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Legislature passes 6 Bills, gives nod for 3 times hike to salary of Judges

High Court and Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Condition of Service) Amendment Act, 2018, the Salary of the Chief Justice of the High Court has been enhanced from Rs 90000 per mensem to Rs 2.50 lakh per mensem and salary of Judges of the High Court has been enhanced from Rs 80000 per mensem to Rs 2.25 lakh per mensem with effect from 1 January, 2016.

In response to MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Kalso's dissent to such a massive hike, the Minister explained that the Bill seeks to enhance the salary of Chief Justice and Judges of High Court to bring them at par with their counterparts in other States. He said the State Constitution is proposed to be amended accordingly.

In response to Ali Mohammad Sagar's query, the Minister clarified that it were salaries of the Judges and Chief Justice and other Allowances were not included in the mentioned amount.

After the Legislative Assembly, the Bill was also passed in the Upper House. However, another significant Government Bill for amending

the Jammu and Kashmir Shri Mata Sukrala Devi Ji Shrine (SMSDJS) and Shri Mata Bala Sundari Shrine (SMBSS) Act 2013, was referred to the House Select Committee on demand of the Opposition Members, who alleged politicization of the Shrine Board by according special invitee status to the local MLA.

NC MLA Devender Rana stressed that like Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, politicians should be kept out of this Shrine Board also. The political compulsions of MLA will politicize the Shrine Board," he said and apprehended that it would lead to wrong precedence.

Seeking further clarification with regard to the definition of eminent persons, to be appointed as private Members of the Board, Mr Rana strongly proposed that the Bill should be referred to the Select Committee.

Nawang Rigzin Jora of Congress and Independent MLA Pawan Gupta also alleged that the proposed Bill was designed to sneak politics in the Shrine Board and hence it should be referred to the Select Committee while BJP MLA Sat Sharma suggested an

amendment in Para 4 of the Bill to ensure that only a Hindu can be Member of the Board.

Agreeing to the suggestions of the MLAs, Minister for Tourism, Tassaduq Mufti, who had earlier introduced the Bill, said that keeping in view the suggestions of the Members, the Bill could be referred to Select Committee for further discussions on the same. He said the suggestions put forth by the Members be incorporated in the amendment Bill.

Pertinent to mention that the said Shrine Bill envisaged that the Member of the Legislative Assembly, representing the area, if he be a Hindu, shall be special invitee at the meetings of the Board with right to vote.

Despite stiff resistance by the Opposition Members in the Assembly, another Bill for establishment of J&K's first National Law University, was passed by both the Houses with a voice vote.

Opposing the Bill, which was introduced in the Lower House by the Minister for Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Law and Justice, Abdul Haq Khan, NC MLA Devender Rana suggested that the Bill should be sent to the Select Committee. He opined that instead of opening more universities, the Government should focus on improving the quality in already existing institutions. "We have opened so many universities in J&K, but failed to provide an excellent infrastructure and faculty," he said and added that instead of opening a new National Law University, the Government should make Law Departments of Jammu University and Kashmir University as National Law Schools.

Ali Mohd Sagar also favoured that the existing institutions should be strengthened while Mian Altaf suggested that the money for National Law University should be utilized to generate more employment in J&K. Pawan Gupta also expressed his reservation over the Bill and stressed that no person other than the State Governor should be Chancellor of the proposed National Law University. Aijaz Khan also stressed that the Bill should be sent to Selection Committee for wider discussion.

However, BJP MLA R S Pathania and PDP MLA Shah Mohammad Tantray supported the Bill.

Explaining the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill, the Minister said that the proposed University once established will give a boost to the quality legal education in the State and the students will be benefited a lot. He explained that it has been resolved in All India Law Ministers Conference of National Law School University at Bangalore for improving quality of professional legal education. He said various States have already enacted the law for establishment of National Law University.

After its passage in the Lower House, the Bill was later passed in Upper House also.

The Legislature also passed a Bill to amend the Jammu and Kashmir Electricity Act-2010 to pave the way for setting up of J&K State Power Trading Company Ltd.

The Bill was moved in the Lower House by the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Nirmal Singh and after thorough discussion, the House passed the same along with amendments through voice vote.

Even as Nawang Rigzin Jora supported the Bill by describing the Government move as part of power reforms at national level to make this sector profit centric, Mubarak Gul and Devender Singh Rana of National Conference sought assurance from the Government that only State owned companies remain sole trading licensee.

Expressing his dissent on very concept of the Bill, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami alleged that only motive of the proposed Bill was to privatize Power Sector.

After Dr Nirmal Singh sought to allay apprehensions of the Opposition Members, Finance Minister Haseeb Drabu also stressed that reform was need of the hour following which the Bill was passed along with amendments suggested by the Members.

Later, this Bill was also passed in the Upper House with a voice vote.

The Legislature also passed a Bill regarding J&K Protection of

Interests of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) Act 2018. The Bill is aimed at protecting the interests of the depositors in the financial establishments of the State.

The Bill intends to amend and update the laws on the subject, with better and stringent provisions, for protecting the interests of depositors in the Financial Establishments in the State.

Mubarak Gul, G M Saroori, Devender Singh Rana, Mian Altaf Ahmad, Altaf Ahmad Wani, Ali Mohammad Sagar and Nawang Rigzin Jora took part in the discussion and supported the Bill in Legislative Assembly. After thorough discussions, the Bill was passed through voice vote.

Both the Houses also passed a Bill to amend the Jammu and Kashmir Motor Spirit and Diesel Oil (Taxation of Sales Act, Svt.2005 (1948 AD). The amendment Bill was moved in the Lower House by the Minister for Finance, Dr Haseeb Drabu.

The Bill envisages bringing Air Turbine Fuel (ATF) and Natural Gas, presently out of the purview of SGST Act-2017, under the ambit of Jammu and Kashmir Motor Spirit and Diesel Oil (Taxation of Sales Act, Svt.2005 (1948 AD).

Explaining the statement of objects and reasons, the Finance Minister, said the move would ease out the business compliance as also reduce the cost of collection of these taxes and would also ensure that all petroleum products will fall under the single legislation. Legislators, Devender Singh Rana and Nawang Rigzin Jora participated in the discussion. After thorough discussions, the Bill was passed through voice vote.

The Bill was later passed by the Upper House also where it was moved by Minister for Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Law and Justice, Abdul Haq Khan.

The Legislature also passed a Bill to amend the Jammu and Kashmir Passengers Taxation Act-1963. The Bill paves the way for transfer of Passenger Tax administration from the Commercial Taxes Department to the Motor Vehicles Department.

The Bill was moved in the Assembly by the Minister for Finance, Dr Haseeb Drabu.

Explaining the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill, the Minister said that in 2011 a Committee was constituted to make recommendation on the modalities for transferring of administration of Passenger Tax from the Commercial Taxes Department to the Motor Vehicles Department. Aas per the recommendations of the Committee one Accounts Officer, 12 each of Motor Vehicle Inspector & Accounts Assistant and 9 Motor Vehicle Traffic Assistant were proposed for creation in the J&K Motor Vehicle Department.

There will be reduction of 9 posts of Guards and 12 Inspectors in the Commercial Taxes Department.

After it was passed in Assembly through voice vote, the Bill was also got passed by the Upper House.

Office of the ADMINISTRATOR AUAQ DEPARTMENT, JAMMU (3rd Floor Hajj House Block-A, Rail Head, Jammu) Ph. 0191-2479163, 9038666320 Email: adm.auqaf.jammu@gmail.com

Office of the J&K State Co-operative Agriculture & Rural Development Bank Ltd., Regional Office 28/9 Trikuta Nagar Jammu. Tel. No. 0191-2475548

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION Subject: - Providing of office accommodation for the Regional Office of the J&K State Cooperative Agriculture & Rural Development Bank Ltd. The J&K State Cooperative Agriculture & Rural Development Bank Ltd requires office accommodation for its Regional Office Jammu preferably independent building in the areas of Trikuta Nagar, Gandhi Nagar, Nanak Nagar and Channi Himmat as per the following requirement on rent basis:-

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Ph: 0191-2475548/2017-18 Date: 12.02.2018

Martyrs' sacrifices won't go in vain: Omar

SRINAGAR, Feb 12:

Former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said that sacrifice of martyrs of Sunjuwan, Jammu, will not go in vain.

However, amidst tragedy, there was a good news that an injured wife of a soldier delivered a baby at Military Hospital in Jammu, the working president of the main opposition National Conference (NC) said.

Taking to micro-blogging site twitter, Omar Abdullah said "May their souls rest in peace & may

their supreme sacrifice in the line of duty not be in vain". He further tweeted "Amidst the tragedy reports of some good news - an injured wife of one of the soldiers delivered a baby at the Military Hospital in Jammu".

A group of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) fideyees stormed into the Sunjuwan Army camp in Jammu. Five soldiers and father of a soldier were killed and 11 others were injured. Four JeM militants were also killed in the encounter, which ensued on January 10 early morning. (UNI)

No proper arrangements for Shivratri: AMCCC

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: All Migrant Camp Coordination Committee (AMCCC) has criticized the State Government's altitude towards Kashmiri Pandits especially on the occasion of Maha Shivratri.

In a statement issued here, today AMCCC said there were no preparations for on Shivratri. Some tents were fitted in ground of Jagti Nagrota and some useless items were kept there which have nothing to do with festival.

No arrangements of water supply and cleaning the camp premises were made, alleged Desh Rattan president AMCCC. He said impure water is supplied in the camp.

ESRM stages nukad natak 'Shanti Aaur Uggerwad'

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: Ek Sath Rang Mandal (ESRM) today presented Vijay Malla's new progressive nukad natak "Shanti Aaur Uggerwad" in its Monday theatre series at Dogra College Road Bari Brahmana, here. The nukad natak was based on terrorism and peace.

According to the play, a group of violent people are attacking peace loving people. Terrorism in this nukad natak

defined as a nuisance for every peace loving man of the country. The nukad natak shows aggressive uggerwad and peaceful shanti in their arguments.

A large number of people witnessed and enjoyed the nukad natak.

The actors who acted were Raju Mad, Shahid, Shally, Kavita, Vidhi Manhas and Vijay Malla.

The play was written by Vijay Malla and directed by Anuroop Pathania.

How convicted persons run parties, select candidates: SC

NEW DELHI, Feb 12:

The Supreme Court today asked as to how a convicted person be an office-bearer of a political party and select candidates for elections, as it was against the spirit of one of its judgements to ensure "purity" of polls.

The Apex Court was hearing a PIL seeking to restrain convicted persons from forming and holding posts in political parties for the period they are disqualified under the election law.

"How can a convicted person be an office-bearer of a political party and select candidates to contest elections? This goes against our judgements that corruption in politics is to be ostracised from the purity of elections," a bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra, and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud said.

The bench said that the "pure question of law" was that following the conviction a politician is barred from electoral politics, and being an office-bearer of a party, he can contest polls through agents.

"So, is it that what you cannot do individually, you can do collectively through some of your agents?" the bench asked.

It said that there was no problem if convicted people open a school and do some philanthropic activities, but the issue was can such persons contest polls through

others by forming a political party. The bench said it was a "huge blow to the purity of the electoral process".

Additional Solicitor General Pinky Anand, appearing for the Centre, said she would be filing the response to the petition and sought two weeks time, which was allowed.

The bench was hearing a PIL filed by lawyer and BJP leader Ashwini K Upadhyay seeking to restrain convicted people from forming political parties and becoming office-bearers during the period they are disqualified.

The top court had on December 1 last year sought responses from the Centre and the Election Commission on the PIL and agreed to examine the constitutional validity of section 29A of the Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1951 (RPA), which deals with the power of the poll panel to register a political party.

Senior lawyer Siddharth Luthra, appearing for Updhyay, had said that under the statutory schemes, the poll panel was empowered to register political parties, but it lacked the authority under the RPA to de-register them.

The plea said convicted politicians, who are barred from contesting elections, can still run political parties and hold posts, besides deciding as to who will become a lawmaker.

It has sought a direction to declare section 29A of the RPA as "arbitrary, irrational and ultra-vires" to the Constitution and to authorise the poll panel to register and de-register political parties.(PTI)

Modi's '56-inch chest' nothing but hollow claim: Azad

VARANASI, Feb 12:

Senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad today hit out at the government over the recent terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir and, in a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said his "56-inch chest" was nothing but a "hollow claim".

Azad also said that the Modi government was the weakest in 70 years.

Addressing Congress workers here, Azad claimed that so many terror attacks never happened in Jammu and Kashmir under the previous governments.

Taking a swipe at Prime Minister Modi, Azad said his "56-inch chest" was nothing but a "hollow claim" ('kaaghazi seena hai').

He said attacks were on the rise under the rule of the present PDP-BJP government in Jammu and Kashmir.

Azad said if the central government is weak then terrorist attacks on the Army will contin-

ue. Five Army men, including two junior commissioned officers (JCOs), and the father of a soldier were killed by the terrorists who struck at the sprawling camp of the 36 Brigade of the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry (JKLI) in Jammu on Saturday.

The Army said yesterday that three heavily armed terrorists were also killed in the encounter.

Lashing out at the Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government, Azad said the Dalits, minorities and women were unsafe in the state.

He said unemployment and inflation has peaked under the Modi government.

The government failed to fulfil the promise made to the farmers and the youth of this country, he said.

The senior Congress leader along with state Congress chief Raj Babbar addressed the Congress workers of the eastern region here. (PTI)

SKIMS commemorates International Day for Reproductive Health Awareness

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Feb 12: Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Medical College and Hospital Bema commemorated the International Day for Reproductive Health Awareness here today.

A SKIMS spokesperson in a statement said Prof M. S Khuroo, former Director /Dean SKIMS Soura and Member Governing body, Prof. Omar Javed Shah, Director/Dean SKIMS and EOSG, were the guest of honour on the occasion.

"The event was organized by the Department of Community Medicine and Department of Obstetrics and Gynae. A guest lecture was delivered by Dr. Mir Jaffar, a clinical embryologist who is the head of Millan Hospital, Bangalore as Scientific Director. Besides, putting in various new and innovative methods of treatment for childless couples, he highlighted the important of marriage in time to reduce the incidence of infertility," he said.

He said Prof Khuroo gave the details of progress made by the SKIMS Medical College since last one and a half year by recruiting large number of Faculty and

Paramedical Staff in a transparent and highly professional manner and promotions of the existing faculty and paramedical staff and following the issues of Infrastructure with the State Govt and thanked the State Administration for their positive and result oriented efforts in addressing the issues of SKIMS and SKIMS MCH Bema.

"Prof Omar Javed ensured full support to SKIMS MCH Bema and complemented the Principal with his tireless efforts in overcoming its deficiency of infrastructure and hoped that the construction of the new 250 bedded IPD block and New College /Lab Block will start any time now as the contract stands finalized," he said.

Dr Untoo in the statement said that efforts are being made to provide treatment to childless couples in Government sector at affordable prices as the same are very costly and unaffordable to public in Corporate Sector.

"The welcome address was given by Prof Rafiq Mir, HOD Community Medicine and Vote of thanks was given by Dr Anjum Malik, Associate Prof, Gynae & Obstetrics SKIMS MCH Bema," he added.

Rain, snow end dry spell; 3 killed

also prompted the authorities to close Srinagar-Jammu National Highway for traffic as it has led to slippery road conditions and land slides at Digidol, Khooni Nallah and Panthal. The BRO made hectic efforts to clear the highway. The closure of the highway left scores of vehicles, including passenger vehicles and load carriers stranded on the highway.

A Traffic official said: "We have suspended traffic on the highway due to heavy snowfall

A Traffic police official said that land slides took place atleast at four places between Ramban and Banihal but due to continuous rain, the restoration work could not be initiated smoothly. Some vehicles had been stranded at Ramban, Chanderkote and Banihal.

Reports from Reasi said that 30-year old Mehndia, son of Ali Mohd resident of Lencha and his 3-year-old son, Shabir Ahmed were killed when they were standing in the Veranda of their



Bhaderwah experiences heavy snowfall on Monday. -Excelsior/Tilak Raj

last night. We have been able to clear most of the stranded vehicles, however, over a dozen vehicles, including passenger buses were stopped at Ramban due to landslides triggered by incessant rains and snow. Efforts are on to clear them," he added.

Inspector General of Traffic, Basant Rath, told Excelsior that no traffic will be allowed on the highway for next two days. He said efforts are on to clear the highway of snow, slides and shooting stones.

After heavy snowfall in the hills, authorities have issued high danger avalanche warning for the hills of Baramulla, Gulmarg, Kupwara, Chowkibal, Tangdhar, Phurkian, Zad Gali, Bandipora, Kanzalwan, Gurez sector. The Medium danger warning has been issued for Poonch, Rajouri, Ramban, Doda, Kishtwar, Ganderbal, Kargil. Low danger warning for Srinagar-Jammu National Highway and higher reaches of Anantnag, Kulgam, Budgam, Leh, Reasi and Udhampur districts. People living in these areas have been advised to avoid these routes and avalanche prone areas.

Authorities this afternoon rescued 20 people including six children from avalanche prone area of Waltengo Nar in Kulgam district.

The snowfall in Srinagar led to deluging of almost all roads in Srinagar. However, in some parts of Srinagar, Srinagar Municipal Corporation had deployed pumps for de-watering.

The snowfall also disrupted electricity in many parts of Kashmir. Many areas of Srinagar were without power during the day. However, in the evening the electricity supply was restored to majority of the areas.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological department has forecast more rains and snow across Jammu and Kashmir for the next 24 hours. "Moderate to rather heavy rain/ snow will occur at most places over the state," an official of the Met department said.

house this afternoon. It was raining heavily with thunderstorm and both father and son were watching the rainfall. Suddenly, a strong beam of flash light from the sky hit both killing on the spot and causing partial damage to the house as well.

In yet another similar incident, 18-year-old Shabnam Waqar, son of Gulzar Ahmed, resident of Jallas village near Chingus in Rajouri was killed in this evening. He was returning home when the lightning hit him during rain. He was rushed to DH Rajouri, where doctors declared him as brought dead.

Meanwhile, cold wave has gripped the Jammu region with the fresh snowfall at higher reaches of Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban, Rajouri, Reasi and Poonch. Some hilly areas of Kathua including Bani and Billawar have also experienced fresh snowfall after a long dry spell of over one and half month. The reports of fresh snowfall have also been reported from Natha Top, Patnitop, Sanasar Bhaderwah, Lati, Dudu, Basantgarh, Mahore, Gool, Budhal, Baflian, Dera Gali, and parts of Loran and Mandi in Poonch.

The Helicopter service from Katra base camp to Mata Vaishnodevi shrine remain suspended due to bad weather. However, the yatra remained uninterrupted throughout the day today despite rain and light snowfall at the Bhawan.

A Met spokesman said that Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 15.1 Degree C and minimum 10.5 degree C, showing steep fall in the temperature during past 24 hours, Bhaderwah recorded a maximum temperature of minus 0.8 degree C and maximum 0.4 degree C, Katra maximum 10.8 degree C and minimum 7.5 degree C while Batote maximum 2.9 degree C and minimum 1.3 degree C temperature. Jammu recorded a rain fall of 9.2 mm till 5.30 pm since morning while Srinagar 16.4 mm during the day today. The weather will improve in the afternoon on Tuesday, the spokesman said.

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