

PC raises several queries in 3 hour meeting

Decks cleared for annual plan, PMRP finalisation

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, June 27: Top brass of the Planning Commission of India (PCI) and Jammu and Kashmir Government met at Yojana Bhawan in New Delhi this morning for three hours to give a final touch to the annual plan finalisation of the State, which has been postponed thrice on differences over plan size.

After the meeting, the State delegation was confident of getting Rs 8050 crores worth annual plan, Rs 600 crores under PMRP and liberal funding under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

After cancellation of July 2 meeting, the Planning Commission has asked for plan finalisation meeting on July 8 but, according to official sources, this date was unlikely to be accepted by the State Government due to reported re-occupation of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. The meeting could take place on July 8 or 9 depending upon availability of

both sides. In any case, it would be held before July 12. A date would be mutually agreed upon by the Planning Commission and the State Government depending upon the availability of Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Montek Singh Ahluwalia and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the next few days.

Today's delegation of the State Government in meeting with Planning Commission Advisors and Members was led by Chief Secretary Mohammad Iqbal Khanday and comprised all Administrative Secretaries of different departments and some Head of Departments.

Principal Secretary, Planning and Development Department, B R Sharma, Principal Secretary, Finance Department BB Vyas and Principal Secretary, Power Development Department Arun Kumar Mehta were also present in the meeting.

Official sources told the Excelsior that Planning Commissioner Member B K Chaturvedi, Incharge Jammu

and Kashmir and his team raised some serious queries over conversion of agriculture land into horticulture and other purposes of urbanization, declining sex ratio in the State and the Government's inability to enhance dairy products despite large presence of sheep and cattle in the State.

The meeting that began at 11 am lasted three hours and was described as "positive" by the sources. They said the meeting has cleared the decks for healthy plan finalisation of the State next month.

Sources said Commissioner/Secretary, Health and Medical Education Shaleen Kabra gave a detailed reply on declining sex ratio and steps taken by the Government to curb it. The Administrative Secretary, Agriculture Department also explained on conversion of agriculture land for other purposes and to contain the menace.

However, the Administrative Secretary, Animal and Sheep Husbandry was not present in

Formal orders for laying of Srinagar-Leh transmission line yet to be issued

Two PMs' announcements fail to see light of day in 10 yrs

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, June 27: Unbelievable it may sound but it is a fact that the separate announcements about one project made by two Prime Ministers of the country during their high-profile visits to Jammu and Kashmir have failed to see the light of the day during the past 10 years as the agency which was to execute the project has yet not received the formal approval.

The announcements of two Prime Ministers pertain to the much talked about and much needed Srinagar-Leh power transmission line.

The first announcement about this ambitious project was made by the then Prime Minister of India, Atal Behari Vajpayee in August 2003 during his three day visit to Jammu and Kashmir. The Srinagar-Leh Transmission Line was part of economic package announced by Vajpayee for the State and at that time the cost of 375-kilometer long transmission line was projected at Rs 300 crore.

Soon after Vajpayee's announcement, Power Grid

Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) which has expertise in laying transmission lines particularly in heavy snow zones started survey for the project and within shortest possible time came up with the detailed note indicating each and every aspect of the transmission line.

Thereafter, no progress could be made vis-à-vis starting work on the project and the file continued to gather dust in the official records due to change of the guard at the Centre, which resulted into change in the priorities of the Central Government.

After seven years, the project again attracted the attention of the Union Government albeit due to intense pressure from the State Government and the leadership of Ladakh region, which was going to be major beneficiary of the transmission line.

In the month of July 2010, present Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh made announcement about the start of the work on the project during his two-day high-profile visit to Jammu and Kashmir. At that time an amount of Rs 100 crore was announced for immediate start of work on the project.

But much to the surprise of people of Ladakh region, even this announcement failed to see light of the day and no significant progress could be made vis-à-vis laying of transmission line between Srinagar and Leh. Perturbed over the hanging fate of the project, Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah in the month of July 2012 vociferously took up the issue with the visiting Chairman-cum-Managing Director of the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) and stressed on speeding up of all the requisite formalities in order to kick start work on the project, which was mooted to overcome power crisis in the Ladakh region, which remains cut off from the rest of the world for more than six months due to heavy snow.

Not only two Prime Ministers of the country, even the Union Finance Minister, P Chidambaram in the month of February this year announced construction of power transmission link between Srinagar and Leh at an investment of Rs 1840 crore to improve power supply in Leh-Kargil region and connect it to the project.

HC stays circular on migrants' relief

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 27: The State High Court today stayed the operation of Government circular debarring relief to Kashmiri migrants, whose family members have been given job under Prime Minister's special package.

While staying operation of the circular and directing continuation of the relief, Justice Ali Mohd Magrey issued notice to the State Chief Secretary, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) and Chief Accounts Officer, Relief Organization (M) for their reply within two weeks.

The court directions were issued on a petition filed by one

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Army busts militant hideout

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, June 27: Army busted a militant hideout and recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition from Kupwara district of North Kashmir, a defence spokesman said here.

The spokesman said that continued area domination operations by troops of the frontline division in Kupwara resulted in unearthing a huge cache of arms and ammunition yesterday.

"The recoveries included two anti tank mines, 55 anti personal

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India, Turkey to enhance cooperation in RE

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, June 27: India and Turkey have agreed to enhance their cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy. This was decided at a meeting held between Turkish Energy Minister Tamer Yildiz and Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Minister of New and Renewable Energy at Ankara today.

Dr. Abdullah is visiting Turkey along with a high level delegation to explore greater opportunities for cooperation and collabora-

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Bodies, arms recovered from Keri

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 27: Army today recovered dead bodies of the two militants killed in an encounter at the Line of Control (LoC) in Keri sector of Rajouri district yesterday while trying to infiltrate into the Indian territory.

Both the slain militants were believed to be Pakistanis affiliated with Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) outfit, official sources said.

Identity of the slain militants has not been established as they were not carrying any identity cards with them.

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Govt extends Employees' Insurance Policy

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 27: The Government today extended for one more year the Employees' Group Janta Personal Accidental Insurance Policy.

The Government had tied up for the Policy with M/s Oriental Insurance Company Limited for three years commencing from June 14, 2011 to over accidental death and disabilities.

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Cabinet clears proposal on CBI autonomy

NEW DELHI, June 27:

In a move aimed at insulating CBI from political interference, the Union Cabinet today approved recommendations of a Group of Ministers which include setting up of a panel of retired judges to oversee the investigations of the agency, besides increased financial powers of its Director.

Based on the recommendations, Government will file an affidavit before the Supreme Court by July 3. The issue will come up for hear-

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'We are not going to tolerate this kind of nonsense' CJ takes strong note of SMC response

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, June 27: Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court, M M Kumar, today took strong exception of the response filed by the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), G N Qasba, before the court and directed him to tender an apology.

However, Advocate General of the State, Mohammad Ishaq Qadri, withdrew the response of the SMC and tendered a written apology on behalf of the SMC Commissioner before the High Court.

The Division Bench of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court comprising Chief Justice M M Kumar and Justice D S Thakur, was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) titled Mujeeb Andrabi versus State and others.

The PIL sought making the Srinagar city as hawk free city by removing all hawkers from the city and to provide them alternate space.

While complying the High Court order (dated 22/05/2013), the SMC authorities filed response where in one of the paras about failure on part of the SMC to remove the illegal constructions, the court directions were held responsible.

The SMC had mentioned: "The problem gets further aggravated due to passing of interim orders by this Hon'ble court due to which the SMC could not take any action."

The High Court took strong exception of the SMC response and the Chief Justice observed: "We know how to deal with them,

whosoever high may be."

The Chief Justice further observed: "We will direct the conduct of the inquiry of the assets of the officials."

"We are not going to tolerate this kind of nonsense. Ek tou chouri, aur fir seena zouri", he observed.

The High Court directed the Advocate General that the Commissioner SMC be presented tomorrow before the court and apology be tendered in this behalf.

Advocate General M I Qadri told Excelsior that he has filed an affidavit tendering an apology for the para that was mentioned in SMC response. He said that the para was not in a good taste and it had commented on the court judgement. It may be mentioned here that the response was drafted by the SMC counsel Firdous Ahmad Mir.

Amicus curiae, Advocate Riyaz Ahmad Jan told Excelsior that it was the wording of a para in the draft that was not drafted suitably but the matter has been resolved and SMC Commissioner may not be required to appear before the court tomorrow now.

The PIL titled Mujeeb Andrabi versus State and others further sought directions be issued to the concerned departments for expediting the road widening from North side of Srinagar at HMT-Narbal crossing and provide alternate routes to Pantha Chowk traffic mess.

It has also sought directions be issued to remove all illegal structures erected in violation of Master plan as the SMC has failed to check its violation.

First batch of yatra leaves; 12,000 to perform darshan today

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, June 27: Undeterred by bad weather conditions and recent Uttarakhand tragedy, over 12,000 pilgrims will perform darshan at holy cave of Swami Amarnath Ji situated at an



Yatris in a jubilant mood before boarding the buses for holy cave of Amarnath Ji at Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas on Thursday. -Excelsior/Rakesh

altitude of 14,000 feet in deep Himalayas in South Kashmir district of Anantnag on the first day of darshan tomorrow.

According to sources, over 5,000 pilgrims have reached

base camps of Nunwan-Pahalgam by late this evening while 6,000 to 7,000 pilgrims from different parts of country are camping at Base Camp of Baltal in Ganderbal.

All these pilgrims are set to leave for holy cave from both the base camps early tomorrow



Yatris in a jubilant mood before boarding the buses for holy cave of Amarnath Ji at Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas on Thursday. -Excelsior/Rakesh

morning for their onwards sojourn.

The first batch of 3,157 pilgrims left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas for the holy cave under tight security measures this

morning. The yatris were flagged off by Minister of Tourism, Ghulam Ahmed Mir who was accompanied by MLA Jammu East, Ashok Khajuria, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Pardeep Gupta, IGP Jammu, Rajesh Kumar, IG CRPF, Kuldeep Dhar, DIG Jammu-Kathua Range, Shakeel Ahmed Beig, Director Tourism, Soujanya Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Jammu and other senior civil and police officers on the occasion.

To keep the tradition alive and as a good omen the Minister broke the Nariyal (Coconut) while the Vedic hymns were recited by Dogra Pujari Shastri Singh led by Ram Paul Shastri.

The first batch of 3,157 yatris comprised of 2466 male, 563 female, 38 children and 90 Sadhus. They left in a cavalcade of 96 vehicles including 75 buses and 21 LMVs.

As the first bus left the Yatri Niwas "Bum Bum Bole" and "Jaikara Veer Bajrangee" chanted by enthusiastic yatris rented the air.

Undeterred and unfazed by

Yatris in a jubilant mood before boarding the buses for holy cave of Amarnath Ji at Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas on Thursday. -Excelsior/Rakesh

altitude of 14,000 feet in deep Himalayas in South Kashmir district of Anantnag on the first day of darshan tomorrow.

According to sources, over 5,000 pilgrims have reached

7 Pak judges overshadow guests in uniform for 1st time at Chamlyal Mela

Gopal Sharma

CHAMLYAL (IB), June 27: For the first time in the history of Baba Chamlyal Mela on Indo-Pak border in Ramgarh sector of district



BSF officers receiving traditional 'Chadar' from Pakistani Rangers at Chamlyal 'Zeroline' in Ramgarh sector on Thursday. -Excelsior/Gautam

Samba, as many as seven serving judges from the Pakistani judiciary and even the media-persons witnessed the event, dominating the decorated men clad in uniforms.

Ignoring the poor pace of dialogue process between two sides and amidst bon-homie, both sides exchanged the traditional sweets and fruits and

Indian soldiers offered holy earth and water (Sharbat & Shaker) from the shrine of Baba Dalip Singh Manhas, popularly known as Baba Chamlyal situated about 200 mt on this side of the International Border for the Pakistani public, anx-

iously waiting on the other side. Due to heavy rain in the morning, the main exchange function between two sides was delayed by about two hours as the BSF men had to slush out massive water logged in the fields and erect tents and make other preparations for the common event.

While the troops on both the

sides along the LoC are engaged in exchange of firing in Poonch and Rajouri sector, here at the Ramgarh zero-line, a perfect bon-homie was witnessed today between the Border Security Force men and the Chenab Rangers of Pakistan of Sialkote sector.

Top officers and members from judiciary on both sides were engaged in joint photo-sessions and greeting each other on the occasion. The people from both the sides including Hindus and Muslims have great respect for this shrine and every year lakhs of people throng the shrine to offer special prayers and offer 'Chadar' and sweets at the shrine. In fact, despite many odds, this is the place and holy shrine of Baba Chamlyal on the Indo-Pak border which bridges the gap between the two sides and makes the people to come closer to pay obeisance together at the shrine and celebrate the fair with great traditional fervor and gaiety, ignoring the past events.

Sector Commander from Sialkote Brig Wasim was leading the delegation of nearly 40 old guests from Pakistan. He was accompanied by Wing Commander Faizal from 12 Chenab Rangers, Wing Commander Qaiser, Wing

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Coming elections offer defining choice to J&K: Mufti ...Page 3	KASHMIR Possibility of light rain/thundershowers TEMPERATURE Max: 23.1 Degree C Min: 19.1 Degree C RELATIVE HUMIDITY Highest: 98.0 per cent Lowest: 72.0 per cent
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