated lifting of the international travel ban has gone into effect in England and Wales, allowing people to travel based on a traffic light grading system.

For "green" countries, British travellers do not have to quarantine when they return home if they test negatively for coronavirus; "amber" or "red" countries mean people do have to quarantine, in the latter case in specific government-approved hotels.

Green list countries include Australia, Brunei and New Zealand, but also countries closer to home include Portugal and Iceland.

Two areas of Scotland, Glasgow and Moray, will maintain stricter restrictions, such as no meeting in private homes and maintaining social distancing, due to a rise in cases of the coronavirus.

## Colombian protest leaders present demands to govt

Indo-Asian News Service

**Bogota, May 17:** After more than two weeks of violent protests in Colombia, national strike leaders have presented a list of demands to the country's government.

Among the demands presented on Sunday are an end to military deployments to protests and the use of firearms by police as well as measures to end sexual violence against women by security forces, reports Xinhua news agency.

They are also demanding the inclusion of UN and church representatives in talks with the government.

The two sides plan to meet again on Monday.

Since the strike was called at the end of April, there have been numerous protests in cities across the country, some of which turned into riots.

On Sunday, thousands of people took to the streets once again for mostly peaceful protests in the capital Bogota and other cities.

The government of conservative President Ivan Duque has denounced supply bottlenecks caused by protest roadblocks.

At least 42 people have



died during the protests, according to the latest figures from the national ombudsman's office.

The strike committee has counted at least 50 deaths and more than 500 missing people as of Sunday.

The country's Defence Ministry says around 1,700 have been injured so far, including more than 900 security personnel.

The protests were initially against a controversial tax reform that has since been withdrawn. Most demonstrators have now turned to other issues, such as opposing a planned health care reform and advocating for the country's fragile peace process.

The Economy Minister and Foreign Minister have both resigned as a result of the protests.

## 'Indian Covid variant can spread like wildfire among unvaccinated people'

Indo-Asian News Service

**London, May 17:** UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock warned that the coronavirus variant first detected in India can "spread like wildfire" among those who haven't received a vaccine against the disease.

The variant is "becoming the dominant strain in some parts of the country" such as Bolton and Blackburn, Xinhua news agency quoted Hancock as saying to Sky News on Sunday.

But on a more positive note, he said there is a "high degree of confidence" that the current vaccines are effective against the variant.

Hancock urged those who are eligible for vaccination but have not yet booked an appointment to come forward to get their jab.

The Health Secretary described the current situation as "a race between the vaccination program and the virus", with the new variant having "given the virus some extra legs in that race".

"And so even with the protection that the vaccine gives you - the vaccine protection is very high but it is not absolute."

Public Health England (PHE) said cases of the variant known as B1617.2 in Britain have more than doubled to 1,313, up from 520 cases recorded by PHE last week.

However, Hancock said Monday's planned easing of lockdown would still go ahead.



A decision would be announced on June 14 as to whether the country would proceed to the final stage on June 21, when all legal limits on social contact are expected to be removed, according to Hancock.

"We need to be cautious, we need to be careful, we need to be vigilant and we've said - at each step," he said.

From Monday, pubs, bars and restaurants in England will be permitted to open indoors, while indoor entertainment will also resume, including cinemas, museums and children's play areas. People in England will be allowed to meet outdoors in groups of up to 30

people, and meet indoors in groups of up to six or as two households.

Hotels, hostels and B&Bs can also reopen from Monday.

But UK health experts warned that the next stage of lockdown easing should be approached "with utmost caution".

Richard Jarvis, co-chairman of the British Medical Association (BMA) public health medicine committee, said "key segments of the population" were still not vaccinated.

According to the latest official figures, more than 36.3 million people in Britain have been given the first jab of

## 'Oxygen for India' marathon fundraiser to collect \$2mn launched in Canada

Indo-Asian News Service

**Toronto, May 17:** The Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC), along with 80-odd community bodies, launched its 'Oxygen for India' marathon fundraiser to collect \$2 million to send oxygen equipment to India, even as Ontario announced to send 2,000 more ventilators to the Covid-battered country.

Almost \$500,000 was raised during the very first session of the marathon fundraiser on Sunday.

It will be held for three hours every Sunday for four weeks.

Surprisingly, the biggest contribution of \$50,000 came from Canada's native or indigenous Metis people.

"We have similarities with Indians even though we are from different parts of the world. India will be there for us when we need, and we should be there for them now. We will donate \$50,000 to the ICCC and do more if needed," announced David Chartrand, President of the Manitoba Metis Federation.

ICCC president Vijay Thomas said their initiative

aims at garnering donations not only from the 1.6 million Indo-Canadian community, but also businesses and cities across Canada.

"The money will be used to send oxygen concentrators and generators and we will find new pathways to send oxygen to India. We want to ensure that oxygen reaches tier 2 and 3 cities and towns before they get severely hit by the virus," Thomas said.

Top political leaders, including the Ontario Premier Doug Ford, Mayors, business owners and medical professionals took part in the marathon fundraiser.

Ford announced that 2,000 additional ventilators are being sent to India, in addition to 3,000 already delivered.

"The whole plane-load of Air Canada is filled from front to back and arriving (in India) by Tuesday with all sorts of supplies. The people of India have been there for us and we will be there for them," the Ontario Premier said, referring to India's delivery of one million vaccine doses to Canada earlier this year.

## Saudi Arabia to lift travel ban from Monday



Indo-Asian News Service

**Riyadh, May 17:** Saudi Arabia will lift the travel ban which was imposed last year in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic from Monday, with authorities saying that they were ready to operate international flights at full capacity.

In an announcement on Sunday, the Interior Ministry announced that May 17 will mark the full opening of all borders - air, land and sea, reports Xinhua news agency.

The Kingdom will allow people who received Covid-19 vaccines to travel along with those who recovered from infection in less than six months, it said.

The decision was based on the recommen-

dations by the competent health authorities. Some categories of passengers will be excluded from the quarantine, including Saudi citizens, their spouses and children.

Along with passengers who received Covid-19 vaccines, official delegations, as well as diplomats and their families residing with them will also be excluded from the institutional quarantine.

But the excluded categories, except for the vaccinated individuals, will be required to undergo home quarantine, with an emphasis on the need to obtain a valid health insurance policy to cover the risks of the coronavirus.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabian Airlines said in a statement that it has completed preparations to operate flights to 71 destinations from 95 airports, including 28 domestic and 43 international destinations, reports Arab News.

The General Authority of Civil Aviation said that around 385 flights are expected to operate throughout the Kingdom's airports on Monday.

The Interior Ministry however, added that said travel to a number of Covid-affected countries, directly or via another nation, is still banned without prior permission.

The countries are India, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Iran, Turkey, Armenia, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, Venezuela and Belarus.

## Taiwan bars entry to non-nationals after Covid spike



Indo-Asian News Service

**Taipei, May 17:** Taiwan is banning the entry of non-nationals without a resident permit and the transit of international airport passengers, after reporting a new daily record of 333 locally-transmitted Covid-19 cases, Health Minister Chen Shih-chung said on Monday.

The temporary suspension will be imposed from Wednesday to June 18, dpa news agency quoted the Minister as saying at a news conference here.

Monday's number of lo-

cally transmitted cases is a sharp jump from Sunday's previous record daily high of 206, prompting fresh concern about the trajectory of Taiwan's outbreak.

The sources of infection for dozens of Covid-19 patients remained unidentified, according to the Central Epidemic Command Centre (CECC).

Taiwan, which had contained the virus well last year, has witnessed three-digit numbers of locally transmitted cases since May 15, when it tightened prevention measures in the Taipei metropolitan area for two weeks.

## Aid ship rescues over 300 people in Mediterranean

Indo-Asian News Service

**Rome, May 17:** The aid ship Sea-Eye 4 has rescued about 330 migrants attempting to make the perilous journey across the Mediterranean in the past few days, the private vessel's German operator announced on Monday.

The latest rescue operation conducted overnight brought 99 people on board, most of whom said they are from Syria, dpa news agency quoted Sea-Eye as saying on Twitter.

The crew was now nearing "the limit" of their capacities to care for the rescuees, Sea-Eye wrote.

The Sea-Eye 4 set out last last week and has been picking up migrants travelling on boats unfit for the high seas.

Among the people brought aboard the vessel at the weekend were children, an eight-month-old baby and a pregnant woman, the group said.

The ship, refitted in the northern German port city of Rostock and belonging to the association founded in Regensburg, Bavaria, in 2015, had started its mission to rescue distressed migrants in the central Mediterranean Sea at the beginning of the month.

The mission is supported by United4Rescue, the Alliance for Civilian Sea Rescue, and the aid organization German



Doctors.

According to UN figures, more than 500 people have died so far this year until the beginning of May trying to cross the central Mediterranean to Europe, usually departing from Libya and Tunisia and aiming for Italy.

The private sea rescuers criticize the Libyan coast guard for intercepting boat migrants and bringing them back to the war-torn country, where they are threatened with human rights violations.

Politically, however, the rescue operations of the private organisations are controversial, with some claiming they encourage the illegal smuggling of people across the Mediterranean.



# 'Death rate higher': Assam CM asks senior docs to work late night

Indo-Asian News Service

Guwahati, May 17: With the Covid related mortality rate seen higher in the night, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday asked the authorities to engage senior doctors on duty at this time.

Sarma, and Health Minister Keshab Mahanta have been conducting surprise and frequent visits in different medical colleges, hospitals and Covid care centres across the state to supervise the Covid management.

After making a surprise visit to the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital, Sarma, who had held the health portfolio during the previous Sarbananda Sonowal government, told the media that it has been one of the priorities of the government to step up critical care services during the night and odd hours in all the medical colleges and main hospitals of the state.

The Chief Minister also ex-



pressed his gratitude to doctors, nursing staff, and other paramedical staff for their round-the-clock services.

In view of the rising cases of Covid-19 and its cascading effect on Assam, Sarma asked the Superintendents of Police in all 34 districts to sternly enforce the preventive directives for containment zones to reverse the

surging trends of the pandemic.

In a video conference on Sunday with the Deputy Commissioners, Superintendents of Police and Joint Directors of Health, Chief Minister said that an exhaustive compliance of preventive measures meant for the containment zones would go a long way in

strengthening containment of Covid-19.

Sarma also asked the Deputy Commissioners to ensure delivery of critical care treatment to the Covid patients during odd hours in their respective districts. He asked them to visit Medical College Hospitals and Civil Hospitals in their respective jurisdictions.

The Chief Minister asked them to arrange conveyance for transportation of Covid positive patients from their home to Covid care centre, and provide essential commodities worth Rs 2,000 to the poor people living in containment zones.

The number of active cases in Assam rose to over 43,377 on Sunday night. Assam has so far reported 3,28,629 Covid cases, while 2,179 persons have succumbed. Of the 34 districts in Assam, the situation in three districts - Kamrup Metro, where the active case tally stood at 1,197 on Sunday night, followed by Cachar (262) and Dibrugarh (240) - is serious.

# Narada case: CBI arrests TMC's Firhad, Subrata, Madan, Sovon (Ld)

Indo-Asian News Service

Kolkata, May 17: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested two Trinamool Congress ministers - Firhad Hakim and Subrata Mukherjee, apart from former Trinamool Minister and present MLA Madan Mitra and former Kolkata Corporation Mayor Sovon Chattopadhyay in the Narada sting tapes cases where several politicians and a high-ranked police officer were allegedly found accepting cash bribes in exchange for providing unofficial favours to the company.

In a statement, the CBI said, "Hakim, Mukherjee, Mitra and Chatterjee have been arrested by CBI and are being produced in the jurisdictional court."

The statement said that the chargesheet against the five persons against whom Prosecution sanction is received is being submitted in court.

The CBI had earlier arrested IPS officer SMH Meerza in connection with the case, who is presently out on bail. He is the fifth accused.

The CBI said that it has received the prosecution sanction against the four ar-



rested leaders on May 7.

Meanwhile, State Transport Minister and former Kolkata Mayor Hakim told the media after he was arrested from his Chetla home in South Kolkata earlier in the day, "They have not given any notice and now they have arrested me. They didn't even seek the permission of the Speaker. We will fight it in the court."

Along with Hakim three others were brought to the CBI regional office at Nizam Palace in the morning.

The CBI officers with large central forces went to the houses of the leaders and the ministers in the morning at around 9.30 a.m. and brought them to the regional office without even allowing them to speak to their lawyers.

Sources in the agency said that all of them were made to

sit in separate rooms on the 15th floor of the office and they were allowed to consult their lawyers.

Though questions have been raised about the arrest of two cabinet ministers without the permission of the Speaker, the CBI officials said that they had sought the permission of the Governor and Jagdeep Dhankhar had given them the permission to prosecute.

"We will appeal for the bail," one of the lawyers said. The arrests obviously attracted controversy because Governor Dhankhar has accorded sanction of prosecution to the premiere agency just few hours before the oath taking ceremony of the ministers.

"The plea for sanction was made a little before MCC came to an end. I thought it as an act of propriety that at that point of time I should

not be giving attention to the matter.

"The moment the poll process was over, the matter engaged my attention because such issues should not be delayed and so I acted and you know the results.

"As coming to issues on people taking oath in respect of whom sanctions for prosecution has been accorded is a matter of propriety to be taken not by those who make a request to the governor to appoint them," the governor had said.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee rushed to the CBI regional office to speak to her cabinet ministers.

The chief minister appeared angry as she entered the CBI office and met her leaders.

Lawyers present on the floor said that the chief minister questioned the CBI officers about the legality of the arrests and even said that she would wait till the end until there is a proper conclusion to the whole incident.

"The BJP is taking a vindictive stance. Why are Suwendu and Mukul, who are also accused in the Narada case, not arrested? They are trying to take revenge for their defeat.

# Gehlot had malafide intentions so ventilators were not used: BJP

Indo-Asian News Service

Jaipur, May 17: BJP National General Secretary and in-charge of Rajasthan Arun Singh on Sunday accused Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot of having mala fide intentions 'due to which he intentionally did not use the ventilators allotted under the PM Care for Rajasthan'.

Addressing a virtual media conference, Singh said, "The ventilators which were termed as faulty could have been made operational by spending a mere amount of Rs 300. In Bikaner, 20 ventilators were made operational by our workers. Why other ventilators were not made functional a year back by the Congress government?"

People would not have died if the ventilators had been made functional. The Gehlot government should be held accountable for this, he added.

If the Central government can provide a ventilator worth Rs 4 lakh, why could not the Gehlot government spend Rs 300 to improve any of its parts. Operating and maintaining ventilators was a part of state government and Gehlot government's loopholes are now out in the public, he further said.

Singh alleged that the Central government allotted 453 MT oxygen but the state government could not reap the benefits as it did not



arrange for tankers. Health sector comes under the state government but it did not do anything and kept sleeping with no work done on ground for installing oxygen plant, he said.

"Due to their mala fide intentions, neither the ventilators provided under PM care were used nor the Rs 201 crore funds sanctioned for installing oxygen plants were used. This would have popularised PM Modi's image and hence public lives were compromised upon," he said.

# IIT-K sets up fund to help needy students in Covid times

Indo-Asian News Service

Kanpur, May 17: IIT Kanpur has raised over Rs one crore by way of donations from around 650 contributors for providing financial aid to students who are facing medical emergencies.

Some of the students who approached the IIT-K authorities needed money for treatment of their family members.

The initiative, according to IIT-K director Prof Abhay Karandikar, was started on May 1 but the portal for this was launched on May 5. Students can send their requests at the portal.

"We had been receiving requests for help from students and so we decided to set up a relief fund. Our target is to raise Rs five crores," he said.

He explained that there are over 8,300 students at IIT K and is even 500 need financial help of Rs one lakh each, a corpus fund of Rs

five crores is needed.

The IIT K director said that he had reached out to alumni and well-wishers through the social media and the response was overwhelming.

The IIT-K has set up a committee headed by dean students' affairs and dean of resource and alumni, student president and two representatives of the alumni community to evaluate each request and decide on the beneficiaries. The committee will meet virtually to review the requests. The decision on appeals will then be communicated to the applicants and the funds will subsequently be transferred to them. The IIT-K director said that the second wave of the pandemic had caused immense financial distress to students and their families.

Covid related health issues may require large sums of money at short notice and it may be difficult for many to arrange for this at short notice.

# Cyclone Tauktae storms over Mumbai, razes trees, damages homes

Indo-Asian News Service

Mumbai, May 17: Cyclone Tauktae hit Mumbai with full fury bringing heavy rains, strong gales of over 60-75 km/hr, which wreaked havoc by uprooting scores of trees, damaged some homes, and disrupted road traffic, though there are no human casualties, officials said.

Categorised now as 'Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm', its effects were felt shortly after midnight of Sunday-Monday with many areas lashed by heavy rains, accompanied by lightning and thunder in some places, aggravated by powerful winds, as it whirled northwards from Sindhudurg-Ratnagiri towards Raigad-Mumbai en route to the Gujarat coast.

As a major precautionary measure, the state authorities have already shifted out 7,866 people from vulnerable spots along the coast, besides another around 4,000 in Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri and Thane, an official said.

Till Monday morning, the city had recorded 8.37 mm rains, 6.53 in eastern suburbs and 3.92 in western suburbs, substantially cooling the weather at the height of mid-summer when Mumbai swelters with the mercury remaining in the upper-30s-to-mid-40s.

Several roads were littered as at least 30



big and small trees got uprooted in different parts of Mumbai and Thane, during the night, besides minor damage to several homes.

The cyclone was hovering around 160 kms away from the Mumbai coast and is likely to reach Gujarat by midnight tonight, said the IMD's latest warning bulletin.

It is accompanied by strong winds of 180-190 kmph, gusting to 210 kmph, which is expected to drop gradually over the next 48 hours into a depression with 40-60 kmph windspeeds by Wednesday morning.

The combined effect of the these have resulted in 'Phenomenal' waves in the frothy Arabian Sea with tidal waves to reach heights of upto 3 metres and the authorities have completely banned all fishing and other maritime activities for the next few days.

# WHO gives 100 oxygen concentrators to Haryana



Indo-Asian News Service

Gurugram, May 17: The World Health Organization (WHO) in first phase provided 100 oxygen concentrators to Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal through one of its top representatives - National Profession Officer, Regional Team Leader, North India, Dr. Vishesh, here on Monday. Khattar thanked the WHO for the assistance and said Haryana is following its guidelines to combat the pandemic.

He hoped that the WHO would keep on helping Haryana in terms of providing medical equipments and also continue guiding for tackling the pandemic in more effective ways. While assuring

the Haryana CM of all help, Dr. Vishesh said that WHO stands in solidarity with the people of India in this crisis and our sympathies are with the families that have lost their loved ones.

He said: "We will continue to work with the Union government and state governments to end the pandemic."

He added that WHO is supporting India to fill critical gaps in the availability of oxygen, testing kits, and hospital beds and it procured 1.2 million respirator masks (KN95), 4,000 oxygen concentrators, 424 medical beds, 128 tents for auxiliary health facilities, 1.2 million reagents and 400,000 test and swab kits to support testing capacity across states and union territories.

# Mamata starts dharna at CBI's Kolkata office

Indo-Asian News Service

Kolkata, May 17: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has started a sit-in in CBI's Kolkata office to protest the arrest of four of her Trinamool Congress leaders, provoking an unusual Centre-state confrontation of sorts.

Banerjee rushed to the 15th floor of the 'Nizam Palace' where the CBI has the office of its anti-corruption cell. Her spokesperson, lawyer Anindyo Raut told waiting media persons: "Didi (Banerjee) will not leave this CBI office until her party colleagues are released or until she is also arrested."

He said Mamata Banerjee told the CBI officers they have arrested the four leaders, among them two sitting and two former ministers, without the mandatory notice. "These arrests are politically motivated and illegal. Suwendu Adhikari and Mukul Roy have been let off though they faced the same charges," Raut quoted Mamata Banerjee as saying.

Central forces guarding the CBI office were not letting media persons inside the office - so speaking to



CM Banerjee was not possible. But she sent out Raut to let journalists "know her viewpoint".

The CBI on Monday launched parallel raids and detained TMC ministers Firhad Hakim and Subrata Mukherjee and MLA Madan Mitra in its probe in the Narada sting case. Within hours, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee reached the CBI office. Along with the TMC leaders, former Kolkata

Mayor Sovan Chatterjee was also picked up and later arrested by the CBI in the same case.

The TMC leaders were taken to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) office in the Narada sting operation case. A few days ago, Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar had given permission to the CBI for prosecution of these TMC leaders.

Dhankhar had threatened the Trinamool Congress and

said he should not be forced to use his powers.

Trinamool MP and lawyer Kalyan Banerjee told IANS the party leaders had "always cooperated with the CBI in these cases."

"Now the CBI says they have arrested the four because they are submitting the charge sheet against them. If they are submitting charge sheet, that means the investigation is over. So why they need the leaders in custody and where is the mandatory notice of arrest! This is downright illegal and politically motivated. We will move the court and we have faith in it," Banerjee told IANS. Analysts blamed the Modi-Shah government at the Centre for provoking this confrontation.

"Modi and Shah have failed to stomach the party's humiliating defeat in West Bengal. They are not only trying to take revenge but also divert national attention from their failure to handle Covid by provoking this confrontation. Who knows what they plan if this leads to violence," said Sukhoranjan Dasgupta, veteran political commentator and writer of several books on West Bengal.

# Transparency should be maintained on vax supply: Sisodia



Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: Amid the shortage of anti-Covid vaccines, the AAP-led Delhi government on Monday wrote to the Centre and demanded full transparency in the vaccine allocation system.

In the letter, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) mentioned that similar to medical oxygen allocation, wherein the Centre has fixed a quota for each state and Union Territories (UTs), the same should be done for vaccine allocation.

Addressing a virtual press conference, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia who is also the Nodal minister for Covid management, said Delhi is ready to purchase vaccines but the Centre said Delhi will not be given more vaccines in May. "The Centre has in a letter to Delhi government today has informed that Delhi will be supplied 3.83 lakh doses (3,83,000) of vaccines in May and no vaccines to be supplied for the age group 18-44 years. If vaccines are not received in the next three days, all vaccination centres for the 18-44 age group will be shut," Sisodia said.

Sisodia told the press that the Delhi government has requested the Centre to provide vaccines for 18-44 age groups at least equal in number to the doses provided for the 45 and above age groups.

"We want to vaccinate both sections (18 to 44 and 45 and above) at the same time so that all age groups of people in Delhi can be administered vaccines before the third wave of Covid pandemic starts," he added.

"The allocation of vaccines is being done under the supervision of the Centre and we have requested the Centre to make the system transparent. All states must be aware of how many vaccines they would be getting and how many vaccines other states would be receiving at the same time. The Centre should also direct vaccine manufacturing agencies to maintain transparency in allocating vaccines for the government (states and the Centre) and to the private agencies," Sisodia added.

The Delhi government has also requested the Centre to inform it about the number of vaccines to be supplied in the months of June and July so that the state administration can prepare for the vaccination drive.

# Covid medicines case: Delhi HC questions police's clean chit to politicians

Indo-Asian News Service

New Delhi, May 17: The Delhi High Court on Monday expressed its displeasure with the Delhi Police clean chit to nine politicians, including city MP Gautam Gambhir and Indian Youth Congress (IYC) President B.V. Srinivas, in a matter connected with alleged hoarding of Covid medicines.

Chaudhary, ex-MLA Mukesh Sharma, AAP leader Harish Khurana, AAP MLA Dilip Pandey, among others.

The allegations against the politicians involved hoarding and distributing Covid-19 medicines, including Remdesivir, in the capital. In their report, the police said they were actually helping people without charging money and no one was defrauded.

Objecting to Delhi Police's clean chit to politicians, a bench comprising Justices Vipin Sanghi and Jasmeet Singh said: "This is com-



pletely unacceptable. Political parties cannot make this pandemic a selling point. How could they purchase it without prescription?"

The court queried the police if it realises how many people have succumbed to the viral infection due to shortage of medicines.

Asking it to act with responsibility, the bench told the Delhi Police: "They have no business to buy medicines and hoarding them to earn some goodwill. Now it seems that you are not interested in getting out the truth."

It added that if there were some political leaders involved in the matter, it should not deter the police from investigating it properly. "Your force should stand up, you

have a duty towards the people... People all over are suffering," said the bench.

The bench further added that it expects the medicines to be surrendered to the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) and the Delhi Police to conduct a "proper investigation" and register an FIR, if a case is made out.

The bench told the police that it wants to see a complete status report. Emphasising the stocks of medicines held by political leaders should be handed over to the DGHS, the court said.



# Nadal beats Djokovic for 10th Rome Open title

Indo-Asian News Service

**Rome, May 17:** World No. 3 Spaniard Rafael Nadal on Sunday won his 10th Italian Open title, after overcoming a second set comeback from No. 1 Novak Djokovic in the final to triumph 7-5, 1-6, 6-3 in two hours and 50 minutes.

The victory gave second seeded Nadal the 36th ATP Masters 1000 crown, equaling top seeded Djokovic's all-time record, since the series was established in 1990.

In the 57th meeting of the ATP Tour's one of the most prolific rivalries, Djokovic was facing second seed Nadal, winner of 20 Grand Slam singles title winner, for the ninth time at the Foro Italico.

Nadal improved to 4-2 in Rome finals against Djokovic with the victory, and brought his ATP head-



to-head record against the Serbian to 28-29 overall.

In the men's doubles final, second-seeded Croats Nikola Mektic and Mate Pavic powered their way to their sixth Italian Open trophy, overcoming a tough challenge from fifth-seeded Rajeev Ram of the USA and Briton Joe Salisbury and winning the final 6-4, 7-6(4).

Djokovic had spent nearly five hours on court on Sat-

urday, first winning his rain-delayed quarter-final against Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas and then the semi-final epic against Italian Lorenzo Sonego, to reach the final.

Nadal, on the other hand, needed an hour-and-a-half to take down Reilly Opelka of the USA.

Djokovic, who was bidding to record his first win on clay against the Spaniard

since the 2016 Rome quarter-finals, showed little signs of fatigue in the opening set.

The Serbian raced to a 2-0 lead, staying aggressive and keeping the points short. But Nadal broke straight back, and his forehand speed steadily climbed as the set unfolded, earning 15 of his 21 winners.

Nadal claimed the decisive break late in the set, taking advantage of a shaky service game of the Serbian at 5-5 to claim the lead, sealing the set.

But a dip in Nadal's intensity gave Djokovic the opening he needed in the second set.

However, the Spaniard held firm and raised his level in the final set, reeling out forehand winners to take a 4-2 lead. He converted his second championship point after Djokovic sent a backhand long, sealing the victory.

# Practice with Dukes ball has helped: NZ pacer Wagner

Indo-Asian News Service

**Auckland, May 17:** New Zealand pace bowler Neil Wagner, whose variations in short-pitched deliveries will be a big challenge for India in the World Test Championship (WTC) final, said Kiwis are better prepared than they ever were before touring England thanks to their practice with the Dukes ball.

New Zealand, who play two Tests against England from June 2 to June 14 before playing the WTC final against India from June 18, used the Dukes ball at the pre-departure camp in Lincoln.

"It's been quite nice, it's obviously got different characteristics to the Kookaburra. The way we've been training for the last while is something we didn't always have in the past, having the facilities and having a marquee up and getting a num-



ber of trainings in before going to England," Wagner told New Zealand media reporters at the Auckland airport just before departing to England.

"On tours in the past you rock up there and you've only got a couple of trainings and maybe one head out with the Dukes ball before the first Test and with that you can find yourself a little bit behind," he added.

"But having had those little bit of trainings leading into it has been quite beneficial, just because it's a little bit different, and obviously adapting to it. It's been really good preparation and everybody is excited bowling with it."

Wagner is ranked third

in ICC Test bowlers' rankings behind No. 1 Pat Cummins and No. 2 R Ashwin. Tim Southee, who also will be playing the three Test matches - two against England and the WTC final vs India -, is the other Kiwi among the top 10 bowlers, at No. 6.

While one batch of the New Zealand team has already reached England, Wagner is part of the second batch that departed on Monday.

The left-arm quick said that they will not take the Tests against England as warm-up for the WTC final but will go for the win.

"We're not going to treat these two Test matches against England just as warm-ups [for the WTC final]," he said.

"I know for a fact we're going to get out there and pride ourselves the way we've been playing Test cricket and we want to win Test matches for New Zealand."

# Australians in IPL arrive in Sydney, to quarantine for 2 weeks

Indo-Asian News Service

**Sydney, May 17:** The Australian players, coaches and commentary staff who were in the 2021 Indian Premier League (IPL) arrived in Sydney on Monday from the Maldives and will be in quarantine for 14 days.

The cricketers had gone to the Maldives after the suspension of the tournament as the Australian government had imposed a travel ban on travellers from India due to the Covid-19 situation in the country.

The group was escorted by police to quarantine hotels across Sydney after landing, according to nine.com. Meanwhile, former Australia batsman Mike Hussey, who had tested positive for the virus, is expected to arrive in Sydney later on Monday in a flight from Qatar.

While the Australians involved in the IPL flew to the Maldives on May 6 via a charter flight, Hussey was



transported from Delhi to Chennai where he stayed while recovering from the virus.

The New South Wales Government conceded it lifted its strict cap of 3000 returned travellers to cater for the cricket players.

"We always make sure that we have 3,000 Australians returning home every week and police and Health make an assessment if re-

# Cricket viewing numbers go up in New Zealand

Indo-Asian News Service

**Auckland, May 17:** More people watched cricket in New Zealand than ever before in the first season of New Zealand Cricket's (NZC) six-year deal with Spark Sport and TVNZ, the NZC said on Monday.

NZC said that the combination of free-to-air and digital subscription as a ground-breaking arrangement which is taking cricket to not only more Kiwis, but demographics of New Zealanders previously lost to the game.

NZC said that the six matches screened live on TVNZ 1 reached 1.86m viewers. Nearly 240,000 Spark Sport viewers watched the New Zealand men's and women's teams while Test match viewing numbers were "very encouraging".

There was also an increase in engagement, in terms of both highlights packages consumed, and average time

spent viewing.

There was a significant increase in viewership of both the men's and women's Super Smash.

"The opening T20 against the West Indies reached more than 970,000 while the Pakistan opener reached just over one million and the most popular Australian T20 reached over 1.24 million viewers. 840,300 viewers watched the last White Ferns fixture, vs Australia," said the NZC.

"The most popular Test match was the second in the Pakistan series which the Blackcaps won by an innings and 176 runs, and the most popular T20 series was the Australian series that was closely fought until the series decider - won by New Zealand.

Spark Sport customers watched over 3.4 million hours of cricket as the Blackcaps rose to the number one Test team in the world," it further said.

# NZ cricketers reach London for WTC final vs India, Tests vs Eng

Indo-Asian News Service

**London, May 17:** A majority of cricketers comprising the New Zealand team that will play a Test series against host England and the World Test Championship (WTC) final against India next month have arrived here.

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said that the other members of the team would arrive here on Monday.

"Tim Southee, BJ Watling, Ross Taylor and Neil Wagner will depart Auckland on Monday afternoon (New Zealand time) to join the squad in Southampton," said NZC on Monday.

"The Maldives-based IPL contingent of captain Kane Williamson, Kyle Jamieson, Mitchell Santner, team physio Tommy Simsek and trainer Chris Donaldson will arrive on Monday (UK time)," read the statement.

Williamson and other players and staff were in India for the Indian Premier League (IPL), which was suspended midway due to raging Covid-19 pandemic in India. They then went to the Maldives before flying out to England.

After a successful county championship stint with Durham, batsman Will Young will also link up with the team on Monday and undergo isolation at the Ageas Bowl before joining his teammates for training.

"Trent Boult will finish his managed iso-



lation on Sunday and return to Mount Maunganui to see his family before a plan is made around his departure to the UK," it said.

"While in England they will operate in a 'controlled team environment' to limit outside contact and risk of transmission. All tour members will complete a daily self-reported health screening as well as undergoing regular Covid testing."

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Blackcaps are adhering to strict health protocols, including pre-departure vaccinations and Covid tests, along with receiving medical bags equipped with masks and hand sanitiser.

# Tennis Australia planning to host Australian Open in Melbourne



Indo-Asian News Service

**Sydney, May 17:** Tennis Australia is planning to host the Australian Open in January next year in Melbourne.

Tennis Australia, country's top tennis body, issued a statement in this regard on Monday after media reports said the tournament would be forced offshore due to federal government's prediction that international borders will stay closed until mid-2022.

"Tennis Australia ran Australian Open 2021 successfully in the middle of a pandemic. We are planning Australian Open 2022 for January and we look forward to having Melbourne again play host to the best players in the world. We continue to work with the government on the best and safest environment for both fans and players," the statement said.

The tournament's director Craig Tiley also refuted the report and expressed optimism over the Grand Slam.

# No surprise Aus bowlers knew about ball tampering: Clarke

Indo-Asian News Service

**Sydney, May 17:** Former Australia captain Michael Clarke has said that he was not surprised by Cameron Bancroft indicating that more than three people knew about the ball tampering tactics of the team during a Test against South Africa in 2018.

The scandal blew up when Bancroft was caught on television cameras using sandpaper on the ball during the third Test in Cape Town. It led to him, captain Steve Smith and vice-captain David Warner being banned. Smith and Warner have since returned to the national team.

"I can tell you now if you went and grabbed a pen, just a pen and put a little 'I' somewhere on my cricket



bat; on top of the handle, on the edge of the bat, on the toe of the bat, on the face, under the grip, anywhere, just a little number one, I would have noticed. If you are playing sport at the highest level you know your tools

that good it's not funny," Clarke told Fox Sports.

"Can you imagine that ball being thrown back to the bowler and the bowler not knowing about it? Please," he said.

Clarke said that didn't think

anybody should be surprised by Bancroft saying that more people knew in the team than the three who were eventually implicated and banned.

"I love how the articles in the paper are 'it is such a big surprise that Cameron Bancroft has made a...' Actually if you read his quotes it is not what he did say as what he didn't say in regards to other people knowing about sandpapergate," he said.

"What's the surprise? That more than three people knew? I don't think anybody who has played the game of cricket or knows a little bit about cricket would know that in a team like that, at the highest level, when the ball is such an important part of the game. I don't think anybody is surprised that more than three people knew about it," he said.

# German football chief Keller resigns after Nazi analogy



Indo-Asian News Service

**Berlin, May 17:** German football federation (DFB) president Fritz Keller resigned on Monday after comparing vice president Rainer Koch to a Nazi judge.

Keller, who at first resisted resigning, stated last week he was ready to leave his position after he compared Koch to Nazi judge Roland Freisler at a meeting in April. Further details of the comparison are not known.

In a statement, Keller said he was "taking personal responsibility" for his "lapse at the executive committee meeting, which is to remain the sad low point of the DFB's desolate leadership situation," DPA reports.

Keller's apology earlier this month was not accepted by Koch, while he also lost a no-confidence vote from regional federation chiefs.

Freisler attended the Wannsee Conference, which set in motion the Holocaust. Later, he was appointed president of the People's Court, where he handed down around 2,600 death sentences from 1942 to 1945.

"The DFB must change. It must regain its credibility, confidence in its integrity and performance," Keller said, but pointing out he found "resistance and walls" within the federation when trying to "professionalise and modernise" existing structures.

The DFB, the largest single sports federation in the world with more than 7 million members, has been scandal ridden for years, most notably concerning the affair around dubious payments in connection with Germany's hosting of the 2006 World Cup.

Wolfgang Niersbach resigned as DFB president in 2015 over the World Cup affair, and his successor Reinhard Grindel quit in 2019 over accepting an expensive watch. Keller was Grindel's successor.

Keller said he didn't "succeed in achieving a trusting, reliable and collegial cooperation within the bodies of the DFB," and mentioned that after a second tax raid at DFB headquarters he realized that "far too often it was about internal power fights, securing advantages, and working on one's image in the public life."

He added that implementing his programme was repeatedly made "difficult or impossible in many places."

"I had to fight legally for the implementation of transparency and for the right to be provided with information that were a matter of DFB interests," Keller said.

Keller acknowledged his misconduct was "shameful" for the federation, but his resignation "will not solve the problems within the DFB and football."

However, he said that the discussion about necessary changes at the DFB initiated in recent days gave him hope and called for short-term measures such as a personnel renewal at DFB's highest ranks and the clarification of "all possible irregularities and misconduct at the DFB by external, publicly recognised specialists."

Last Tuesday, the DFB announced that the contract of secretary general Friedrich Curtius would be terminated.

# ICC clears India's two home Tests of 'spot-fixing' influence

Indo-Asian News Service

**Dubai, May 17:** The International Cricket Council (ICC) has cleared India's two home Tests - against England in 2016 and against Australia in 2017 - of any influence by spot-fixers, saying that a TV channel's allegations had 'fundamental weaknesses'.

The match against England was played in Chennai while the game against Australia was held in Ranchi.

"The ICC has concluded its investigation into the documentary programme 'Cricket's Match Fixers' broadcast by Al Jazeera on 27 May 2018. No charges will be brought under the ICC Anti-Corruption Code against any of the five Participants to the Code who featured in the programme due to insufficient credible and reliable evidence," an ICC statement said on Monday.

The ICC said that it hired four bet-



ting and cricket specialists to study the passages of play. The four, the ICC added, couldn't find anything wrong.

"To assess whether the passages of play highlighted in the programme were unusual in any way, the ICC engaged four independent betting and cricketing specialists to analyse the claims. All four concluded that the passages of play identified in the programme as being allegedly fixed were entirely predictable and, therefore, implausible as a fix," said the statement.

The 2018 documentary had alleged that a group of English and Australian cricketers were involved in spot-fixing.

"All five Participants to the Code who featured in the programme have been interviewed by the ICC Integrity Unit and there is insufficient evidence based on the normal thresholds applied through the Code to lay any charges," the ICC said.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) had earlier denied the allegations, saying the evidence used in the reporting was poor.

However, Alex Marshall, the ICC General Manager (Integrity) said that the ICC is open to review the allegations if substantial evidence comes forward.

"Should any new substantial evidence come to light I will re-examine the case. But at present I am comfortable with the conclusion of the investigation and the thoroughness with which it was undertaken," he said.

# Dubai Asian boxing: So far no visas for 20-member Indian team

Indo-Asian News Service

**New Delhi, May 17:** India's participation in this month's Asian Boxing Championships in Dubai looks doubtful as its 20-member team hasn't got the visas, the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) secretary said on Monday.

The competition is scheduled to start on May 21. The Indian team includes 10 women boxers.

"The Indian men and women's boxing teams haven't got visas to travel to Dubai. We are, however, trying our level best to send the teams," BFI secretary Hemanta Kalita told IANS.

Originally, New Delhi to host the continental competition, but last month the

Asian Boxing Confederation shifted the tournament to Dubai because of the raging Covid pandemic in India, particularly in Delhi.

With Covid-19 crisis deepening in India it is unlikely the BFI will send even its staff to officiate in the Asian meet.

"Since we were co-host it was planned to send officials to Dubai, but not now. The situation is scary and I doubt any Indian official would like to go," said Kalita.

The men's team is training in Patiala's National Institute of Sports while the women's camp started on May 5 at Army Sports Institute in Pune.

The BFI had shortlisted 10 elite women boxers for the Pune camp, but only five had joined until a few days ago.