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**PDP may shift 2 votes to BJP**

**voting for the PDP and not the BJP.**

Sources said the BJP and PDP would be casting votes in favour of candidates of each other for Notification No. 1 and 2 to make their candidates victorious. For Notification No. 1, the PDP and BJP MLAs would cast their all 53 votes (PDP 28 and BJP 25) to make PDP candidate Mir Mohammad Fayaz victorious while for Notification No. 2, they would vote jointly to ensure victory of BJP nominee Shamsher Singh Manhas.

Sources said the BJP could get even more votes as two MLAs of Sajjad Lone's People's Conference and some Independent candidates were sure to vote for the combine. This will lead to defeat of NC candidates Sajjad Ahmed Kitchloo and Nasir Aslam Wani, who will poll 27 or 28 votes.

However, the most crucial battle will be fought on Notification No. 3, where the PDP would be required to shift at least its two votes to BJP candidate Chander Mohan Sharma to ensure his victory. Sources said Sharma would be polled 27 votes (25 of BJP and two of People's Conference) and would require two additional votes to ensure his victory.

The PDP has 28 MLAs of its own and has confirmed support of two Independent candidates while one of the two other

Independents was likely to vote for the PDP. While the Independents would vote for the PDP, the PDP would divert its two votes to the BJP candidate to either make it 30-29 or 29-29 in favour of PDP-BJP candidates Nazir Ahmad Laway and Chander Mohan Sharma to ensure their victory.

On the other, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha and NC-Congress joint candidate has confirmed support of 28 MLAs only including 15 of NC, 12 from Congress and one from CPM. The PDP-BJP calculations will be upset only if two vulnerable Independent candidates opted to vote for Azad, sources said.

One of the former Law Minister in the PDP-Congress coalition Government would guide the PDP-BJP MLAs on the voting pattern a day before the elections to ensure that no vote is wasted as even a single vote could be crucial for victory of the PDP-BJP candidates, sources said.

Meanwhile, Returning Officer for the Rajya Sabha elections, Mohammad Ramzan today issued a notification inviting all 87 newly elected MLAs to cast their vote in the Legislative Assembly Secretariat lobby from 9 am to 4 pm on February 7. Counting of votes will be taken up on the same day at 5 pm and results declared by about 7 pm.

The clear weather and sunny day after the snowfall has led to the threat of snow avalanches in upper reaches of the State.

There was also danger of snow avalanche and landslides on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, particularly during the day when the sky remains clear.

**After 30 years, top bureaucrats visit towns, where they started their career**

make them more successful. The bureaucrats have been told to meet the officials at the ground level and record their observations in a report, sources asserted.

The communication by DoPT asked all Secretaries to "feel the difference" and recommend changes to make the Central schemes more beneficial and impactful. The letter also said that officials should visit the districts of the State, where they have served for about one year.

Even Cabinet Secretary, Ajit Seth visited the place, where he had first served as a young IAS officer more than 30 years ago.

For most of the Secretaries, this would be the first ever visit after almost 30 years. "The basic thought is that they go back to the roots and see if things have changed for better or what more is needed to be done to improve the existing situation. The officials have been told to meet as many people and interact with the ground-level officers, based on which they will send their observations", said official sources.

It is pertinent to mention here that Secretary, Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Madhav Lal on January 22, this year visited Baderwah and chaired a meet-

ing with officers to review the various development works in Baderwah. During the meeting, Mr Lal impressed upon officers to work out ways to contribute for betterment of the society and asked them to make optimum use of the available resources to provide better services to the people.

The Secretary inspected various sections of the SDM office and teshil office Baderwah, besides took a round of the town and inspected the newly constructed bus stand near GHSS (Boys), Baderwah and other development works.

On February 1, former Union Home Secretary, Anil Goswami had visited Reasi and reviewed the developmental activities in the areas. Addressing the meeting, Mr. Goswami said that he had come here to listen to the people's problems and assured that he would take up their demands with the concerned authorities. He added that a comprehensive report of his tour would be sent to the Government of India as early as possible.

Mr Goswami also visited Pouni and its adjoining areas the next day and chaired a meeting of locals, members of Panchayati Raj Institutions from various villages of Pouni and all District Officers to listen to developmental needs of the people.

**HC seeks info on deaths of flood rescuers**

The direction has been passed after submissions made by advocate Lone before the court that to his information some people lost their precious lives in the recent floods while rescuing the flood people and to his information nothing has been paid to them by the State Government till date.

With regard to issue of rehabilitation of flood affected families court directed all Deputy Commissioners except DC Ganderbal, Shopian, Poonch and Ramban to file compliance reports indicating therein whether possession of shelter sheds have been handed over to the affected families.

"The Deputy Commissioners other than the aforesaid Deputy Commissioners shall file compliance reports, indicating therein as to possession of how many shelter sheds has been handed over to the affected families and how many affected families have been paid the rent", directed the bench.

Court passed the direction to DCs after perusal of status report filed by Chief Engineer PWD and R&B department wherein he has stated that his department has constructed 285 shelter sheds which are complete in all respects and the same has been handed over to concerned DCs.

"Excepting Deputy

Commissioners Ganderbal, Shopian, Poonch and Ramban no other DC has filed compliance report as they were directed and it is not known to the court as to whether the possession has been handed over by these DCs to the affected families or rent has been paid to them", court said.

Court earlier had given the deadline of completion of shelter sheds upto December 31 last year and handing over the shelter sheds to the affected families and payment of rentals by January 1 this year.

With regard to issue of providing ex-gratia from Prime Ministers Relief Fund (PMRF) to the victims appearing counsel for Central Government Showkat Makroo sought weeks time for filing of compliance report.

Earlier, according to him, Rs 1 lakh and Rs 50, 000 have been paid by Centre as ex-gratia from Prime Ministers Relief Fund (PMRF) for fully damaged and partially damaged houses respectively to those whose full particulars as well as bank details have been provided by the State Government. He had further submitted that State Government has not provided correct bank details in most cases due to which payment has not been made in their favour.

**Haul of bullet-proof jackets, ammunition**

Vijay Kumar disclosed to the police that he had purchased the items from Gourav Kabaadi of Pathankot.

Both the accused have been booked under Section 188 RPC at Trikuta Nagar and Bari Barahamana police stations respectively for further investigations.

Police parties in Narwal raid were led by SHO Trikuta Nagar Naveen Angral and Narwal Police Post Incharge SI Inayat Ali under the supervision of SDPO Mohammad Rafiq.

Major Surash Babu of 9 Corps Intelligence and Surveillance Unit Satwari developed information about the sale of items.

**Finally, J&K on path of getting alternate connectivity with Northern Power Grid**

**is the only lifeline for entire Valley, sources said.**

"Another importance of the project is that it will help in industrial promotion as with the availability of extra reliable power more and more private players will come forward to establish their units in J&K", they said. Besides, the existing industrial units would get required impetus.

"The possibility of Rajouri and Poonch areas attracting attention of industry players cannot be ruled out as these border districts would be the major beneficiaries of new transmission line", sources said.

"Keeping in view the importance of the project for which the State was struggling for during past many years, it is imperative on the part of the concerned authorities in Jammu and Kashmir to ensure that all the necessary clearances are sanctioned for NH re-opens, air traffic resumes to Srinagar

The snow in parts of Kashmir where it had accumulated started melting, water-logging the roads.

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**Locals hurl Kangris, police fires in air**

locals as they alleged that Wagay was beaten up by the police.

The locals protested against the detention and beating of Wagay. They hurled Kangris (Fire pots) at police and security forces had to call off the search operation.

Police and Army also resorted to aerial firing to quell the protests.

**Pak again opens firing on IB**

Later, at about 2.25 pm, the Rangers opened firing with semi automatic weapons at Khora post in Samba sector. The firing lasted for a brief period only.

Sources said the BSF didn't retaliate at both the places. There were no reports of casualties or damage in the firing.

**9 CEOs, others transferred**

Soni Sanam, Incharge Principal DIET Pulwama (Pampore) and Abdul Hameed Kumar, Incharge Principal DIET Shopian, have been transferred and posted as Incharge CEO Kargil and Incharge CEO Bandipora, respectively, against available vacancy. Soni Sanam and Ab Hameed Kumar will hold the additional charge of Principal DIET Kargil and Principal DIET Bandipora, respectively.

Shamas-ud-Din Bhat, Incharge Principal DIET

Kulgam, has been posted as Incharge DEO Kulgam. However, he will continue to hold the charge of Principal DIET Kulgam in addition to his own duties.

Ajit Kumar Sharma has been transferred from SIE Jammu and posted as Incharge CEO Doda against an available vacancy while Vinod Kumar Soni, Incharge Principal DIET Kud, has been transferred and posted as Incharge CEO Kishtwar against an available vacancy.

**Changthang-Ladakh delegation call on MHA, demand border security**

NEW DELHI, Jan 3: A delegation from Changthang-Ladakh bordering with China led by Thupstan Chhewang Member of Parliament from Ladakh call on Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister of State for Ministry of Home Affairs, at North Block here today.

The delegation had taken up many of very crucial issues to the Home Ministry and sought the personal intervention of the Minister. Some of very important issues taken up by the delegation are strengthening of Border Security along with China and Pakistan, Effective implementation of Welfare Schemes for Border living people, earliest Construction of Road Connectives, Installation of Mobile and Television Towers and other basic amenities in border areas of Ladakh.

The delegation has shown and given detail information to the Minister all the locations of DBO, Kakjug-Dumtselay, Demjok and Chumur sectors through Google Map where Chinese PLA keep infiltrating and suggested remedy measures for prevention.

Member of Parliament Thupstan Chhewang appealed the Minister to launch a Concrete House Construction Scheme for border living people especially for Demjok and Chumur villagers who are the real protectors of the nation.

**India's social security pact with Norway comes into force**

NEW DELHI, Feb 4:

Now the employees posted by Indian establishments in Norway on a predetermined duration of up to 60 months are not required to contribute towards social security schemes there.

Similarly, the Norwegian employees posted in India would enjoy the same benefit after producing a certificate of coverage certifying that they are contributing towards social security schemes such as PF and pension in their country.

"In pursuance of the social security agreement (SSA) signed with Norway, Government of India has notified it... (it) has come into force with effect from January 1, 2015," the Employees Provident Fund Organisation's office order said.

As per the order, the SSA provides for detachment, totalisation and portability. Under the detachment clause, the employees of one country deputed by their employers to other country for short-term assignments are exempted from social security contributions up to a period of 60 months.

The clause would enable Indian as well as Norwegian employees to avoid double social security contribution and enhance competitiveness of their products and services.

As per the government notification, EPFO has been identified as the agency to implement this SSA in India. It has also been authorised to issue certificate of coverage to employees of Indian establishment posted to Norway. (PTI)



Dignitaries presenting certificates during the concluding function of NTM's Translators' Orientation Programme in Udhampur on Wednesday.

**NTM's Translators' Orientation Programme concludes**

Excelsior Correspondent

UDHAMPUR, Feb 4: The week long Translator's Orientation Programme for Knowledge Text Translation in Dogri concluded today at Bhaskar Degree College Udhampur in which Danish Rana, Director SKPA Udhampur was the chief guest, whereas Dr Arvinder Singh Amn, Additional Secretary J&K Academy of Art, Cultural & Languages was guest of honour.

Organised by National Translation Mission, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt of India. Orientation programme for Translators is a part of Translator Education Programme of NTM. Since translating knowledge texts require skills and orientation which are different from literary translation, NTM intends to introduce the aspiring translators for providing platform to different aspects of translation.

Eminent scholars engaged in conceptualizing problems related to translating academic texts that will help the participants to explore the realms of translation.

In his address the chief guest said that it is necessary to attract younger generation towards this language and culture by projecting its grandeur. He appreciated the efforts done by NTM towards translation of knowledge texts. He called it more as a "Art" and "to do in-

**7 bovines seized in Akhnoor**

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 4: Akhnoor and Jaurian police today seized two vehicles and recovered seven bovine animals from them. The bovine smugglers, however, managed to escape.

A load carrier No. 9285 JK02BJ was seized at Akhnoor while Mahindra vehicle No. 5057 JK12 was seized at Jaurian.

A total of seven bovine animals were recovered from the two vehicles while the bovine smugglers fled away. Police have been searching the bovine smugglers.

Two separate cases under Sections 188 RPC and 3 Prevention of Cruelty Act have been registered at Akhnoor police station and Jaurian police post.

Police parties headed by SDPO Akhnoor Naresh Singh supervised both the operations.

**FM mulling hiking lock-in period for PPF account**

NEW DELHI, Feb 4:

The Finance Ministry is considering a proposal to raise the minimum lock-in period for withdrawal from PPF account from six to eight years to attract longer term funds for infrastructure development.

"Infrastructure funding is the focus area for Budget. PPF is long term investment and the idea of increasing the PPF lock-in is to have more scope to channelise funds into infrastructure," a source said.

The NDA government would present its Budget for 2015-16 on February 28.

"There are two proposals on the table. Increasing the lock-in period by at least two years to eight years. And also hiking the time limit for maturity of investment from 15 years," the source added.

Currently investment of up to Rs 1.50 lakh in Public Provident Fund (PPF) is exempt from Income Tax under 80C. This was hiked from Rs 1 lakh in the budget for 2014-15.

The interest rate on PPF Account is revised at the beginning of financial year in April and currently stands at 8.7 per cent. The minimum annual investment is Rs 500 and maximum is Rs 1.5 lakh.

Under the present norms, an individual can withdraw money from his/her PPF Account only at the end of sixth year. (PTI)

**26 dead in plane crash**

TAIPEI, Feb 4:

Rescuers used a crane to hoist the fuselage of a wrecked TransAsia Airways plane from a shallow river in Taiwan's capital late today as they searched into the night for 17 people missing in a crash that killed at least 26 others.

Flight 235 with 58 people aboard, most of them travellers from China, banked sharply on its side shortly after takeoff from Taipei, clipped a highway bridge and then careened into the Keelung River.

Rescuers in rubber rafts pulled 15 people alive from the wreckage during daylight. After dark, they brought in the crane, and the death toll was expected to rise once crews were able to search through submerged portions of the fuselage, which came to rest a few dozen meters (yards) from the shore.

Dramatic video clips apparently taken from cars were posted online and aired by broadcasters, showing the ATR 72 propjet as it pivoted onto its side while zooming toward a traffic bridge over the river.

In one of them, the plane rapidly fills the frame as its now-vertical wing scrapes over the road, hitting a vehicle before heading into the river.

Speculation cited in local media said the crew may have turned sharply to follow the line of the river to avoid crashing into a high-rise residential area, but Taiwan's aviation authority said it had no evidence of that.

**Swine flu claims 5 more lives, death toll reaches 67 in R'than**

JAIPUR, Feb 4:

Five more persons today succumbed to swine flu in Rajasthan, taking the toll to 67 this year, a top official of the State medical and health directorate said here.

The death figure could go up by night as the State level report is being prepared at district headquarters, the Director MHD B R Meena said.

Whereabouts of five persons who died today are being collected, Meena said.

Yesterday, 10 persons succumbed to the dreaded disease. Out of these, deaths of two persons due to the H1N1 virus were reported from Bikaner, Ajmer, and one person each died in Jaipur, Barmer, Kota, Udaipur, Banswara, and Chittorgarh, the official said.

Of the 1,200 tested for swine flu, 366 patients were found positive for the virus.

Out of 33 districts, 29 are afflicted with swine flu while Dholpur, Hanumangarh, Sirahi, and Baran were said to be safe as per the Medical and Health Directorate (MHD) records, he said.

Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje held a high-level review

**Body of drowned youth found**

Excelsior Correspondent

RAMNAGAR, Feb 4: Body of the youth, who was washed away in flash flood in Dalah nallah at Preya in Ramnagar last evening, was recovered today.

The deceased, identified as Ram Rattan (20), son of Hem Raj of Preya, was working in Delhi and had reached here only yesterday. While on way to home, he was crossing Dalah Nallah when flash floods washed him away. Cousin of the deceased, who was accompanying the latter, tried to rescue him but could not succeed in the same.

Today, body of the deceased was found around one km away from the point where he was washed away.

**Implement CBCS from next academic year: Prez to Universities**

NEW DELHI, Feb 4:

President Pranab Mukherjee today came out in support of the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) of earning degrees for students pursuing higher studies as he urged Universities in the country to implement the system from the upcoming academic session.

Observing that there are diversities in evaluation systems in the country, he said students in the past have suffered in the acceptance of their credentials across the university system and in accessing employment opportunities.

"The initiative of CBCS will ensure seamless mobility of students across higher education institutions in the country as well as abroad. The credits earned by students can be transferred and would be of great value to them in the event of their seeking migration from one institution to the other.

"23 central universities have already implemented CBCS. I would urge remaining universities to consider implementing this system from next academic year," Mukherjee was quoted as saying in a Rashtrapati Bhavan statement.

The system operates on a module called 'credits' and become competitive over the years and it was the responsibility of the teachers to prepare their students for the same.

"Students passing out from Indian higher education system will have to compete with the best in the world. There is a need to imbue young minds with competitive spirit and a sense of pride in their alma mater. In addition to international rankings, the universities should attempt ratings on a National Ranking Framework which needs to be expeditiously developed," he said. (PTI)



President Pranab Mukherjee and Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani at a Conference of Vice Chancellors of Central Universities at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Wednesday. (UNI)