

**IT attaches properties,  
bank accounts of  
Valley businessman**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
JAMMU, Mar 27: Income Tax Department today attached the properties and bank accounts of a leading businessman of Srinagar for his failure to deposit Rs 19 crore tax.

According to R N Sahay, Principal Commissioner of Income Tax J&K Circle, the sleuths of the department, while exercising powers under Income Tax Act, have attached Cottage Art and Emporium showroom at Boulevard, residential building in Ram Munshi

**(Contd on page 6 Col 1)**  
**Major martyred  
in J&K gets  
gallantry award**

NEW DELHI, Mar 27: President Ram Nath Kovind today conferred Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra posthumously to Major David Manlun and Major Satish Dahiya, who lost their lives while fighting with militants in Nagaland and Jammu and Kashmir.

Besides Manlun and Dahiya, Shaurya Chakra was posthumously awarded to Naik Chandra Singh, Constable Manzoor Naik of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Sergeant Milind Khairnar and Corporal

(Contd on page 6 Col 5)

**Pak violates  
ceasefire**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
JAMMU, Mar 27: Pakistan today violated ceasefire on the Line of Control (LoC) at Khari Karmara in Poonch sector but there were no casualties or damage.

This was for the first time after March 18 that Pakistan violated ceasefire on the LoC. On March 18, five members of a family including three children were killed and two others were injured in Pakistan shelling at Balakote sector.

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

**36 officers  
transferred**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
JAMMU, Mar 27: Finance Department has ordered transfer and postings of 36 officers with immediate effect.

According to the order issued, Avtar Singh, AAO, Directorate of Audit and Inspections Jammu has been transferred and posted as AAO Police Headquarters J&K and Berjesh Gupta, Incharge AAO

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

**HC quashes  
retirement order**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
SRINAGAR, Mar 27: Observing that mere registration of case against an employee cannot form the basis of retiring him from services, the High Court today quashed such order and directed the Government to reinstate the petitioner to his services.

"...As a corollary to which, the impugned order bearing No. 865-GAD of 2015 dated 30th of

(Contd on page 6 Col 7)

**Expert Panel report on pellet guns accepted**  
**BJP dilutes stand; says no  
to abrogation of Art 370**

**Sanjeev Pargal**

JAMMU, Mar 27: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has been ruling both the Centre as well as State, the latter in alliance with People's Democratic Party (PDP), has diluted its stand on abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution of India, which grants special status to Jammu and Kashmir, by giving a statement in the Parliament today that there was no proposal currently to scrap the Article.

Union Minister of State for Home Hansraj Gangaram Ahir informed the Lok Sabha today, in response to a written question tabled by BJP Lok Sabha member from Karnal (Haryana), Ashwini Kumar that "there is currently no proposal to scrap Article 370, which gives special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

Ashwini Kumar had asked whether the Government was committed to scrapping Article 370 of the Constitution.

"There is currently no such proposal under consideration of the Government," Ahir said in his one-line reply in the Lok Sabha.

Ever since its formation, the BJP had always made abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution of India, as part of its election manifestoes, both at the Centre as well as State elections. All its top leaders had repeatedly been battling for scrapping the Article.

However, the ruling party chose to take U-turn on the scrapping of Article 370 while giving reply to the question of its own party MP.

According to sources, the BJP after entering into an alliance with the PDP had decided to keep some of the "controversial issues" on the backburner and adopted Agenda of Alliance.

Replying to another question in Lok Sabha, Ahir said the Government of India has taken into account the recommendations of an Expert Committee to

explore other possible alternatives to pellet guns as non-lethal weapons.

"The Government of India had constituted an Expert Committee on 26.07.2016 to explore other possible alternatives to pellet guns as non-lethal weapons. The Committee has submitted its report and the recommendations have been taken into account by the Government for appropriate implementation," Ahir said in the written reply.

He said 3 days special training for use of less lethal weapons/ammunitions is conducted in which theory/practical on riot drill, weapons/equipments, law & order in Jammu and Kashmir, firing practice with less lethal weapon/equipment are imparted.

"Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been adopted by Jammu and Kashmir Police including law enforcing

(Contd on page 6 Col 7)

**India, Pak to  
hold Indus  
Comm meet**

NEW DELHI, Mar 27:

India and Pakistan will hold a two-day meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission here from Thursday to discuss various issues under the Indus Waters Treaty, sources said today.

This will be the 114th meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC), which should meet at least once a year as per the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), they said.

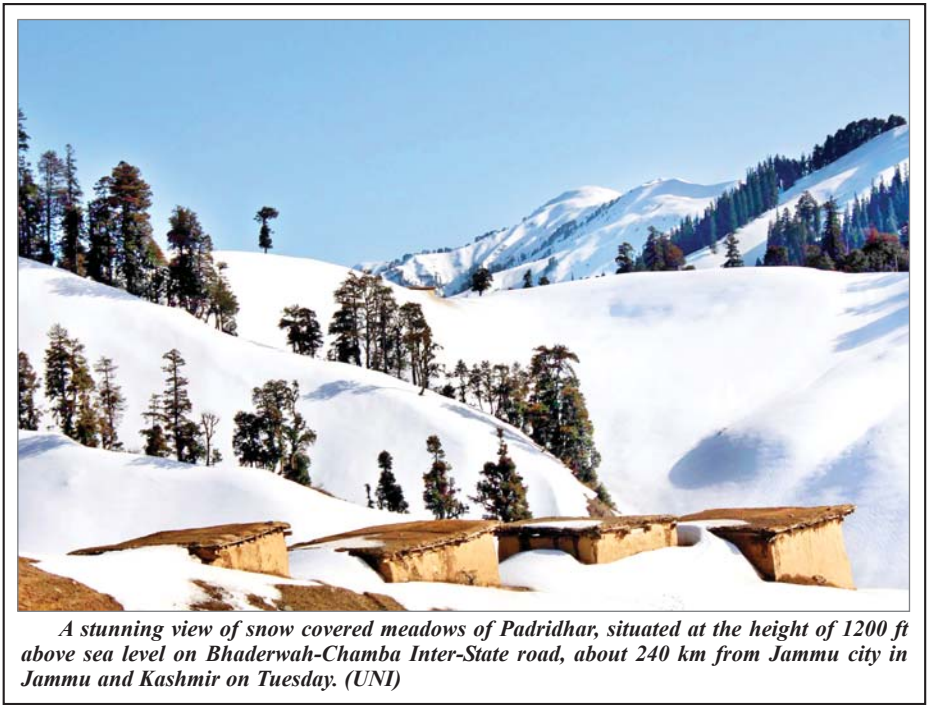
India's Indus water commissioner PK Saxena and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) officials will be part of the Indian delegation for the annual meeting. Pakistan's six-member delegation will be led by Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah.

The meeting will take place in the backdrop of the continuing tension between the two countries over a host of issues, including the alleged harassment of diplomats.

"The meeting will be held on March 29 and March 30," a Government source said.

According to the sources, the issues relating to India's Ratle hydroelectricity, Pakul Dul and Lower Kalnai projects,

(Contd on page 6 Col 5)



A stunning view of snow covered meadows of Padridhar, situated at the height of 1200 ft above sea level on Bhaderwah-Chamba Inter-State road, about 240 km from Jammu city in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday. (UNI)

'BDOs seem to have no regard for directions of superior officers'

**RDD inimical to RTI Act; doesn't want  
transparency, accountability at all: SIC**

Initiates proceedings for imposition of penalty on PIO

**Mohinder Verma**

JAMMU, Mar 27: In a major embarrassment for the Government, the State Information Commission (SIC) has stated that Rural Development Department is totally inimical to the Jammu and Kashmir Right to Information Act and doesn't want transparency and accountability in its functioning. It has directed the top brass of the department to take steps on war footing so as to ensure openness at all the levels in the department otherwise people will draw an inference that officers have lot many things to hide.

These observations have been made by the State Information Commissioner Mohammad Ashraf Mir in the 2nd appeal filed against First Appellate Authority (FAA) and Public Information Officer (PIO) of Rural Development Department Kishtwar for denial of information regarding works executed during 2015-16 and 2016-17 in some areas of Kishtwar along with material supplied and payments made

etc. While dealing with the 2nd appeal, the State Information Commissioner had on January 15, 2018 observed, "The State Information Commission is pained to note that the PIOs of Rural Development Department at district level do not take the RTI requests seriously and not only avoid providing the replies to the RTI applicants within the period specified in the RTI Act but also not attending the hearings before the Commission when appeals are filed".

"In a number of cases, it has also been observed by the Commission that the Block Development Officers do not respond to FAAs or the Director RDD when 1st appeals are filed by the RTI applicants. This attitude of the PIOs of RDD reflects the un-comfortability of these officers in sharing the information with the information seekers", the SIC had further observed, adding "it is not only unbecoming of public servants but also a failure on their part to deliver the statutory duties and responsibilities under the J&K RTI Act".

The Commission had also taken serious note of non-appearance and non-filing of counter statement to the 2nd appeal by the Block Development Officer Drabshalla and dubbed his attitude as highly undesirable, disagreeable and unacceptable. Accordingly, the Information Commission had advised Director Rural Development Department, Jammu to educate PIOs about their role and responsibilities under J&K RTI Act.

Even Director Rural Development Department, Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar and Assistant Commissioner Development Kishtwar were directed to ensure compliance of the orders of the Information Commission and provisions of the J&K RTI Act by all the PIOs of the Rural Development Department as the SIC had a very bad experience with the PIOs of this Public Authority.

However, much to the surprise of the State Information Commissioner the PIO/BDO chose not to attend the hearing

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

■ Home Secy reviews situation with CM  
**Centre set to release over Rs 5000  
cr for J&K under PMDP soon**

**Works, Power,  
Health sectors to  
get big boost**

**Excelsior Correspondent**

JAMMU, Mar 27: The Centre Government is all set to release a handsome amount under Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) to Jammu and Kashmir in the State sector for giving pace to major developmental projects in Works, Power, Health, Rehabilitation and some other departments.

Sources told the Excelsior

that the funds around Rs 5500 crore could be released in the State sector for various works by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which monitors the PMDP, during the initial period of upcoming financial year of 2018-19. More funds would be considered depending upon the submission of Utilization Certificates, they said.

Meanwhile, Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba today met Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti in Srinagar, where he had reached yesterday for high-level review of PMDP and security situation. Gauba had half-an-hour long meeting with Mehbooba at her official residence in summer capital of the

State during which they were reported to have discussed overall security and law and order situation in Jammu and Kashmir with special reference to the Valley where summer is about to set-in.

Sources said Mehbooba and Rajiv Gauba reportedly discussed the steps that the Ministry of Home Affairs can take for maintenance of law and order situation and keep the militancy under control in the Kashmir valley during upcoming crucial tourist season and annual pilgrimage of Shri Amarnath Ji during the summer.

"Both Centre and State Governments were concerned

about maintenance of peace in the Valley to facilitate good tourist season and Shri Amarnath Ji pilgrimage which would strengthen peace as previous two summers in 2016 and 2017 were almost lost to street protests," sources said.

Some more Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) that the State Government wants the Ministry of Home Affairs to announce were also discussed. Significantly, Centre Government's Special Representative on Jammu and Kashmir, Dineshwar Sharma also reached the Valley today and visited parts of Bandipora district. He is likely to stay in the

(Contd on page 6 Col 1)

**Sharma meets 17  
delegations in Bandipora**

**Excelsior Correspondent**

SRINAGAR, Mar 27: Centre's Interlocutor on Jammu and Kashmir, Dineshwar Sharma today met around 17 delegations in North Kashmir's Bandipora district.

Security was tightened across the district ahead of Sharma's visit. He met around 17 delegations during the day and people raised several issues with him.

Last year in November, when Sharma started his first visit to the State as the Interlocutor, he reached out all stakeholders to ensure that the dialogue process was kept on track.

Dineshwar Sharma met the delegations of social activists,



Centre's Special Representative for Jammu and Kashmir, Dineshwar Sharma at Bandipora on Tuesday.

youth delegation and political parties including People's Democratic Party workers from Bandipora and Sumbal constituency under the chairmanship of Zonal President and Indian National Congress workers under the chairmanship of MLA Bandipora, Usman Majid. However, the major opposition party National Conference stayed away.

Member of Legislative Assembly from Bandipora, Usman Majid termed it as a "futile exercise" without any conclusive outcome. He said Prime Minister of India is making tall claims of being familiar with the situation of Kashmir but has failed to discuss the reports of Interlocutor and his fate has turned out to be just "waywardness" at the end of the day.

Trader's Federation Bandipora and Bar Association Bandipora also boycotted the visit of the Interlocutor.

**Clear negative perception about  
J&K: CM to TAAI**

**Fayaz Bukhari**

SRINAGAR, Mar 27: Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti today appealed to country's tourism industry to clear the negative perceptions about Jammu and Kashmir and help in bringing peace to the troubled Valley.

Speaking at the inauguration of the 64th convention of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) here this evening, she described tourism as the best means of people to people dialogue adding that every effort in this regard would be an investment in peace. "Tourism helps build bridges among people which ultimately leads to minimizing alienation or misgivings about each other", she said.

The three day TAAI conven-

tion is being held at Srinagar after a gap of 31 years. The last TAAI convention was held here in 1987.



Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti addressing TAAI convention in Srinagar on Tuesday.

Mehbooba said the State has gone through a phase of enormous violence during the last

three decades or so for which people here need a healing touch which tourism sector alone can provide. "Government alone cannot do that, you have to do partnership with us", she told the delegates.

"There is no doubt that we are going through a very difficult phase but we have invited you today for our handholding", she said.

The Chief Minister blamed

(Contd on page 6 Col 5)

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INSIDE	WEATHER
Underground cabling and PMDP ...Page 8	JAMMU: Partly cloudy TEMPERATURE Max: 30.8 Degree C Min: 18.4 Degree C
* Pamphlet Court complex	RELATIVE HUMIDITY RH-I (Morning): 84.0 per cent RH-II (Evening): 55.0 per cent
LAHDC Leh delegation calls on PM, projects vital issues ...Page 3	Sunset on Wednesday: 06.48 p.m. Sunrise on Thursday: 06.25 a.m.
Gadkari, Dr Jitendra for expediting work on new highways linking Doda ...Page 3	SRINAGAR: Generally cloudy TEMPERATURE Max: 22.8 Degree C Min: 6.8 Degree C
Bali reviews progress of renal, other human organs transplantation services ...Page 5	RELATIVE HUMIDITY RH-I (Morning): 60.0 per cent RH-II (Evening): 39.0 per cent
2 Killed, 4 hurt in Doda mishap ...Page 9	LEH: TEMPERATURE Max: 4.1 Degree C Min: -3.1 Degree C
Tassaduq Mufti inaugurates Golf Tournament at RSGC ...Page 14	

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- All those pensioners who have failed to deposit their life certificate till date are requested to deposit the same before 31st, March 2018.
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- Format of Life Certificate is available at all Business units of J&K Bank and can also be downloaded at Bank's website [www.jkbank.net](http://www.jkbank.net).

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