

Chhari Mubarak leaves for holy cave, yatra remains suspended from Jammu

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR/ JAMMU, Aug 16: Chanting Vedic mantras and Bam Bam Bolay, the ' Chhari Mubarak', Silver Mace of Lord Shiva today left for the Holy

When Mahant Giri holding the Chhari, left the temple and reached Budshah Chowk, Bam Bam Bolay rented the air. The Mahant said on the way to Pahalgam, Pujan will be performed at Sureshwar Temple,

Cave (3952 mtrs) on the occasion of Raksha Bandan' Sharvan Purnima. He said traditional rituals shall be performed and prayers shall be offered the whole day at Holy Cave.

However, before dusk, Chhari-Mubarak shall leave for night halt at Pancharani.

On the occasion of 'Pratipda' on August 22, Chhari-Mubarak shall leave at 0700 hrs for night halt at Pahalgam.

On August 23 on the occasion of 'Dvitiya' 'Pujan' & 'Visarjan' ceremonies shall be performed at 1015 hrs on the banks of river Lidder.

Thereafter, traditional 'Kari-Pakouri' Bhandara shall be organised for Sadhus. With this last ritual, annual pilgrimage of Shri Amarnath Ji shall culminate.

Chhari-Mubarak shall return to its Abode at Srinagar.

Meanwhile 387 pilgrims performed darshan at holy cave today while 115 had performed darshan yesterday. With this the total pilgrims performing darshan in cave shrine since the yatra started on June 28 has reached 3,52,458, an official spokesman said.

He said till yesterday 3,52,071 pilgrims had performed darshan at holy cave situated at an altitude of 3888 metres in deep Himalayas.

He said 202 pilgrims left for holy cave from Baltal base camp via shortest track while 285 pilgrims left for darshan from Nunwan-Pahalgam base camp via traditional Chandanwari track.

The pilgrimage to the cave shrine remained suspended for the second consecutive day today from Jammu following bad weather conditions.

"Amarnath yatra has been suspended for second day today due to bad weather conditions," a police officer said here.

No fresh batch was allowed to move to Amarnath cave shrine this morning, he said.

Yatra was earlier resumed on August 13 after it remained suspended for three days in the wake of communal clashes and curfew in areas of Jammu region.

The pilgrimage was also suspended due to bad weather conditions from Kashmir-based twin base camps of Pahalgam and Baltal on Wednesday.



Governor N N Vohra administering oath to Gou-sul-Nissa Jeelani at Raj Bhavan on Friday.

Governor administers oath to Gou-sul-Nissa as Vigilance Commissioner

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Aug 16: Governor N. N. Vohra today administered the oath of office to Gou-sul-Nissa Jeelani as Vigilance Commissioner, State Vigilance Commission, at a function held at Raj Bhavan here today.

The Governor congratulated Gou-sul-Nissa Jeelani and wished her a successful tenure ahead.

Omar Abdullah, Chief Minister; Mohammad Iqbal Khandey, Chief Secretary; Kuldeep Khoda, Chief Vigilance Commissioner, State Vigilance Commission; G. R. Sufi, Chief Information Commissioner, State Information Commission; Dr. R. K. Jerath, Vigilance Commissioner, State Vigilance Commission and family members of Gou-sul-Nissa Jeelani were among those present at the oath ceremony.

PIL against unplanned digging in Jammu DB issues directions to ERA, NBCC, JMC

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 16: In a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) against unplanned digging and frequent traffic jams in Jammu, Division Bench of High Court comprising Justice D S Thakur and Justice Bansil Lal Bhat today directed NBCC and ERA to file affidavits giving details of the roads where trunk sewer lines and lateral sewer lines have since been laid.

These agencies have also been directed to submit detail regarding the date of completion of the works. In the PIL filed by two Advocates namely Ashish Sharma and Deepak Singh Balouria it has been submitted that the entire process of digging of roads was so mis-managed that the same were left dug up for months together with either little or no progress. Not only this, the roads where sewerage pipes had been laid, the agencies responsible for metaling the same were absolutely callous in discharging duty.

After hearing Senior Advocate B S Salathia with Advocate Bhanu Singh Salathia for the PIL whereas Advocate S S Nanda for the Jammu Municipal Corporation and Advocates Vishal Bharti, Ravinder Kumar Gupta for other respondents, the DB observed, "while dealing with issue of macadamization of those roads where the process of laying down the sewerage pipes has since been completed by various executing agencies, NBCC and J&K ERA are directed to file

affidavits giving details of the roads where trunk sewer lines and lateral sewer lines have since been laid. The details shall be reflected in meters/ KMs ward wise/ locality wise. The authorities concerned shall also submit a detail regarding the date of completion of the works."

"The affidavits shall also be filed by PWD (R&B) and JMC as to what steps have been taken by them to ensure black topping of the roads where work has since been completed by the concerned agencies regarding laying down of sewerage lines", the DB said. The Division Bench further directed that the Divisional Commissioner Jammu and the committee set up shall prepare a plan to ensure that all those roads where the sewerage pipes have been laid black toping was also done preferably within a period of two months.

The DB directed the Registry to list the PIL after two weeks.

Army apprehends more infiltration attempts

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Aug 16: Army today said there have not been significant ceasefire violations from across the Line of Control (LoC) in the Valley, but attempts to infiltrate are going to be there in the coming time.

The General Officer Commanding (GOC) 15 Corps, Lt General Gurmeet Singh while speaking to reporters said that there has been no significant ceasefire violation in Kashmir valley but attempts to infiltrate are there.

"Also, I like to highlight their infrastructure and apparatus close to the launchpads and their activi-

maintain our effective counter infiltration grid on LoC," the GOC said. Lt Gen Singh said there will be an appropriate response to ceasefire violations and infiltration attempts. "We are very alert and conscious of the faith the nation has reposed in us. In fact, our drills and procedures of countering ceasefire violation is well rehearsed and there will be an appropriate response," he said.

The GOC said militant groups are trying to infiltrate experienced men to this side of the border as most of the militant leaders here have been eliminated. "In the recent operations, we have been able to eliminate a large number of their leaders. A terrorist we

and recovered six weapons including three AK-47s and one Pika rifle.

The Army displayed the huge cache of arms and ammunition including assault rifles, pistols, bullets, clothing materials and medicines all carrying Pakistan markings that were recovered over last one and a half month from the dead militants in North Kashmir.

The GOC said Army killed 28 militants on the LoC and in the hinterland in Kashmir since the June 24 Hyderpora attack in which 8 army men were killed a day before Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Kashmir and recovered huge cache of arms and ammuni-



Sadhus, led by Mahant Deependra Giri leave for holy shrine of Amarnath ji after the worship of the "Chhari Mubarak" of Lord Shiva at Martand Sun Temple, Mattan on Friday.

Amarnath cave shrine in South Kashmir Himalayas on the final leg of annual pilgrimage, which will conclude on August 21, Sharvan Purnima coinciding with Raksha Bandhan.

"The Kishtwar clashes were very unfortunate and we will pray for peace and communal harmony in the country, particularly in the Jammu and Kashmir at the Cave shrine," Mahant Deependra Giri, custodian of the Chhari said before leaving from Shri Amreshwar Temple Akhara Building at Badshah Chowk near here.

The Chhari was kept in the temple for the darshan of devotees on the occasion of ' Nagpanchami', traditional Chhari-Pujan on August 11 after puja by Mahant Giri at 1700 hrs.

The Mahant said Jammu and Kashmir is known for centuries-old communal harmony and brotherhood where people belonging to different faiths and regions are living peacefully. He said those responsible for dividing people on religion and regions must be brought to book and punished as per law of the land.

Mahant Giri said people of the Kashmir Valley have always helped the pilgrims to undertake the yatra peacefully and smoothly.

A large number of Sadhus and locals, including security forces, Central Government employees and Kashmiri Pandits joined the prayers in the temple before the journey of Chhari commenced at 0800 hrs.

During pre-90s, the Chhari was taken out from the temple shortly before sunset to have night halt at Sureshwar temple at Sonawar.

However, for security reasons, the Chhari is now taken in a vehicle to Pahalgam after puja at different temples on way.

Unauthorized absence can't be called as abandonment of job: HC

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Aug 16: High Court today directed the Government to allow an employee of the Education Department to resume her duty, saying that unauthorized absence after availing leave cannot be determined as a case of abandonment of services.

Justice Hasnain Masoodi also asked the Government to enquire her unauthorized absence as per rules.

"A civil servant shall not be dismissed or removed or reduced in rank except after an enquiry be conducted against him, and reasonable opportunity of being heard in respect of charges levelled against him," the court said.

The court was hearing a case in which an employee of the Education Department was placed on suspension in 2004 for being absent from her duty. However, her absence was treated as leave by the Director School Education and the concerned official at the Government Higher Secondary School, Nuner, Ganderbal, didn't permit her to rejoin.

The court said that the authorities were satisfied with the ground projected by her for her absence as ill health and medical advice to avoid travelling.

The court said that as per JK Civil Service rules, her absence from services would cover under Article 128 of CSR, adding there is a provision for inquiry in implicit in CSR rules in the event a Government employee remains absent without leave or after a leave duly granted to him came to an end.

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