

Guv accepts resignation, CM keeps charge of Finance

## Mehbooba drops Drabu from Cabinet for controversial remarks

FM removed without waiting for reply to Dis Comm

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Mar 12: In a major political development, Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti today dropped her close and trusted lieutenant, Finance, Labour and Employment Minister Dr Haseeb Drabu from the Cabinet, in view of his "controversial remarks" made in New Delhi on March 9 at a PHDCCI function that Kashmir is not a political problem but a social issue.

\*Watch video on  
www.excelsiornews.com

"On a day of fast paced political development, Mehbooba, who also happens to be the president of People's Democratic Party (PDP), was reported to have spoken to some senior Ministers and party leaders before writing to Governor NN Vohra to drop Drabu, who was

one of the architects of PDP-BJP coalition and their Agenda of Alliance, from the Cabinet."

### Setback to alliance: BJP

NEW DELHI, Mar 12:

The BJP today termed Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's decision to sack Finance Minister Haseeb Drabu from her Cabinet a "setback" to PDP-BJP alliance and said it would widen the gap between the two allies.

A top BJP leader praised Drabu's role in coordination between the

official sources told the Excelsior.

The Governor has accepted recommendation of the Chief Minister to drop 57 years old

### Rally in support of Kathua accused unethical: CM

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 12: Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti today described as "unethical" any rally or demonstration in support of the accused (of rape-murder of minor girl) in Hiranagar tehsil of Kathua district.

"The case is being investigated thoroughly by a very competent police authority under the supervision of highest court of the State. Any rally or demonstration in support of the accused are unethical," Mehbooba tweeted.

She said the law of land is supreme and justice will prevail.

(Contd on page 4 Col 3)

### Cabinet meeting rescheduled

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 12: The Cabinet meeting scheduled to be held tomorrow has been rescheduled and will now be held on March 20.

As per the notice issued by the General Administration Department, the Cabinet was scheduled to meet on March 13 at 12.30 pm but now the meeting will be held on March 20 at 11 am.

### 3 IPS officers shifted

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 12: The Government today ordered posting of Surinder Gupta, an IPS officer of 1997 batch as Director SSG in place of Rajesh Kumar. Gupta was presently posted as IGP Police Headquarters.

Rajesh Kumar, who has proceeded on Central deputation, will be posted as IG in Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

Anand Jain, on his return from the Central deputation, has been posted as IGP Police Headquarters vice Surinder Gupta.

### Bank Manager robbed of Rs 6 lakh

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Mar 12: Armed men this morning looted cash amounting to Rs 6 lakhs from a Jammu and Kashmir Bank Manager at Kapran area of South Kashmir's Shopian district.

\*Watch video on  
www.excelsiornews.com

A group of gunmen stopped the Bank Manager traveling in his swift vehicle (JK18-8375) at Kapran in the South Kashmir district of Shopian. The gunmen looted around Rs 6 lakh cash from the vehicle and fled away from the spot.

Police said that an amount of Rs 6 lakh was robbed by armed robbers from a private

(Contd on page 4 Col 3)

## NIA raids Central Jail Srinagar Cell phones, SD cards, pen drives recovered

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Mar 12: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) today raided the Central Jail in Srinagar and seized over two dozen mobile phones, jihadi literature and a Pakistani flag apart from data and hardware.

At least 20 teams of the Central probe agency, with Commandos of the NSG and Ghones hovering over the Jail, searched the barracks and open ground of the high-security prison that housed some of the most wanted militants including those from Pakistan.

The searches were carried out in connection with an investigation over the arrest of two youths in Kupwara -- Danish Ghulam Lone and Sohail Ahmed Bhat. The two youth had claimed that the fresh recruits of Al-Badr outfit were being sent across to Pakistan for arms training and the conspiracy is being hatched from inside the Central Jail, Srinagar.

The searches started early morning and continued till late

afternoon during which all the barracks and the open ground were thoroughly searched with the help of well-trained teams and deep search metal detectors. A close watch was kept on the entire operation with the help of drones.

The NIA spokesman said that the NIA teams were also accompanied by Magistrates, witnesses and doctors. He said that the search was carried out in connection with investigation of NIA case RC07/2018/NIA/DLL.

He said that during the searches, 25 mobile phones, some SIM cards, five SD cards, five pen drives, one iPod and large number of incriminating documents/articles including a poster of Hizbul Mujahideen and a Pakistani flag besides jihadi literature were seized.

The Agency is investigating the escape of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) commander, Mohammad Naveed Jutt, who escaped from SMHS hospital Srinagar on February 6 and conspiracy for

(Contd on page 4 Col 3)

## Shepherd dead in blast

## 3 top militants killed in Anantnag

Fayaz Bukhari

Schools to remain open today

SRINAGAR, Mar 12: Three top militants were killed in an encounter at Hakoora area of South Kashmir's Anantnag district early today and authorities imposed curfew like restrictions in parts of Srinagar and closed Educational Institutions today as a precautionary measure to prevent any violence.

The Special Operations Group (SOG) of Jammu and Kashmir Police, Army, and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) cordoned off Hakoora village at around 12.30 am.

The operation was launched on the basis of the specific

\*Watch video on  
www.excelsiornews.com

inputs about the presence of militants inside a residential house in the village.

As the searches were conducted some warning shots were fired towards the house where recovered from the deceased militants, who belonged to Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen and



Youth collect stones from a tipper for pelting on para-military and police personnel in Pubwama town on Monday.

The militants were hiding. Three militants tried to break the cordon and opened fire upon the security forces. Security forces retaliated triggering a brief gun battle in which three militants were killed.

Three AK-47 rifles were

Hizbul Mujahideen outfits.

Two of the militants have been identified Mohammad Esha Fazili alias Esha Roohula of Soura area of Srinagar and Syed Owais Shafi of Voiloo, Kokernag. The identity of the

(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

## Less than 50% progress on two vital schemes of Union Ministry

## Parliament Panel not satisfied with pace of work on tourism sector projects in J&K

Mohinder Verma

Recommends gearing up of work to meet timelines

JAMMU, Mar 12: Putting concerned authorities of J&K in the dock, a Parliamentary Panel has expressed dissatisfaction over pace of work on projects sanctioned for the State under two major schemes of the Union Tourism Ministry and has recommended gearing up of the work to meet the timelines and avoid cost overrun.

As per the report of the Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Tourism comprising of 10 Members of Rajya Sabha and 21 of Lok Sabha, which was tabled in the Parliament few days back, several projects and circuits were sanctioned for Jammu and Kashmir under two major schemes by the Union Ministry

of Tourism titled PRASAD and Swadesh Darshan.

The scheme titled Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) is aimed at bridging the infrastructure gaps between the required and the existing while as Swadesh Darshan is aimed at ensuring integrated development of theme based

tourist circuits.

Under PRASAD scheme, a project for development of Hazratbal was sanctioned on December 28, 2016 at a cost of Rs 42.02 crore and against this an amount of Rs 19.23 crore (almost 50%) was released to the concerned executing agency of Jammu and Kashmir.

However, only 15% (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

## DB imposes Rs 5000 costs upon

## FC H&UDD, Finance, PWD Secys

Rs 27 crore scam in Housing Board

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 12: Division Bench of the State High Court comprising Chief Justice Badar Durrez Ahmed and Justice Sanjeev Kumar today expressed displeasure over non-filing of the Action Taken Report/status report in Rs 27 crore scam in J&K Housing Board and imposed cost of Rs 5,000 each upon the defaulting Administrative Secretaries

including Financial Commissioner H&UDD, Commissioner Secretary Finance Department and Commissioner Secretary PWD (R&B).

The Division Bench vide its order dated February 22, 2018 had granted final opportunity of two weeks to Financial Commissioner (FC) H&UDD and all concerned departments for filing their status reports/Action Taken Report in respect of all the officers including Ram Pal Sharma, the then Managing Director J&K

Housing Board and Aftab Rashid Pandit, the then Deputy General Manager J&K Housing Board Srinagar into Rs 27 crore scam in J&K Housing Board.

After hearing Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed with Advocates Rahul Raina, Supriya Chouhan and Suraj Singh appearing for petitioners in the much publicized PIL titled Sheikh Mohd Shafi and Anr Versus Union of India and Ors whereas Deputy AG Raman Sharma vice Advocate General for State of J&K, the Division Bench imposed cost of Rs 5,000

each upon the defaulting Administrative Secretaries including Financial Commissioner H&UDD, Commissioner Secretary Finance Department and Commissioner Secretary PWD (R&B) for not filing the requisite status reports/ATRs as directed by the Division Bench earlier on December 15, 2017 followed by last opportunity granted on February 22, 2018.

The Division Bench allowed further two weeks time to these Administrative (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

## Centre approves 2 major road projects of J&K

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Mar 12: Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has approved the rehabilitation and upgradation of two major roads in the Jammu and Kashmir.

As per the official hand-out, Jammu-Akhnor section of National Highway Number 144A from 4thTawi Bridge to Hanuman Chowk shall be upgraded to four lanes with paved shoulders under EPC mode. The project road is part of newly declared National Highway Jammu-Akhnor-Poonch.

Having the length of 30.097 kms, the project will cost about Rs 914.48 crore.

The Chenani-Sudhmahadev section of National Highway 244 shall be upgraded to two lanes with paved shoulders under EPC mode. A tunnel of 4.5 kms has also been proposed between Sudhmahadev and Goha village to operationalise the re-alignment. Having length of 16.99 kms, the project will cost about Rs 255.90 crore.

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