

GMC Jammu doc among 11 more test +ve for Coronavirus, tally 49

Testing docs to stay in hotels, many contacts sent for quarantine

***Lakhanpur completely sealed, none allowed to enter J&K**

Sanjeev Pargal
JAMMU, Mar 30: Fresh Coronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir today surged to 49 with the Union Territory reporting 11 fresh cases including eight in the Valley and three in Jammu region while tally in the UT of Ladakh stayed at 13 with no new case reported during past 11 days.
***Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com**

vent spread of the virus. Of three persons tested positive for COVID-19 in Jammu today, two belonged to Jammu and one to

Microbiology Dr Shashi S Sudhan, the doctor was not part of Coronavirus testing team.



People camping at Lakhanpur border after authorities stopped entry of people into J&K on Monday. —Excelsior/Madan Magotra

The Government today completely sealed J&K's border with Punjab and restricted every kind of movement at Lakhanpur, the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir in Kathua district, blocking entry of all inhabitants of the Union Territory trying to return to their home towns while District Magistrate Jammu Sushma Chauhan ordered containment of five localities in the district to pre-

Microbiology Dr Shashi S Sudhan, the doctor was not part of Coronavirus testing team. The medical experts were trying to find out the source of doctor's infection and his family members in Channi H i m m a t including his father, a retired SSP, have been taken for test and quarantine by the doctors.

It is being ascertained whether the doctor caught virus within the Medical College or he had come in contact with any person of travel history especially those who have returned from pilgrimage from Saudi Arabia, Iran and Indonesia. Dr Sudhan said the Microbiology Department has tri-

furcated staff into three teams, Collection, Testing and Infection Control and all of them are working effectively to speed up testing process. Today, she said, the Department staff took 35 samples mostly of those who were contacts of three positive patients including staff of her Department especially those who had come in contact with the positive doctor, for testing.

The HoD Microbiology said all doctors and staff of her Department have stopped visiting houses and were being kept in hotels by the administration.

Sources said the Government has hired four hotels nearest to the GMC Jammu to lodge the doctors engaged in testing to ensure their safety as well as their family members' safety after one of the doctors tested positive for COVID-19.

Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Piyush Singla told the Excelsior that a woman tested

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Fayaz Bukhari
SRINAGAR, Mar 30: The number of COVID-19 cases rose to 37 in Kashmir as eight more persons tested positive for Coronavirus while a woman has recovered and tested negative. Eight persons today tested positive in Kashmir with four of them

***Pic on page 4 Video on www.excelsiornews.com**

admitted in SKIMS Soura, while two each are presently in JLNMSrinagar and district hospital Pulwama respectively.

Two among them are residents of Sedow and Rannagri of Shopian district in South Kashmir and have a travel history to Indonesia.

The duo had also shared a Sumo vehicle on way to home from Jammu to Srinagar with a COVID-19 positive man from Bemina, Srinagar.

The two persons admitted in

JLNMSrinagar include a father-son duo from Bemina area of Srinagar. One is 61-year-old man and his 32-year-old son had returned from Saudi Arabia on March 16, sharing the same flight as that by the Kashmir's first

COVID-19 man and another a 27-year-old man from Soibugh area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district who has travelled to Odisha as part of a Tablighi Jamaat and had returned recently. Another is a

Persons enlisted for observation	11644
Persons in Hospital Isolation & Hospital Quarantine	355
No of Samples collected for test of COVID-19	722
No of samples tested Negative	659
No of samples tested Positive	49
No of reports awaited	15
No of cases recovered	2
No of Deaths	2

COVID-19 patient, a 67-year-old woman from Khanyar, Srinagar.

Four persons today tested positive for COVID-19 and they are admitted in SKIMS. They include a 36-year-old resident of Lal Bazar who had recently returned from Kolkata while two others include 30-year-old man from Saderkote Balla Bandipora who is contact of a

24-year-old from Noorbagh area of Srinagar and had returned from Haryana recently.

With these eight fresh cases, the number of COVID-19 patients has gone up to 37 in Kashmir.

Director SKIMS Soura, Professor A G Ahangar, said that the first positive case, an elderly lady with history of foreign travel, responded very well to the treat-

ment and has recovered with the repeated tests as negative in 24 hours on the 14th day. She has shown progressive recovery and is being shifted to Level-II for further Quarantine purpose.

The patient will be sent home after spending the next 14 days in the quarantine where she will be observed. "We will not be doing anything during these 14 days, but monitor her condition," Dr Aijaz Kaul, In-charge COVID-19 clinic of SKIMS told Excelsior.

"For 10 days, she was given antivirals and over these days she has improved a lot," he said, adding that as per ICMR guidelines the patient is to be tested twice within a particular time before saying that the patient has been cured.

Symptomatically, the doctor said, she has had high fever coupled with stiffness and weakness. "The high fever which even went up to the scale of 104 was her main complaint", he said.

(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

PM hails Omar's call for social distancing

NEW DELHI, Mar 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today condoled the death of Omar Abdullah's uncle and appreciated the former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister's call to supporters to respect guidelines and not gather at either his residence or the graveyard.
(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

Govt extends validity of vehicle permits

NEW DELHI, Mar 30: The Centre today extended till June 30 the validity of documents like driving licenses, permits and registration that expired since February 1, in a move to ensure hassle-free transportation of cargo amid the lockdown over the Novel Coronavirus pandemic.
(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

Govt sanctions Rs 17.65 cr for construction workers

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 30: The Government today sanctioned Rs 17.65 crore for construction workers registered with the J&K Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board who have been left without any work due to lockdown announced in
(Contd on page 4 Col 2)

No extension of FY: Govt

NEW DELHI, Mar 30: There is no extension of the Financial Year, the Government said today, adding that there is a fake news circulating in some section of media that the Financial Year has been extended.
(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

Prioritize treatment of COVID patients, says LG

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 30: Lieutenant Governor, Girish Chandra Murmu today chaired a high level meeting at Raj Bhavan to review the arrangements being put in place to contain the spread of COVID-19 in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu chairing a meeting on Coronavirus situation in Jammu on Monday.

He emphasized on prioritizing the treatment of the patients tested positive for COVID-19 and passed directions for the distribution of masks, and PPEs, especially to the front-line workers who are associated with Corona prevention efforts.

Kewal Kumar Sharma, Farooq Khan and Baseer Ahmed Khan-Advisors to the Lt Governor; BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Arun Kumar Mehta, Financial Commissioner, Finance

Department; Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner Health and Medical Education; Bipul Pathak, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; besides Administrative Secretaries of various Departments; Divisional Commissioners of Jammu & Kashmir and Mission Director, NHM J&K participated in the deliberations (in person and through video conferencing).

He called for intensifying the COVID-19 testing to trace the

potential cases and making the necessary arrangements to engage more doctors and paramedical staff as backup.

The meeting was informed that sufficient quantity of masks are being procured and the process of re-engaging the doctors and paramedical staff (retiring within 6-months) for one year has already been set in motion. It was also informed that more than 2400 beds in J&K have been made ready for meeting any eventuality.

The Lt Governor also sought a detailed briefing of the present situation of the migrant labourers putting up in in Jammu and Kashmir and stressed on laying special focus on sanitization and distribution of masks in crowded areas and the pockets where labourers are dwelling. He was

(Contd on page 4 Col 2)

Govt constitutes coordination teams to ensure movement of essential goods, services

Nishikant Khajuria
JAMMU, Mar 30: In view of COVID-19 outbreak and to address the issues arising out of the ongoing situation, Government of Jammu and Kashmir today constituted coordination teams for ensuring movement of essential goods and services besides addressing difficulties because of the ongoing lockdown.

According to an order in this regard, Financial Commissioner, Health & Medical Education Department, Atal Dulloo has been made overall incharge of UT coordination COVID-19 response effort while Mission Director NHM, Bhopinder Kumar shall be the Incharge Apex Health Control Room.

Commissioner Secretary PHE, I&FC, Ajeet Kumar Sahu along with Arun Kumar Manhas, Project Director Samagra, shall coordinate

management of inter-state border, transit of passengers and supply management while Simrandeep Singh, Secretary FCS & consumer Affairs, shall be looking after overall coordination of essential supplies and logistic chains.

Coordination of issues related to students, patients and other residents of J&K affected by lockdown and currently in different parts of the country, shall be looked after by Principal Resident Commissioner, J&K Government, New Delhi, Dheeraj Gupta and Additional Resident Commissioner and ex-officio Secretary Resident Commission J&K Government, New Delhi, Niraj Kumar.

Coordination of labour issues, including problems of wage-labourers of J&K, currently under lockdown in other parts of the country, shall be looked after by

Saurabh Bhagat, Commissioner Secretary, Labour & Employment Department.

For overall coordination at divisional level, including quarantine facilities and all other administrative arrangements,

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Sanjeev Verma will be assisted by Managing Director Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited, Yasha Mudgul while Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, P K Pole will be assisted by Managing Director Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited, Mohammad Aijaz and Chief Executive Officer JAKEDA, Owais Ahmed.

Commissioner Secretary Industries and Commerce, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi and Director Industries and Commerce, Jammu, Anoo Malhotra shall oversee industrial production efforts-maintaining
(Contd on page 4 Col 8)

Directors' Industries appointed Registrars

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 30: The Government today issued two orders under Section 98 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019, read with Clause 17 of the Jammu and Kashmir Removal of Difficulties Order, 2019.

According to the first order, Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu has designated the Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir and Jammu as "Registrar of Firms" under the Jammu and Kashmir Partnership Act, Svt. 1996 (repealed). They will be deemed to have been appointed under the Indian Partnership Act, 1932.

According to the second order, "Lieutenant Governor ordered that the Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir and Jammu will be appointed as "Registrar of

(Contd on page 4 Col 2)

Microbiology team of GMC Jammu working under intense pressure for want of proper infra, trained personnel

Govind Sharma

JAMMU, Mar 30: Due to sudden surge in suspects of COVID-19 cases in Jammu province in last few days, Microbiology team of Government Medical College (GMC), Jammu is working under intense pressure to conduct COVID-19 tests timely and on the same day with its limited testing capacity and trained personnel.

Official sources told Excelsior that COVID-19 testing must be done in a BSL-3 lab but as it is yet not ready in GMC Jammu, testing for the dreaded virus is being done in centrally funded BSL-2 lab of Microbiology Department which does not have adequate testing capacity due to lack of proper infrastructure and trained lab personnel.

The existing capacity of the

***BSL-3 lab not ready yet, needs more COVID-19 testing facilities**

GMC team is only 40 samples per day but in last two-three days several suspects of COVID-19 have been traced out in Rajouri, Udhampur, Samba and Jammu districts and they all need to be tested immediately.

Yesterday GMC Jammu received about 54 samples and eight the other day were already pending but with limited trained staff and in the absence of BSL-3 lab, the institution is feeling helpless while there is mounting pressure of the higher authorities to conduct the tests and do their reporting the same day.

They lamented that despite adequate funding and lapse of about five years even after its announcement, the administration

of Jammu and Kashmir has constituted a High-Powered Committee headed by Executive Chairman, State Legal Services Authority and comprised Principal Secretary to the Government, Home Department and Director General of Police (Prisons) J&K.

The High-Powered Committee has been asked to determine the category/class of prisoners who may be considered for release on parole or interim bail for such period as may be thought appropriate, depending upon the nature of offence, the number of years to which he or she has been sentenced or severity of the offence with which

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Coronavirus still in local transmission stage Cases rise to 1251, deaths 32

NEW DELHI, Mar 30:

The COVID-19 crisis appeared escalating today as the Government reported more than 200 new cases of infection and at least five more deaths across India but maintained it was still in the local transmission stage.

The Government also said there was no immediate plan to extend the 21-day lockdown period, which entered its sixth day today, while the Indian Army dismissed as "fake" social media posts about a possible emergency declaration next month.

In its latest update, the Union Home Ministry said the death toll due to COVID-19 has risen to 32 and the number of total positive cases to 1,251 as on Monday 9.30 PM, up from 1,024 positive cases and 27 deaths as on Sunday

evening. While there are more than 1,100 active cases, nearly 100 have been cured.
At 227, this is the largest

Kejriwal orders FIR against Maulana

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal today ordered the registration of an FIR against a maulana for leading a congregation in West Nizamuddin in South Delhi after several people who attended it showed symptoms of coronavirus, sources said.

They said the Delhi Government will launch a house-to-house mapping exercise in two
(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

one-day increase in the number of cases for India. At least 25 fresh cases were reported from

Delhi alone, taking the national capital's tally to 97, as per the Delhi Health Department.

The Delhi Government separately converted its 11 schools into night shelters in a bid to help migrant workers stay in the city during the lockdown period, which would be in addition to the existing 238 night shelters in the city.

However, some good news came in the latest update from the Union Health Ministry which said the COVID-19 is still in local transmission stage in India and it took 12 days for cases of infection to rise from 100 to 1,000 at a rate of increase slower than some of the developed countries.

Addressing the daily press briefing on the actions taken, preparedness and updates on COVID-19, Joint Secretary in the
(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

Over 1500 vehicles stranded as NH remains blocked on Day 4

***NHAI resumes work, bleak chances of road opening in 3-4 days: DC**

Gopal Sharma
JAMMU, Mar 30: Over 1500 vehicles have been stranded as Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained blocked due to sinking of major portion of the road at Dalwas near Chanderkote in Ramban for 4th consecutive day today while
***Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com**



Restoration work in progress at Dalwas near Chanderkote in Ramban on Monday.

Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Nazim Zia Khan told the Excelsior that National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) today resumed the restoration work at
(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

'Provide security to medics treating patients' Take strict action against those violating Govt instructions on Coronavirus: DB

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 30: Division Bench of High Court comprising Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Sindhu Sharma today directed the authorities to take strict action against those who are violating instructions and orders issued by the Central Government and J&K UP Government to check spread of Coronavirus as their conduct would endanger lives of the people.

Hearing Public Interest Litigation (PIL) through video conferencing, the DB also directed the authorities of UTs of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to ensure that accommodation, healthcare and other needs of the migrant labourers are addressed. During the course of hearing,

Advocate Faisal Qadri submitted that he has received information from some doctors who are working at the two hospital facilities in Srinagar wherein quarantining and isolation of suspected/infected COVID-19 patients is being affected that such persons are misbehaving with the doctors and damaging the available facilities. "The doctors are apprehensive about their own security at the hands of the persons who have been lodged", he added.

On this, DB observed, "there can be no manner of doubt that the safety and security of all health providers which would include not only doctors but also the nurses, the paramedics, mess boys, safai karamcharies as well as administrative staff at all Government
(Contd on page 4 Col 3)