

## Major success against HM

# Dist Com, 2 associates; cop killed in Tral

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, July 1: The District Commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, his two associates and a police man were killed and three cops injured in a fierce gunbattle at Mandoor Tral in South Kashmir district of Pulwama today.

Deputy Inspector General of Police, South Kashmir range, Vijay Kumar told Excelsior that Jammu and Kashmir Police, Special Operations Group of JKP and 185 battalion of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) launched an operation on a tip off about the presence of three militants in the house of Gulzar Ahmad Bhat in Mandoor Tral last night.

The DIG said that early today when the cordon was laid around the house of Bhat, militants present inside opened fire on the police killing Mushtaq Ahmad of SOG Tral and injuring Manzoor Ahmad and two CRPF personnel.

Kumar said that after two hours, the Army's 42 Rashtriya Rifles was called in to assist the police in the operation. He said that the gun fight continued



Army soldiers rush to the site of gun fight with militants in Tral on Monday.

throughout the day.

"We maintained utmost restraint to avoid collateral damage. But later we used IED and fired mortars to target the militants who were firing on

troops from inside the house", the DIG said.

Kumar said that in the evening when the gun fight stopped the debris was being

cleared, a militant fired on troops. However, there was no causality. He said that the security forces again used IED and killed the militant, who

(Contd on page 7 Col 5)

## Troops didn't kill first man: Army

# Strike paralyses life, AGS set afire

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 1: Army today said that they didn't fire bullets that led to the killing of first man in North Kashmir district of Bandipora yesterday while normal life across Kashmir was today affected due to the strike called by separatist groups to protest against the killing of two youth in Bandipora district yesterday.

The Commander of 3 sector Rashtriya Rifles of Victor Force, Brigadier Gopal Sharma, today told reporters at Mansbal that

"We are surprised who fired upon him. I reached myself on the spot and checked the ammunition of my men and I found that not a single bullet was wasted by my jawans," said the Brigadier.

The commander, however, admitted that another youth was killed in Army firing. "We were helpless that time. The protesters had snatched the

keys of our vehicles and damaged one of the ambulances completely. Our jawans fired upon the protesters in self defence," he said.

Sharma maintained that the jawans of 13 RR and Special Operation Group personnel of local police had laid a siege of Markundal area after they had received an information that militants were present in the village.

However, a civilian driver, who was hired by the Army for ferrying the troops to the village claimed that the State police was not involved in the operation.

"There was no one else there when the first burst of firing took place. There was only Army," Manzoor Ahmad Sheikh, one of the five civilian drivers hired for the operation by the Army, told Excelsior.

Sheikh said the vehicles were called to the Safapora Army camp on Saturday and at 11.00 pm they started to move. "We were told that some Army personnel have to be dropped in Sonamarg area. We were asked to proceed towards Markundal village," he said.

(Contd on page 7 Col 1)

## Ice Lingam in full size

# 51, 292 perform darshan in 4 days

Avtar Bhat

SRINAGAR/JAMMU, July 1: With 15,664 yatis performing darshan at holy cave of Swami Amarnath situated in the lap of deep Himalayas at an altitude of 14000 feet in South Kashmir district of Anantnag

while hundreds of pilgrims from both Baltal and Chandanwari tracks were on their way to the cave shrine.

The spokesman said that 3,393 pilgrims left Nunwan-Pahalgam base camp for holy cave under tight security arrangements early this morning

However yatis accused the administration of lack of arrangements.

Dr Mohan Khosla, who performed darshan in holy cave, said that there are not proper arrangements for the pilgrims and they were subjected to many problems enroute. He said even favoritism is shown and influential yatis are given preference to the others in boarding of choppers for holy cave which should have been avoided.

The sources said at Nunwan there are no proper medicare facilities available in the camp and the yatis who have the darshan date of two days ahead are not allowed to leave for holy cave from Pahalgam two days earlier by the authorities. As a matter of fact it will take two days to these pilgrims to cover the journey to reach holy cave. But this argument is turned down by the authorities, which has been a cause of concern for the pilgrims.

Sources said the unregistered pilgrims or the pilgrims who had come ahead of their darshan date are turned back from Pahalgam, Manigam and Sonamarg and Ice Lingam in full size.

(Contd on page 7 Col 1)



Pilgrims on their way, from the Chandanwari-Pahalgam base camp, to the holy Amarnath cave on Monday.

-Excelsior Photo

on day four of yatra today, the total yatis who paid obeisance in cave shrine so far has reached 51,292.

According to an official spokesman, 15,664 pilgrims performed darshan in the holy cave till last reports came in today

## Two more drugs found spurious

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 1: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) has found two more drugs as sub-standard whose samples were taken from Jammu and Kashmir Government hospitals in April this year after expose of fake drug scam in the State.

The CDSCO had taken 131 drug samples during its raids of various Government hospitals in Jammu and Kashmir. Out of 131 samples taken, reports of 25 samples were received by them so far and 2 drugs were found spurious.

The sub-standard drugs are Ofloxacin tablets and Nitrofurantoin tablets that were supplied to the Jammu and Kashmir hospitals. 106 reports are still awaited.

It may be mentioned here that Excelsior broke the spurious

(Contd on page 7 Col 3)

## Chachra takes over as GOC-in-C

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 1: Lt Gen Sanjiv Chachra today assumed the charge of Northern Army Commander at Udhampur. He succeeds Lt Gen KT Parnaik, who retired yesterday after a distinguished career.

Lt Gen Chachra, who would be new GOC-in-C Northern Command, is a second generation Rajput Officer, commissioned in 17 Rajput in June 1974. An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla and Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, the General had varied combat, staff and instructional experience.

A Graduate of the Defence Service Staff College, Wellington,

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## 31 KAS officers shifted

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 1: The State Government today ordered transfers and postings of 31 KAS officers with immediate effect and also assigned additional charge of Mission Director State Rural Livelihood Mission J&K to Farooq Ahmed Peer, Commissioner Secretary Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj till further orders.

A K Razdan, awaiting orders of adjustment in GAD, has been posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Srinagar against an available vacancy while Onkar Nath, Special Secretary Finance Department, is transferred and posted as

(Contd on page 7 Col 3)

## Cabinet meeting today

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 1: State Cabinet is meeting under the chairmanship of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar tomorrow morning.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that Cabinet will accord sanction to the proposal of the Law Department regarding creation of court of Additional District and Sessions Judge at Sopore besides taking decision on administrative agenda of some other departments.

## Arms haul in Kupwara

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 1: Army today recovered huge cache of arms and ammunition from Macchil sector on the Line of Control in North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

A Srinagar based defence spokesman said here that based on a tip off, column of Rashtriya Rifles Battalion of Macchil Brigade launched a search operation in Macchil Sector during the early hours yesterday.

"The search party unearthed a cache of arms and ammunition in the area between the LoC and the fence", the spokesman said.

The recovery included one AK-56 Rifle with ten magazines and 300 rounds, four Chinese pistols with four magazines, one Under

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## June sets new record in yatra

# Vaishno Devi pilgrimage close to 5 million

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, July 1: Pilgrimage to holy cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi ji was nearing 5 million during first half of 2013 and this could well be third consecutive year when it could touch or surpass the figure of 10 million in a year.

As many as 79,943 pilgrims availed the benefit of on-line registration in the month of June as against total pilgrimage of 12,68,313. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) had launched on-line registration for Vaishno Devi pilgrims in the month of May this year.

June 2013 has recorded highest ever number of yatra (12,68,313) in a month, breaking all previous records. Official sources told the Excelsior that 48.61 lakh pilgrims have visited the holy cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi ji located in Trikuta Hills at a height of 5200 feet from the sea level in Katra town of Reasi district during first six months of this year. In the next four-five days, the number of yatis was expected to cross 5 million.

However, during corresponding months of 2012, 51.80 lakh pilgrims had visited the shrine. This year, the yatra was down by 3.18 lakh during first half of the year as compared to the last year.

Decline of 3.18 lakh notwithstanding, the yatra could still touch or cross the figure of 1 crore in 2013 even if it was down by 4 lakh from the last year. During 2012, 1.04 crore yatis had paid obeisance to Goddess Vaishno Devi while the number was 1.01 crore in 2011 when the pilgrimage had, for the first time, touched the figure of 10 million.

The month of June has recorded highest ever yatra to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in a month. The yatra last month stood at 12,68,313 as compared to 12.62 lakh in June 2012, the previous highest so far.

Last year, the pilgrimage had crossed 12 lakh in three consecutive months of May, June and July. While, it stood at 12.3 lakh

in May, it rose to 12.61 lakh in June and was 12.01 lakh in July. In 2011, 11.21 lakh yatra was recorded in July and 10.05 lakh in August.

Yatra in the month of June this year was 6008 more than the previous year.

It was, however, in the month of May this year that yatra declined by about 2.4 lakh. In May 2013, 9.88 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance to Goddess Vaishno Devi while the number was 12.3 lakh last year.

In the month of April 2013, 10,32,301 pilgrims had darshan of the shrine as against 9,61,025 of last year, an increase of 71,276.

During January this year, 4.36 lakh yatis visited the shrine as against 4.59 lakh last year while the number was 3.49 lakh in February as compared to 3.92 lakh year year. In March, 7.87 lakh pilgrims offered prayers to the Goddess as against 8.74 lakh previous year.

Going by the trends, this could be third consecutive year when the pilgrimage would touch or surpass 1 crore to Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine. Last year, 1.04 crore pilgrims had visited the widely revered shrine while the number was 1.01 crore in 2011.

Pilgrimage to Mata Vaishno Devi was 13.95 lakh in 1986 when Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) had taken over affairs of the shrine. Since then, the yatra continued to go up every year creating new records.

It was for the first time in 1991 that the pilgrimage crossed 3 million (31.15 lakh). The 4 million mark was reached in 1996 while the yatra reached 50 lakh in 2000 and 60 lakh in 2004. It was in 2007 that the yatra stood at 74.17 lakh.

The pilgrimage came down to 67.92 lakh in 2008 due to two months long Amarnath land agitation but again went up to 82 lakh in 2009 and reached 87.2 lakh in 2010. It was for the first time in 2011 that the yatra crossed 10 million mark and stood at 1.01 crore.

## Suspected 'human bomb' shot dead

\* Body blown into pieces

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 1: Army today gunned down a suspected 'human bomb' when he was trying to infiltrate into the Indian territory along the Line of Control (LoC) in Sabjian sub sector of Poonch district early this morning. The infiltrating militant had reportedly strapped explosives on his body or was carrying it in his hands, which went off on being hit by the Army bullets leading to a powerful blast and blowing up of his body.

Only partially visible head and two broken legs of the infiltrator were recovered from the spot while remaining parts of his body had been mutilated due to massive impact of the explosion, official sources said.

They said the troops in their

forward posts of Sabjian sub sector in Poonch district observed movement of a militant intruding toward the Indian territory in Sabjian sub sector at 4.30 am today. As the militant came close to the forward posts, the troops opened firing to neutralize him.

The militant tried to escape back but was killed.

Sources said a powerful blast occurred when the Army bullets hit the infiltrator leading to his on spot death. Troops conducted searches in the area this morning and found badly mutilated body of the militant, which had been blown into pieces. While partially visible head and one leg of the militant were recovered this morning, another leg was found at a far away place in the evening.

Rest of the parts of the militant's body were charred. The militant had either strapped an explosive laden belt on his body or was carrying an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), which exploded after he was hit by the bullets, leading to his killing, sources said and didn't rule out the possibility of the militant being a 'human bomb' trying to cross along this side with the intentions of causing casualties in forward posts of the Army.

However, identity of the militant couldn't be established as his body had been reduced to parts of flesh only. No weapons were recovered from the spot, which indicated that the militant was carrying explosives only.

"The incident highlighted

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## Joint Select Committee yet to hold first meeting

# Over 2 years elapse, fate of Bill to prohibit conversion of agri land hanging in balance

\*Implementation of existing laws out of focus

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, July 1: Notwithstanding shrinking of agricultural land due to rapid urbanization, the fate of bill to prohibit conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes, which was moved in the Legislative Assembly in 2011, has been hanging in balance during the past over two and half year. Though Joint Committee of both the Houses of State Legislature, constituted after the failure of Select Committee of Legislative Assembly to arrive at any conclusion, has been entrusted with the task to carry out fresh

exercise yet there are doubts about concrete outcome in the time-bound manner.

The bill titled 'Jammu and Kashmir Prohibition on Conversion of Agricultural Land for Non-Agricultural Purposes' was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in the Budget Session of 2011 and keeping in view divergent views of the MLAs on the provisions of the bill, the then Speaker, Mohd Akbar Lone, referred the proposed legislation to the Select Committee.

The Select Committee headed by the then Minister for Revenue, Raman Bhalla, convened several meetings but no consensus could be emerged

among the members of the Select Committee that too even after seeking three extensions for the House Panel.

As it was not possible to give further extension to the Select Committee and no decision could be taken on the bill, new Minister for Revenue, Aijaz Ahmed Khan, moved a motion during the Budget Session of 2013 seeking to refer the bill to the Joint Select Committee of both the Houses. Accordingly, the Speaker nominated Aijaz Ahmed Khan as Chairman of the Committee with Dr Sheikh Mustafa Kamaal, Moulvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari, Surjit Singh Slathia, Harshdev Singh,

Abdul Gani Malik, Mohd Sharief Niaz, Abdul Gaffar Sofi, Jugal Kishore and Charanjit Singh as Members of the Committee from Lower House.

However, the Joint Select Committee has not met even once till date, official sources told EXCELSIOR, adding "as only two sessions of the current Legislative Assembly (one within next two-three months) and another in February-March next year) have been left before the next elections, there are apprehensions that even Joint Select Committee

(Contd on page 7 Col 5)

# SC verdict on pvt practice of docs to decide fate of Evening Clinic

Nishikant Khajuria

JAMMU, July 1: Supreme Court decision on private practice of doctors will decide the fate of much talked about Paid Evening Clinic in Jammu as the ongoing standoff between State Government and Medical Faculty continues over the issue.

Even as the required infrastructure in respect of space and machinery for running the Evening Clinic at Chopra Nursing Home is in place, the administration of Government Medical College is finding it difficult to prepare roster of the

doctors for duty there as Medical faculty is opposed to the idea tooth and nail, official sources informed the Excelsior.

Both the Operation Theatres are ready while all the rooms in Ground as well as First floor have been furnished after completion of plumbing and electric fitting etc for starting paid OPD in the Chopra Nursing Home, sources added.

However, on the other hand, there is virtual no response to the fresh circular by the Principal Government Medical College Jammu to all the Heads of Department for preparing roster of the doctors for their

duty in the Evening Clinic, sources further said.

According to Dr Shashi Gupta, Principal of GMC Jammu, everything was in place for making the Evening Clinic functional. "All the necessary arrangements are in final stage and we have also prepared duty roster of Nursing Staff, Technicians and Para-Medical Staff for deployment in the Chopra Nursing Home while the process is on for planning duty roster of doctors," she said.

Claiming that her office had received roster of a few doctors for duty in the Evening Clinic,

the Principal, however, refused to comment on the stand taken by Medical Teachers Association over the issue.

As reported earlier, the Medical faculty is opposing the idea of paid Evening Clinic in GMC Jammu notwithstanding a blanket ban on private practice of the Heads of Departments and a similar move in offing by the Government against other faculty members also.

According to Dr Tariq Azad, president of Medical Teachers Association, Jammu, the proposed Evening Clinics would not serve any purpose to general

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