

PM accuses UP of policy paralysis

Commitment to peace as strong as protecting territory: Modi

THIRUVIDANTHAI (TN), Apr 12:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said India's commitment to peace is just as strong as its commitment to protecting its territory and listed his Government's efforts in making the country a hub of defence manufacturing and bolstering the armed forces.

His remark, after formally inaugurating the Defence Expo here, comes amid increasing Chinese activities along the nearly 4,000-km-long border with India as well as Beijing's efforts to expand its influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

Spelling out his Government's initiatives to promote defence production in India, Modi also accused the previous UPA dispensation of policy paralysis in the sector, which he said affected the country's military preparedness.

"There was a time when the critical issue of defence preparedness was hampered by policy paralysis. We have seen the damage such laziness, incompe-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing at DefExpo-2018 at Thiruvandanthai, in Chennai on Thursday. (UNI)

ence or perhaps some hidden motives, can cause to the nation. Not now, not anymore, never again," he said, in presence of top executives of foreign as well as domestic defence firms.

He said issues that should have been long addressed by previous governments are being resolved now.

Though the four-day-long

Defence Expo - India's biennial exhibition of military platforms and weapons began yesterday, it was formally inaugurated by the prime minister today. The event was also attended by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit Tamil Nadu Chief

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Mehbooba assures nation on Asifa's case

CM announces new law to make death penalty mandatory

Law won't be allowed to be obstructed

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Apr 12: Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti tonight announced that her Government will bring a new law making death penalty mandatory for those who rape minors and assured the nation that she stands committed for justice to Asifa, an eight year old minor Bakerwal girl, who was raped and murdered at village Rassana in Hiranagar tehsil of Kathua district.

Mehbooba's announcement came through couple of tweets tonight following nationwide outrage over the rape and murder of Asifa in January this year. Only a day before, the Crime Branch Jammu had filed chargesheet in the case before the Court in Kathua.

"We will bring a new law that will make the death penalty mandatory for those who rape minors, so that little Asifa's case becomes the last," Mehbooba tweeted.

Assuring the nation that she stands committed not just for justice to Asifa but also exemplary punishment to accused, the Chief Minister said the case has shamed the humanity.

"I want to assure the nation that I stand committed not just to ensure justice for Asifa but also seek exemplary punishment for those responsible for a crime, whose brutal savagery has shamed humanity," she said through another tweet.

She declared that the Government wouldn't let another child suffer in this way.

Without referring to yesterday's bandh in which handing over of Rassana rape-cum-murder case to the Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI) was one of the demand, Mehbooba described actions and statements of some of the people as "irresponsible actions".

"The law will not be obstructed by the irresponsible actions & statements of a group of people. Proper procedures are being followed, investigations are on the fast track & justice will be delivered," the Chief Minister said through another tweet.

Mehbooba's significant announcements of making law to give death penalty to those involved in raping the minors and exemplary punishment to the killers of Asifa came after national outrage over the rape and killing of minor wherein several top leaders voiced deep concern over the shameful act.

Meanwhile, National Conference working president and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah immediately reacted to the tweets of Mehbooba Mufti.

"Mehbooba Ji before you try to convince us you will be able to safeguard against future Asifas, what action will you take against your Ministers who supported

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300 passengers stranded on Mughal Road rescued

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 12: Police and Army authorities in a joint operation last night res-

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cued over 300 passengers, stranded on Mughal Road after an avalanche hit the road near Peer Ki Gali while more than 50 vehicles got trapped as

snowfall amidst rain also started in the area.

SSP Poonch, Rajiv Pandey told the Excelsior that since there is no mobile communication in the area, he received information in the evening on his wireless set regarding avalanche and snowfall in Pir Ki Gali area where more than 300 passengers had got trapped. (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

Cabinet meet on Apr 16

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 12: The State Cabinet will meet here on April 16 at 4.30 pm, an official order issued today by the General Administration Department (GAD) said.

The Cabinet meeting will be chaired by Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti.

The Cabinet was scheduled to meet today but was deferred as Mehbooba flew directly to Srinagar from New Delhi yesterday in view of killings of four civilians in Kulgam district of South Kashmir.

19 AEEs PDD transferred

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 12: Power Development Department (PDD) today ordered transfer and posting of 19 Incharge Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs).

According to the order, Ajaz Ahmed Bhat has been transferred from ED Pulwama SD Newa and posted at JKSPDC, while Vinod Kumar from JKSPDC to ED-I Sub Division-IV Nagrota and Latief Ahmed Wani from STD-I Srinagar-II to Central Store Division Srinagar. Sanjeev Suman has been transferred from ED Doda SD-I and posted as TO to Xen ED Doda, while Abdul Matin Sherwani from Project Wing

17 AEEs Mech shifted

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 12: The Government today issued orders of transfer and postings of 17 Incharge Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs), Mechanical in the PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control Department.

Subhash Sharma, Technical Officer to Executive Engineer RTIC (Mech) Division Kathua has been transferred and posted I/C AEE, PHE SD Hiranagar; Kuldip Kumar awaiting orders of posting has been shifted and posted as TO to Xen RTIC (Mech) Kathua; Sudesh Sharma PHE (Mech) Pumping SD Company Bagh PHE Div North Jammu has been shifted to PHE (M), SD-I PHE (M)

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Directions passed over three years back still on papers

Admn Deptts paying scant attention towards several decisions of Rajouri, Poonch DDBs

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Apr 12: Several Administrative Departments have been paying scant attention towards the vital decisions taken by the District Development Boards of Rajouri and Poonch over one year back despite words of caution from the respective Chairmen. Moreover, for want of necessary cooperation, timely decision and financial assistance many directions passed from this platform over three years back are still on papers much to the disappointment of the people of twin border districts.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that District

Lack of coordination prevails despite warning from Chairmen

Development Board of Rajouri, in its meeting held on March 16, 2017 under the chairmanship of Minister for Agriculture Zainulabidin Nabi Lone Hanjura, was apprised that Rajouri Development Authority has formulated six projects including Rs 38.43 crore Eco-Tourism Park for Patli Qila and submitted the same to the Tourism Department for approval and release of funds.

Keeping in view importance of these projects from tourism promotion point of view, the District Development Board had

stressed upon the Rajouri Development Authority to vigorously pursue the projects with the Tourism Department so as to ensure immediate start of work on these projects.

However, no seriousness was shown either by the Rajouri Development Authority or by the Tourism Department to strictly implement the directions of the DDB, sources said, adding the district administration on its part has carried out some works through convergence mode in respect of Eco-Tourism Park at Patli Qila but

Tourism Department only released meager amount of Rs 20 lakh that too few days before the closure of 2017-18 financial year.

"For want of timely clearance of projects and subsequent release of sufficient funds the decision of the Rajouri DDB has remained unimplemented till date", sources said, adding "similar is the fate of the decision regarding construction of hanging garden near Rajouri Fort by the Rajouri Development Authority as despite availability of sufficient land no major work was carried out during the past over one year".

"Semi-finished cafeteria is (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Strike over killings disrupts life

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Apr 12: Life in Kashmir valley was disrupted today due to shutdown against civilian killings in Kulgam even as authorities imposed restrictions in parts of Srinagar and closed colleges and schools.

The shutdown was called by separatists to protest against the killings. Shops and business establishments remained closed in most parts of Valley while

*Watch video on

www.excelsiornews.com

public transport was off the roads due to the strike.

The authorities also placed chairmen of Hurriyat Conference factions, Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq under house arrest while JKLF chief Yasin Malik remained lodged in central jail Srinagar.

11 new Colleges from ensuing session

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 12: In pursuant to the Cabinet decision, the Department of Higher Education today accorded sanction for establishing 11 new Government Degree Colleges in the State from the ensuing academic session 2018-19.

Six colleges are being established in uncovered areas of Jammu Division and five in uncovered areas of Kashmir Division.

In Jammu Division, these new colleges are going to be established at Chenani, Mongri, Vijaypur, Dongri, Ramban and Dudu Basantgarh while in Kashmir Division, the new colleges will be established at Kralpora (Kupwara), Langate

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2 cops injured in grenade blast

Clashes took place in several parts of Valley including Natipora, HMT Zainakote, Mochow, Court Road Shopian, Memander, Ajas Sumbal, Drugmulla, Bumhama, near Police Lines Bandipora, Jogilanker Rainawari, Model Town Sopore and Soura. Police and CRPF used force at these places to disperse the protesters. Students of NIT Engineering College Hazratbal and Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) campus Wadoora, Sopore also staged strong protest demonstrations against the civilian killings in Kashmir.

Also, to thwart the protests, authorities had put parts of

Srinagar including Old City and Maisuma under restrictions.

Internet services were snapped in Shopian, Awantipora and Pulwama since yesterday morning while as speed was reduced in Srinagar on Wednesday. The internet was snapped in Kulgam district on midnight Tuesday soon after the encounter broke out at Wani Mohalla, Khudwani.

The railway authorities suspended train services. A Railway official said that the decision was taken in wake of the apprehensions of law and order in the Valley.

In the meantime, separatist leaders Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Mohammad Yasin Malik today called for peaceful Kashmir-wide protests after Friday congregational prayers against

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Nationwide outrage over Kathua rape, murder

NEW DELHI, Apr 12:

Congress president Rahul Gandhi today described the rape and killing of an 8-year-old girl in Kathua as "unimaginable brutality" that cannot go unpunished, and wondered how anybody can seek to protect the culprits.

He also lashed out at the politics being played over the crime.

"How can anyone protect the culprits of such evil," he asked, adding that the decision against the child was a crime against humanity.

"I cannot go unpunished," he said on Twitter.

"What have we become if we allow politics to interfere with such unimaginable brutality perpetrated on an innocent child," he tweeted.

Meanwhile, Union Minister V K Singh today said "we as humans" had failed the eight-

Unimaginable brutality, says Rahul

year-old girl from a minority nomadic community who was gangraped and killed in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district but she would not be denied justice.

Expressing distress over the tragedy, perhaps the first reaction from a BJP Minister, he said we have failed her as humans.

"But she will not be denied justice," the Minister of State in the External Affairs Ministry added in his tweet.

Meanwhile, the NCP today accused the BJP, the ruling ally in the Mehbooba Mufti Government in Jammu and

Kashmir, of "shielding" the accused involved in the alleged gang rape and killing of a minor girl in Kathua.

The Sharad Pawar-led party also accused the BJP of not initiating any action against its rape accused MLA in Unnao in Uttar Pradesh.

"The gang-rapes in Unnao and Kathua, and the incidents that followed these ghastly crimes are shocking and inhuman. A gang-rape victim's father is arrested and killed in police custody (in Unnao), but no action is taken against the accused BJP MLA," NCP gener-

al secretary, D P Tripathi, told reporters here.

He said the BJP was supporting the accused persons involved in the alleged gang-rape of a minor girl in Kathua in Jammu. "No party has taken such a stand in independent India," said Tripathi.

Two-time World Cup winning cricketer Gautam Gambhir and multiple Grand Slam winner Sania Mirza were among the prominent sportspersons who expressed their anger at the rape incidents in Uttar Pradesh's Unnao and Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua.

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

HC seeks personal appearance of Comm/Secy, MD Power

Deposit Rs 50 lakh before Registry

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Apr 12: The High Court today sought personal appearance of Commissioner-Secretary, Power Development Department and Managing Director, JK Power Development Corporation for withholding the retiral benefits of its employee.

Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey while dealing with a contempt petition filed by one Gulam Qadir Wani for seeking implementation of directions passed by the Court, said the Court is left with no option

but to seek the personal appearance of Commissioner-Secretary Power Development Department and Managing Director, JK Power Development Corporation, on the next date of hearing.

Justice Magrey also directed them to deposit an amount of Rs. 50 lakhs before the Registry of this Court against the claim of petitioner of his post retiral benefits including gratuity. "Failure of the respondents in complying with the judgment in tune with the order passed today shall constrain the court to adopt the coercive methods", Justice Magrey recorded and posted the

matter for further consideration on May 2.

Court further directed the Bank Authorities not to honour or encash any bill of the contemnor-Commissioner /Secretary and MD PDC in case they fail to deposit the requisite amount. Copy of the order has also been directed to be sent to the Chief Secretary of the State for information.

Wani through the contempt petition is seeking implementation of the Judgment passed by the Court on April 2015 whereby the court on adjudication of the

(Contd on page 6 Col 5)

WEATHER

JAMMU :
Mainly clear sky.
TEMPERATURE
Max: 29.9 Degree C
Min: 15.3 Degree C
RELATIVE HUMIDITY
RH-I (Morning): 47.0 per cent
RH-II (Evening): 27.0 per cent
Sunset on Friday: 07.00 p.m.
Sunrise on Saturday: 06.04 a.m.

SRINAGAR:
Mainly clear
TEMPERATURE
Max: 19.2 Degree C
Min: 7.7 Degree C
RELATIVE HUMIDITY
RH-I (Morning): 79.0 per cent
RH-II (Evening): 35.0 per cent

LEH:
TEMPERATURE
Max: 14.6 Degree C
Min: 3.0 Degree C

THE DEVOTEES OF ART

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