

Govt panel opposes election to Chairman of District Planning Board

Report on amendments to Panchayati Raj Act being placed before Cabinet today

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, May 30: Report of a committee constituted to recommend amendments to the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 is being placed before the State Cabinet tomorrow morning and if the consensus emerged among the Coalition partners the same will be accepted.

Authoritative sources told EXCELSIOR that Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj is placing before Cabinet the report of a committee headed by the Commissioner Secretary, Rural Development Department and comprising Secretary, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Special Secretary and Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and Directors of Rural Development, Kashmir and Jammu, which was constituted following voices from various quarters to strengthen the J&K Panchayati Raj Act and bring it in consonance with the 73rd Amendment Act of the Constitution of India.

The committee submitted its report to the Department of Rural Development on March 7, 2013 and now the same is being placed before the Cabinet with certain changes carried out on the directions of the Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah.

Quoting the report, sources said that committee has recommended that Chairperson of Block Development Councils should be elected from amongst the Panchs and Sarpanchs of that particular block. However, the Chief Minister has desired that the election of the Chairpersons of BDCs should be only from amongst the Sarpanchs.

"The committee has recommended that the term of BDC and District Planning and Development Board should be co-terminus with that of Halqa Panchayat", sources added.

About the Chairman of District Planning and Development Board, sources said, "the committee has proposed that the present form whereby the Chairman of the DPDB is nominated by the Government should not be changed. However, it has men-

tioned that Chief Secretary has recommended that both Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board should be elected from amongst the members of the board".

About the reservation at all three tiers as recommended under the 73rd Amendment, the report said, "the reservation should be extended to all the three tiers of Panchayats. However, regarding reservation to OBC and Pahari speaking people suitable amendments can be made to the Act as and when the Government categories them for reservation".

Regarding the recommendations from various quarters that for removal of Sarpanch a provision shall be kept for requirement of confirmation of the Government by a Cabinet decision, the Committee said, "the present method of removal is independent of Government interference and empowers the Panchayats to take their own decisions as such the same should not be infringed".

Similarly, the committee has

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, May 30: Announcing that all corruption cases against politicians and bureaucrats would be referred to State Vigilance Commission, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today declared war against corruption in the State.

Chairing meeting of Consultative Committee on General Administrative Department (GAD) here today, Mr Abdullah said that SVC has been given office in the Old Assembly Complex, Srinagar.

He said cases pertaining to bureaucrats and government officials have been transferred to SVC from the Accountability Commission which will concentrate on the cases pertaining to politicians.

The Consultative Committee was informed that 193 cases received from SVO, Crime Branch and CBI, have been sanctioned for prosecution by the Government and there is no backlog in this regard.

It was stated that three cases relating to IFS and IAS officers have been referred to

Government of India for sanctioning prosecution.

The Chief Minister said Government would consider yet another initiative of placing high ranking officers in corruption prone areas as dedicated vigilance officers to keep eye on transactions and functions of these departments and report status to Vigilance Commission regularly.

He said he has also directed

for formulating water-tight cases against proven corrupt officials besides initiating prosecution process on firm footing so that they do not get any chance of getting benefit of looseness of the case or from any technical impediment in it.

Presenting the overview of new initiatives Government has taken to improve governance and bring transparency in the functioning of administration, Mr Abdullah said that by setting up of Vigilance Commission, Re-constituting Accountability Commission and empowering people through Right to Information Act and Public Service Guarantee Act has created

substantial means to reduce the chances of corruption and punish the culprits.

The Chief Minister said that further steps are on to ensure that Government functionaries indulging in corruption are readily booked and handed over severe punishment under the law.

"We would not allow them to move scot free", he said and underlined the need for full utilisation of powers entrusted by his Government to the people to scan Government functioning and help in identifying unscrupulous elements in the administration.

He said during this year his Government has put in place yet another initiative of Results Framework Document (RFD) which would help the common people to ascertain the performance and functioning of Government departments.

He said land has also been identified at Sidhra for constructing residential accommodation for Government employees and politicians.

On creating enhanced opportunities for Government



A boy quenching his thirst by drinking water from a leaked pipe at Mendhar on Thursday. -Excelsior/Nazki

PM elected to RS from Assam

GUWAHATI, May 30:

Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh was elected to Rajya Sabha for the fifth consecutive term today as Congress won both the seats to the Upper House from Assam.

Singh got 49 first preference votes, while the second Congress candidate bagged 45 votes in the 126-member state Assembly, its Principal Secretary and Returning Officer G P Das said.

All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF)'s Aminul Islam, who polled 18 votes, lost, he said.

(Contd on page 6 Col 5)

5 years RI to ex-Director

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 30: Special Judge, Anti-Corruption Court, Kashmir M L Manhas today convicted Gulam Ahmad Dar, the then Director Horticulture Department Kashmir and sentenced him to undergo simple imprisonment for five years and fine of Rs 50,000 under Prevention of Corruption Act.

According to the Vigilance case, Gulam Ahmad Dar, son of

(Contd on page 6 Col 1)

Farooq, Omar visit ailing MP

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 30: Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah accompanied by Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Dr. Farooq Abdullah today visited Government Medical College Hospital here to enquire about the health of Parliament Member, Gulam Hassan Khan, who has been admitted in the hospital since yesterday morning for treatment.

(Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Pregnant woman dies due to negligence

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, May 30: A pregnant woman died along with her baby due to the alleged negligence of doctors at Sub District Hospital (SDH), Chattergam in Central Kashmir's Budgam district last evening.

Following the death of the woman due to medical negligence, the family members and other locals of the area held protests

(Contd on page 6 Col 1)

10 KAS officers get IAS

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 30: Ten KAS officers including Dy Commissioner Poonch have been inducted into the IAS cadre.

According to official sources, the officers who got inducted to IAS are Mohd Yousuf Dar, Saleem Mohammed, Hemant Kumar Sharma, Hilal Ahmed Parray, Kifayat Hussain Rizvi, Mrs Shadad Khan, Bashrat Saleem, Tsering Angehok, Shafiq Ahmed Raina and Sajjad Ahmed Khan, posted as DC Poonch. They have also been allotted J&K cadre.

One killed, 13 hurt in mishaps

Excelsior Correspondent

RAJOURI, May 30: A tractor driver died in accident in Mendhar while at least 13 passengers including driver were injured when a Tempo Traveler skidded off the road and fell into a gorge at Tarala near Sawari in Kandi-Budhal area today.

(Contd on page 6 Col 1)

193 cases sanctioned for prosecution

Corruption cases against politicians to be referred to SVC: Omar

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On creating enhanced opportunities for Government

Cabinet to take final call today; police transfers likely

After HoDs, Taj proposes ban on private practice of all teaching faculty members

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 30: After Principals and Head of Departments, Minister for Medical Education, Taj Mohi-ud-Din has proposed ban on the private practice of all the faculty members in the Government Medical and Dental Colleges in the State and Cabinet, which is meeting under the chairmanship of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah tomorrow morning at Civil Secretariat Srinagar, will take final call on the proposal. The Cabinet is also likely to order much-awaited transfers in the Police Department at the level of SSPs and SPs.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that Medical Education Department has moved a proposal seeking approval to impose ban on private practice of all the teaching faculty members in the Government Medical and Dental Colleges and the same would be thoroughly discussed in the Cabinet meeting tomorrow.

Stating that the Medical Education Department has been facing the greatest challenge of providing qualitative services to the people and the rapid depletion in qualitative services in tertiary care hospitals, which is damaging the academic character of these institutions besides effecting the provision of health care in these hospitals, is primarily due to the indulgence of faculty members in private prac-

tice, the proposal said, "not only this, the menace of private practice is also affecting quality teaching and research work".

"Keeping in view the prevailing situation there is an urgent need for creating an atmosphere of disciplined work culture by banning practice of all faculty members of Government Medical and Dental Colleges", the proposal said.

It is pertinent to mention here that imposing ban on private practice of the Government doctors was also ordered by the Division Bench of State High Court on November 18, 2011 in a writ petition titled Vichar Kranti International and Another Versus State of J&K and Others. However, the DB order was challenged by the State Government before the Supreme Court, which on May 10, 2012 granted stay on the operation of the impugned judgement. The next date of hearing in the SLP filed by the State Government against DB order is July 19, 2013.

Sources disclosed that Committee on Estimates in its report on the neonatal/infant deaths in the GB Pant Children Hospital, Srinagar amongst its various observations and directions strongly recommended to the Government imposition of ban on the private practice of the doctors in all the teaching hospitals on the ground that the same is damaging the academic character of these institutions besides effecting the provision of healthcare.

Recently, the Medical Education Department imposed ban on private practice of Head of Departments of different disciplines on the ground that they were directly related to the administration and management of their concerned disciplines and doctors dealing with the administrative job/role are not entitled to private practice for which they are being paid the

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Plan down by Rs 1500 cr, Taxes share by Rs 230 cr

Centre blocks Rs 2130 cr worth funds, re-validation unlikely

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, May 30: Negotiations at top level between Centre and State political leadership notwithstanding, the Union Government and the Planning Commission of India have blocked Rs 2130 crores of the State and were reluctant to release it or re-validate it for the current financial year.

Top official sources told the Excelsior that this was for the first time that the Government of India has withheld such a big amount of the State under the

annual plan 2012-13, Prime Minister's Re-construction Plan (PMRP) and Share of Central Taxes.

The amount withheld by the Centre included Rs 1500 crores under annual plan, Rs 400 crores under PMRP and Rs 230 crores under Share of Central Taxes, sources said, adding that despite series of meetings of top political leadership of the State with the Union of India and bureaucratic level negotiations, the Union Government has declined to release or re-validate the funds excepting those falling in the PMRP category.

The State Government had been accorded Rs 7300 crores worth annual plan during the financial year of 2012-13. However, the Planning Commission of India had released only Rs 5800 crores leading to a deficit of Rs 1500 crores.

Under 'Share of Central Taxes' category, the State got Rs 230 crores less than the target. The Government of India had reduced the amount on the ground the collection of taxes projected by them from the States fell short of the target and, therefore, they

reduced the amount of not only Jammu and Kashmir but almost all the States.

Out of Rs 700 crores proposed for the State under the PMRP, the State was given only Rs 300 crores. However, the Government was not worried on the funds withheld under the PMRP as they are non-lapsable and would be extended for the current fiscal year. It may be mentioned here that the PMRP funds are extendable till the scheme existed. The Centre had recently extended the PMRP till

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

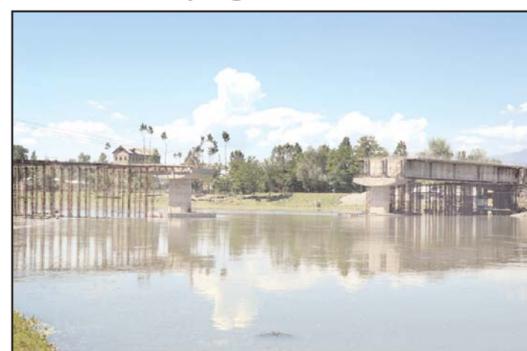
5 years delay for commissioning of Sopore bridge

Contractor, Beacon lock horns; construction may get further delayed

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, May 30: The Sopore Bypass bridge in North Kashmir that was to be commissioned 5 years ago is still under construction and locking of horns between the contractor and Border Roads Organization (BRO) over the enhancement of rates due to cost escalation over the years may delay its commissioning further.

The construction of the Bridge that has vital importance for the Apple town Sopore in North Kashmir was started in 2004 by M/S Mir Constructions who got the contract from the



Sopore bridge awaiting completion. -Excelsior/Aabid Nabi

BRO's Project Beacon. The BRO officials say that the 216 meter bridge that was coming at a cost of Rs 9.36 Crore was to be commissioned in March 2008 but has not been completed yet as work on the bridge is going at snail pace.

Farooq Ahmad Mir of M/S Mir Constructions admitted that there has been initial delay due to land acquisition but blamed the 2008, 2009, 2010 summer unrest for the further delay in the completion of the project.

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5000 to be benefitted

HRD Ministry releases Rs 9.3 cr for J&K students' scholarships

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 30: The Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India, has launched a Special Scholarship Scheme for the students of Jammu and Kashmir, appearing for Class XII or equivalent examinations through the State Board of School Examinations (BOSE) or Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) affiliated schools, located within the State.

Official sources said under this scheme of the Central Government, 5000 scholarships will be given every year to the students of Jammu and Kashmir, who take admissions outside the State to pursue higher education in general degree courses, Engineering and Medical studies

in the Government Colleges and Institutes and other non-Government institutes recognized by AICTE or University Grants Commission.

The Government has split 5000 scholarships giving major share i.e. 4500 scholarships to general degree courses. Rest of 500 scholarships would be equally distributed (250 each) to Medical and Engineering students.

"An amount of up to Rs 30,000 per annum for general degree courses, up to Rs 1.25 lakh per annum for Engineering and up to Rs 3 lakh per annum for Medical students is being given to every scholar as tuition fees," sources said, adding that in addition to this, hostel fees and incidentals is also being given for all categories of courses up to a ceiling of Rs 1 lakh

per annum. Sources said that the HRD Ministry was making efforts to popularize the scheme among the students by publicizing it at the school level.

"In order to improve the delivery mechanism and also effectively monitor the progress of the scheme, it has been assigned to the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for implementation through an e-portal from the academic year 2012-13."

Meanwhile, the AICTE has invited online applications from the eligible students through its web portal by advertising it in the leading newspapers. On the basis of the recommendations made by the AICTE, an amount of Rs

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

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INSIDE	WEATHER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reviving Jammu heritage ...Page 8 * Callousness of PDD ...Page 8 Omar underlines force of art to conjoin areas ...Page 3 Shabir annoyed over poor show in Drug Store ...Page 3 Habibullah for check on RTI's misuse ...Page 5 Bhall inaugurates Academy's 2-day Punjabi Conference ...Page 5 Clamour for Srinivasan's ouster grows ...Page 14 	<p>JAMMU</p> <p>Mainly dry.</p> <p>TEMPERATURE</p> <p>Max: 39.8 Degree C</p> <p>Min: 21.8 Degree C</p> <p>RELATIVE HUMIDITY</p> <p>Highest: 30.0 per cent</p> <p>Lowest: 10.0 per cent</p> <p>Sunset on Friday: 07.33 p.m.</p> <p>Sunrise on Saturday: 05.22 a.m.</p> <p>KASHMIR</p> <p>Mainly dry.</p> <p>TEMPERATURE</p> <p>Max: 26.5 Degree C</p> <p>Min: 8.4 Degree C</p> <p>RELATIVE HUMIDITY</p> <p>Highest: 61.0 per cent</p> <p>Lowest: 39.0 per cent</p>

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