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Work on the stage in progress at Shalimar Garden in Srinagar for Zubin Mehta's concert. -Excelsior/Amin War

Zubin arriving amid tight security

Police have restricted the entry into the garden and those who are allowed are being frisked and have to pass through metal detectors. "And from tomorrow the garden will be out of bounds and would be handed over to the security", said a top security official.

Top Police and administration officials are making frequent visits to the Garden to supervise the arrangements for the show that is being held for the first time ever in Kashmir.

A top security official said that such kind of show is being held for the first time in Kashmir. "It is a biggest ever security exercise for us. Around 1500-2000 guests including Ambassadors of European countries, Central minister and bureaucrats are arriving here for the concert", he said.

The three tier security is in place in Srinagar city for the security of the guests and the venue. "The 15 kilometre road leading from city centre Lal Chowk to the Garden will be out of bounds for public on September 7", said a top security official.

"The Dal Lake would be monitored by security forces using speed boats. No civilian movement would be allowed inside the lake at least three kilometres beyond the banks of the garden", said the official.

At a time when security is on alert ahead of concert, a group of unknown militant outfits have issued threat asking German Embassy to cancel the concert.

"We will not allow the orchestra of Zubin Mehta to perform in Shalimar Garden. If the German Ambassador remains adamant on holding the event, we will target foreign tourists for which the diplomat shall be responsible," Sami-ul-Haq, a spokesman for Al Nasireen, Farzandaan-e-Millat and Shuhda (Martyrs) Brigade said in a faxed statement to local office of a New Delhi based wire service.

A top state intelligence officer says: "I don't think it is genuine threat. There is no specific militant threat to the concert. But we are taking all precautions for

the international event and there would be no lowering of guard from our side."

Sunil Misri, Director of Floriculture who looks after the garden says: "We took up a major conservation and heritage revival programme at the cost of Rs. 3.5 crore to renovate the garden ahead of the concert. The work was going on for past 5 months. The garden was in dilapidated shape and this massive renovation is taking place after 40 years. The water channel and 114 fountains were made functional beside palace hall, main hall and gardens were restored for the concert," he said.

The separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Civil Society in Kashmir is opposing the holding of concert in Kashmir. A civil Society Group is organizing a parallel concert, Haqeeqat-e-Kashmir (reality of Kashmir) a few hours before Mehta's concert at 5 p.m. on September 7."

A meeting in this effect was held at Srinagar today and it was attended by Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Chairman, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Nayema Hamid, Zariq Ahmed Zariq, Shakil Qalandar and others. The representatives of separatist organizations like APMC (M), DFP and National Front were also present during the meeting.

"We are going to organize an event on the same day which would be music free. All the writers and eminent personalities who have written extensively on Kashmir conflict and human rights violations have consented to take part in the programme and throw a light over the plight of Kashmiri people," said one of the members of civil society present in the meeting.

Another member said that there is a need to confront the concert in a logical way. "We have decided to gather at Sher-i-Kashmir Park and find ways and means to take Kashmiri people out of trouble. We have no doubt suffered heavily and we must show a united face in the interest of the people of Kashmir," he said.

Two cops held with Chinese pistols

Police have, however, not ruled out the links of the arrested policemen with the militants as they had been instrumental in several anti-militancy operations in Rajouri district. "It was in view of the role of Ashfaq and Zaheer in anti-militancy operations that they had been absorbed as Followers in the Police Department after their initial recruitment as Special Police Officers (SPOs)," sources said.

After interrogation by police, the Followers were likely to be sent to the Joint Interrogation Centre (JIC) in Jammu for their questioning and ascertain their links in the militancy.

Few months back, Rajouri Police had arrested a constable Abdul Rahim along with a consignment of grenades for the militants. A Territorial Army jawan Haneef Mohammad was also arrested along with Rahim. Prior to that, another constable Shahnaawaz was arrested along with a rich haul of drugs.

"As the militants were coming from Mendhar, the chances were that they might have taken the consignment of Chinese pistols from couriers of the militants for supplying them to the ultras in Doda, Ramban or Kishtwar districts or show them as recoveries to get promotion and rewards. All aspects are being investigated," sources added.

5 IPS, 9 KAS, 2 Accounts Cadre officers promoted

Cabinet also approved designation of Dev Lata, Special Secretary in Chief Minister's Secretariat, who is already holding the Super Time Scale of KAS as Secretary in the Chief Minister's secretariat and designation of Teering Muroop as Secretary in the Ladakh Affairs Department consequent upon his promotion to the Super Time Scale of KAS.

The Cabinet also approved

IT sleuths raid business establishments, houses of 6 top jewelers

Department decided to lay hands on them in order to unearth tax evasion", sources said in response to another question.

About the outcome of the raids and searches, they said, "since searches, evaluation and examination of stock takes time, clear picture about the evasion of tax by these jewelers will emerge within next one or two days", adding "from the preliminary scrutiny of the records it came to fore that there was concealment of stocks in almost all the jewelers".

It is pertinent to mention here that this was one of its kind major operation of the Investigating Wing in Jammu and is an indication that department will leave no stone unturned to tighten noose around the tax evaders in the coming days.

Meanwhile, taking strong exception of the massive raids in the Lakhdatta Bazar and Jain Bazar by the sleuths of Income Tax, traders of both these markets held protest against what they termed act of harassment.

Jointly led by Swarankar Sangh President Kulbhushan Anand and Sarafa Association President Parjan Jain, more than

Cabinet orders reshuffle: Comm Secys among 19 officers shifted

Kuldip Lal Khajuria, Municipal Commissioner, Jammu, has been transferred and posted as Vice Chairman, Jammu Development Authority vice Satish Nehru. Kiran Watal, Managing Director, J&K Housing Board has been transferred and posted as Municipal Commissioner, Jammu vice Kuldip Lal Khajuria. Ram Paul, Secretary, J&K Housing Board will hold the charge of the post of Managing Director, J&K Housing Board till further orders.

The Cabinet also approved transfers and postings in the Forest Department.

Deepak Khanna, (APCCF), Director, State Forest Research Institute has been transferred and posted as Chief Conservator of Forest, Projects & Planning vice Mukerjeet Sharma. Ravi Kumar Kesar (APCCF), Chief Conservator of Forests, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Director, Forest Protection Force relieving Abdul Razaq of the additional charge.

Mukerjeet Sharma, (APCCF) Chief Conservator of Forests, Projects and Planning has been transferred and posted as Director, Soil Conservation Department vice Upinder Pachandna, who has been transferred and posted as Director, State Forest Research Institute vice Deepak Khanna.

L K Sharma, CCF, CAMPA, has been transferred and posted as Managing Director, State Forest Corporation relieving A K Tickoo of the additional charge. MA Tak, (CCF) Regional Director, Wildlife Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Director, Social Forestry Department relieving S P Sharma of the additional charge. Roshan Jaggi, Conservator Forest (East Circle) Jammu has been transferred and posted as CCF Jammu vice R K Kesar.

As reported by EXCELSIOR exclusively, Cabinet approved amendments to the SRO-384 of 2009 titled 'Jammu and Kashmir

Lali, the longest surviving militant, arrested the militants in Kashmir valley. Lali is a local Gujjar of Bandipora area and survived for two decades because of his relations in the area. He was said to be helping the local Gujjars financially.

Sexual exploitation of mentally challenged girls unearthed

Development Commissioner Jammu, Ajeet Kumar Sahu and SSP Jammu, Atul Goel received a complaint regarding sexual harassment of the female inmates of the Home for Mentally Challenged Children being run by Rotary Inner Wheels in Channi Rama area.

Taking serious note of the complaint, DDC Jammu constituted a committee comprising of IAS officer, doctors, police officer and others to investigate the matter. During detailed enquiry, committee with the assistance of the doctors including gynecologists and psychiatrist came to the conclusion that the female inmates of the home were being subjected to sexual exploitation for the past quite long time.

"In the opinion of the doctors the girls were habitual of sexual intercourse, which was beyond the imagination in view of their

mental condition", sources said, adding "on the basis of the detailed enquiry conducted by the committee, police has registered a FIR No.183 at Police Station Trikuta Nagar under Sections 376-C and 109 RPC for detailed investigation".

"How mentally challenged girls can become habitual to sexual intercourse remains a million dollar question before the committee, police has registered a FIR No.183 at Police Station Trikuta Nagar under Sections 376-C and 109 RPC for detailed investigation".

Meanwhile, police has detained two persons Chowkidar of the home namely Angad Kumar, son of Sat Pal of Rajouri and Director Sudha Sharma, son of Nand Lal of Paloura for questioning.

one thousand people gathered at Jain Bazar and raised slogans against the manner in which the people associated with the trade were subjected to harassment.

Speaking on the occasion, Kulbhushan Anand and Parjan Jain said, "the manner in which the raids were conducted reminded of the British Rule when there existed no law of the land and unilateral decisions were taken and implemented", adding "our traders have always co-operated the Government departments and we have been paying all our taxes and other dues on time. Not only this, we are providing employment to a large number of unemployed youth. We are an important part of the society and have a status among the business community as well. Instead of appreciating our community, the Government has behaved in a very inhuman manner, which is very unfortunate and has invited resentment".

Swarankar Sangh, Jammu District General Secretary Ajay Vaid announced that the Swarankar and Sarafa Association will observe complete bandh in whole of Jammu district in protest against the uncalled raids.

No review on convicted MPs: SC

NEW DELHI, Sept 4:

The Supreme Court today refused to review its verdict that an MP or MLA convicted of any criminal offence attracting a punishment of two years and above will be disqualified immediately but agreed to relook its other judgement debarbing arrested persons from contesting polls.

The apex court, however, said that Parliament is free to amend law if it does not agree with interpretation of law given by the Supreme Court.

A bench of justices A K Patnaik and S J Mukhopadhyay said that it would hear review plea on the limited ground whether disqualification mentioned in the constitution bars an arrested person from contesting election or not.

It also raised questioned on why Centre preferred not to argue the case when the matter was being heard.

It also said that the Representation of People's Act is "clumsy" which caused the confusion and said that "The object of the provision was to keep the person with criminal background away from election."

"Parliament frames laws in the manner they like. If we make interpretation of law and if it is not accepted by it (Parliament), its again for Parliament to enact a law," it said.

Referring to its July 10 judgement that convicted legislatures would be disqualified as members of the House, the bench said, "There is no error on the face of the law but there can be on interpretation. We found

Rupee impact: Jet increases fares by steep 25 pc

MUMBAI, Sept 4:

Jet Airways today followed its smaller rival SpiceJet and hiked fares by a steep 25 per cent to mitigate the impact of the sharp fall in the rupee value and a near 15 per cent spike in oil prices of late.

"The airline has hiked its fares by 25 per cent with immediate effect," a Jet Airways source told reporters here.

Asked whether the hike is on

Raghuram Rajan takes over as 23rd Governor of Reserve Bank

MUMBAI, Sept 4:

Raghuram Rajan today took over as the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Rajan, 50, an economics professor who also served as chief economist at the International Monetary Fund, took charge from D Subbarao.

The duo shook hands warmly and hugged after Rajan signed papers taking over as the 23rd Governor of the central bank.

"Ten minutes ago, I handed over charge to Raghuram Rajan," Subbarao said after stepping out of Mint Road. "The country could not have asked for a more capable person to lead the RBI in these most difficult times." (PTI)

that there are lacunae in law in this regard which can be considered by the legislatures."

It said since there was no error in its verdict. Parliament accepted it and came out with the Amendment Bill in RPA which was passed by Rajya Sabha.

"We are not inclined. It is a well considered judgement. Everybody should accept it. We are glad that Parliament has accepted," it said, adding, "We don't find any error apparent in the judgement of July 10. Hence, it (review petition) is dismissed."

The bench also said that Parliament can go ahead with the amendment saying "We don't want to stall the legislators who have come out with the bill."

While agreeing to have a fresh look at the issue of arrested persons prohibited from entering the electoral fray, the bench said this matter was not argued well keeping in view the Constitutional provision.

It said it will consider the issue of disqualification by taking into account Article 102 of the Constitution which deals with disqualification of membership as well as the provisions contained in the electoral law.

The Centre contended that protecting convicted MPs and MLAs from disqualification during pendency of appeal is necessary "to protect the House and to ensure that governance is not adversely impacted".

The apex court had on July 10 held that an MP or MLA convicted of any criminal offence attracting a punishment of two years and above will be disqualified immediately and a person,

who is in jail or in police custody, cannot contest election to legislative bodies.

It had declared as unconstitutional a provision in the Section 8(4) of Representation of the People Act that says a convicted legislator can continue in office if he or she appeals in a higher court within three months of the conviction. The verdicts have been widely opposed by politicians cutting across party lines.

Interestingly, the Government justified the protective provision for elected member on the ground that the rate of acquittal in Indian judicial system is high and if the elected

member is once disqualified on being convicted then his membership of the House cannot be restored after his acquittal.

It had said Parliament has exceeded its powers by enacting the provision (Section 8(4) of the Representation of Peoples Act) that gives a convicted lawmaker the power to remain in office on the ground that appeals have been filed and pending.

It had also said that a person, who is in jail or in police custody, cannot contest election to legislative bodies, bringing to an end an era of undertrial politicians fighting polls from behind bars. (PTI)

LS nod to Pension Bill

NEW DELHI, Sept 4:

The long-pending Pension Bill, a key economic legislation assuring minimum returns to subscribers, was today approved by the Lok Sabha, with the Government saying it is based on the principle that "you save while you earn".

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Bill, 2011, provides for market based returns and wide coverage based on several investment options in the pension sector with an aim to building confidence in the subscribers.

It will have provision for withdrawals for limited purposes from Tier-I pension account, an incentive for subscribers to join the New Pension Scheme (NPS).

Replying to a brief debate, Finance Minister P Chidambaram said the Government has accepted most of the recommendations of the Standing Committee.

The NPS, beneficial for employees in the long run, is based on the principle that "you save while you earn" especially for retirement period and is mainly for those who have a regular income, he said.

The corpus of the NPS having 52.83 lakh subscribers (including those of 26 State Governments) was about Rs 35,000 crore.

The bill also seeks to grant statutory status to the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority.

"...Rs 35,000 crore should not be used by unstatutory authority... All this Bill does is make unstatutory authority (into a statutory authority," Chidambaram said, adding the statutory authority will have powers to penalise.

The bill would also provide subscribers a wide choice to invest their funds for assured returns, like opting for government bonds as well as in other funds depending on their capacity to take risk.

The subscriber seeking minimum assured returns would be allowed to opt for investing

funds in such scheme providing minimum assured returns as may be notified by the Authority.

The bill seeks to empower PFRDA to regulate the NPS.

Further withdrawals will be permitted from the individual pension account subject to the conditions, such as, purpose, frequency and limits.

The bill was referred to the Standing Committee twice -- in 2005 and 2011.

The bill provides for 26 per cent foreign investment in pension sector or as may be approved for insurance sector, whichever is higher. It also provides that at least one of the pension fund managers shall be from the public sector.

The legislation also provides for establishment of a vibrant Pension Advisory Committee with representation from all major stakeholders.