

Guv asks Army to enhance surveillance

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Feb 17: Governor N N Vohra today advised Army to enhance surveillance along the Line of Control (LoC) and said there was no likelihood of a decline in the continuing terrorist activities in the State.

Vohra gave the advise to General Officer Commanding of Srinagar-based 15 Corps Lt Gen A K Bhat who called on him at Raj Bhavan here and briefed him about the issues relating to the security situation in the Valley, an official spokesman said.

He said the Governor observed that there was no likelihood of a decline in the continuing terrorist activities and advised enhanced surveillance along the LoC.

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Avalanche warning issued for J&K

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Feb 17: Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir today issued a low danger avalanche warning for high altitude areas, including Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, advising people to take precautionary measures.

"On the basis of information received from SASE, low danger avalanche warning has been issued for various high altitude areas," an official spokesman said.

He said the avalanche warning has been issued for Baramulla, Gulmarg, Furkian-Z Gali, Kupwara-Chowkibal-Tangdar, Kupwara and Bandipora, Anantnag, Kulgam, Budgam, Ganderbal and Bandipora-Kanzalwan-Gurez

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Shutdown in Valley

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 17: A shutdown was observed in Kashmir valley today in response to a call given by the separatists to protest the killing of a Hurriyat activist, shifting of prisoners to outside jails and Supreme Court's decision to stay an FIR against Army personnel named in the Shopian firing.

Mohammad Yousof Rather alias Yousof Nadeem was shot dead by unknown gunmen in a passenger cab earlier this week. Authorities imposed restrictions in parts of the old city to prevent protests and maintain law and order.

In Srinagar, most of the shops, business establishments and petrol pumps remained closed while public transport was thin on the roads.

And a massive search (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

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Modi, Rouhani for terror-free world

End selective approach in dealing with terror: India, Iran

NEW DELHI, Feb 17:

Pressing for concerted global action to deal with terrorism, India and Iran today called for ending "selective" approach to combat the menace and said countries that aid, abet and support terror groups should be condemned.

***Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com**

The issue of dealing with the challenge of terrorism figured prominently during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

While Rouhani said India and Iran have a "common stance" in effectively dealing with terrorism and extremism, Modi said the two countries want a terror-free world and that they were committed to stop expansion of the powers which encourage terror.

"Iran and India have a common stance on confronting terrorism and extremism, and we are determined to confront terrorism and extremism through culture and the exchange of



President of Iran, Dr Hassan Rouhani being received by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Saturday.

information and experience," Rouhani said.

A joint statement said the two leaders expressed their conviction that the fight against terrorism should not only seek to disrupt and eliminate terrorists, terror net-

works, but should also identify and address conditions conducive to terrorism as well as extremist ideologies.

It said the two leaders called for combating terrorist elements and "complete eradication" of their supportive movements and

financial support.

The statement said Modi and Rouhani reiterated their strong commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and stressed that there can be no justification whatsoever for any act of terrorism.

"They urged an immediate end to all support and sanctuaries enjoyed by terrorist groups and individuals and were of the view that States that aid, abet and directly or indirectly support terrorism should be condemned," the joint statement said.

It said the two leaders stressed that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or ethnic group.

"They called on the international community to end selective or partial approaches to combating terrorism and, in this regard, stressed the need to make every effort to reach an agreement on and conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism at the UN General Assembly," the statement said.

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'India giving befitting reply to Pak'

Talks & terror can't go together: Rajnath

BAREILLY (UP), Feb 17:

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh today said India is giving a befitting reply to the nefarious activities of Pakistan.

Singh, who was here to attend a programme at Rohilkhand University, also said talks and terrorism cannot go hand in hand.

"India is giving a befitting reply to the nefarious activities of Pakistan... Talks and terrorism cannot go on concurrently," he told news persons.

Replying to a question on withdrawal of cases against stone pelters in Kashmir, he said it is being done only in

"cases of first time offenders caught for the first time".

"The Government does not want to keep someone confined in the jail... Some of them have come back to the mainstream... But action will be taken against anyone who indulges in wrong tactics," he said.

Asked about the Punjab National Bank take the fifth spot by 2030. It will be an economic superpower... But this does not mean that it will create any pressure or fear in the world. Rather, it will be the 'vishwa guru' (world leader) along with which the entire world will progress," Singh said.

He said the country's world-wide prestige has grown in the recent past and the young people need to work dedicatedly in the field of knowledge and science to ensure that no one can stop India from becoming a world leader.

"The country, which is at present ranked tenth economically in the world, will

take the fifth spot by 2030. It will be an economic superpower... But this does not mean that it will create any pressure or fear in the world. Rather, it will be the 'vishwa guru' (world leader) along with which the entire world will progress," Singh said.



In his address as the chief guest at a function in Rohilkhand University here, he said that the country's scientists have earned praise for the nation.

"The world is aware of the nationalist and cultural strength of the country," the Minister said, adding that the time has now come for the youth to see the reality and work towards taking the country ahead.

"Whenever any big change has come, it has been on the strength of youth power... Till the young people keep working, no one can stop the country from marching ahead," he said.

Union Minister Santosh Gangwar also spoke on the occasion. (PTI)

Vested interests seeking to sustain militancy: Dr Jitendra

NEW DELHI, Feb 17:

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said here today that vested interests are seeking to sustain Kashmir militancy, even though the youth of Kashmir have moved ahead.

Addressing the inaugural session of the three-day academic-cum-cultural event "Jammu & Kashmir - A Cultural Prism", at New Delhi on Saturday,

separatist lobby, but some of the so-called mainstream Kashmir-centric political groups and politicians have also developed a vested interest in the continuation of militancy.

This is so, he said, because

so-called freedom movement in Kashmir is, in fact, a mercenary movement sustained by cross-border resources, but what is alarming is that, not only the

political agenda of these activists has, over the last two decades, mastered the art of thriving and surviving in a state of uncertainty and may-



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh addressing the inaugural function of the three-day academic cum cultural event "Jammu & Kashmir - A Cultural Prism", at New Delhi on Saturday.

hem. There are politicians and parties who look forward to win elections under the shadow of gun with a low and dismal voting percentage and it will never suit them that the

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

No compromise with discipline, guidelines

In a first, Govt cuts budget of 4 Deptts for not meeting targets

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Feb 17: In a significant decision aimed at enforcing financial discipline in the Departments including implementation of expenditure reforms mentioned in two consecutive budgets of the State, the Finance Department has decided to cut the budgetary allocations of four Departments for their failure to meet the targets.

This is for the first time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir that a cut has been imposed on budgetary allocation of four Government Departments for failure to meet the targets of expenditure i.e. 70

per cent of the total budget up to December 31, 2017.

Official sources told the Excelsior that four Government Departments including Power, R&B, Urban Development and Irrigation & Flood Control had failed to meet the target of 70 per cent expenditure by December 31. In view of this "symbolic cuts" in the budget have been imposed on them, which would serve as deterrent to other Government Departments that the financial discipline guidelines can't be taken lightly.

The guidelines state that only 30 per cent expenditure can be incurred during last quarter of the financial year i.e. January 1

to March 31 while 70 per cent funds had to be used during first three quarters from April 1 to December 31. This has been done to avoid last quarter expenditure rush especially in the month of March, which had been the case earlier during which certain "misappropriations and irregularities" also used to take place.

Sources said all four Government Departments, which were unable to meet the target up to December 31 have been advised to strictly observe the fiscal discipline in future to avoid more cuts in their budgetary allocations.

"The expenditure reforms were now part of the

Appropriation Bill, which has been passed by both Houses of the Legislature and, therefore, they have legal sanctity. The Government Departments have been left with no option but to observe the guidelines mentioned in the Appropriation Bill or, otherwise, they could significantly lose the funds," sources pointed out.

Asserting that "financial and expenditure discipline" had to be enforced at any costs, sources said: "this was in the interest of Jammu and Kashmir, which has very limited working season in some of the districts, where no development can be carried out from November to March due to

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Children playing sleds on snow covered hilly road on the outskirts of Srinagar. —Excelsior/Shakeel

ED seizes Rs 2.5 cr diamonds from N Modi's franchise in Udhampur

Vital record seized, may be taken to Mumbai

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 17: The Enforcement Directorate today raided Geetanjali Jewellers, a franchise of Nirav Modi, who has fled the country after his involvement surfaced in Rs 11,400 crore bank fraud in Punjab National Bank, and seized Rs 2.5 crore worth diamond and ubluminex jewellery.

***Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com**

"A team of Enforcement Directorate from Jammu and Jalandhar jointly conducted raid at Geetanjali Jewellers at Sailan Talab, Udhampur, last evening and continued searches for two days in the presence of magistrates and independent witnesses during which they seized Rs 2 crore worth diamond jewellery and Rs 50 lakh ubluminex (a foreign made jewellery)," official sources told the Excelsior. Geetanjali Jewellers, a franchise of Nirav Modi Group, is owned in Udhampur by Ravi Kumar Gupta, a local businessman.

Searches were conducted on the basis of First Information Report (FIR) registered in Mumbai by the Enforcement Directorate vide No. ECIR/1/MD/Bby.

The search operation was executed by Sharad Kumar, Assistant Director, Enforcement Directorate, J&K and was executed by Lalit Kumar, Assistant Director PMLA along with other officers of the Directorate including Raj showrooms in Udhampur on Saturday.

—Excelsior/K Kumar

"Entire record pertaining to Geetanjali Jewellers in the shop, which was franchise of Geetanjali Retail Limited Bombay, has been seized," sources said, adding that the record and seizure have been shifted to Jammu for further investigations.

"We are awaiting further directions from Mumbai and, if asked, the seized items can be transported to Mumbai," sources said.

The seized items included gold and diamond studs, dia-

mond finger rings, ear rings, nose pins, black beet chains, Mangal Sutras, Kamanyas and necklaces, totaling around 500 articles. Besides Rs 50 lakh worth foreign made ubluminex jewellery was also seized from the shop.



ED officials during searches at Geetanjali Jewellers showroom in Udhampur on Saturday. —Excelsior/K Kumar

"Search revealed that the franchise had procured maximum articles on credit basis without any security," sources said, adding the two-day long searches concluded peacefully.

PTI adds from Mumbai: Raids by the ED in connection with its money laundering probe against diamond czar Nirav Modi and others in the alleged Rs 11,400-crore bank fraud continued for the third day today with the agency saying it seized Rs 25 crore worth diamonds and jewellery, taking the total seizure value to

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WEATHER

JAMMU: Mainly dry

TEMPERATURE: Max: 23.3 Degree C, Min: 10.0 Degree C

RELATIVE HUMIDITY: RH-I (Morning): 90.0 per cent, RH-II (Evening): 54.0 per cent, Sunset on Sunday: 06.20 p.m., Sunrise on Monday: 07.11 a.m.

SRINAGAR: Mainly dry

TEMPERATURE: Max: 10.8 Degree C, Min: 4.5 Degree C

RELATIVE HUMIDITY: RH-I (Morning): 81.0 per cent, RH-II (Evening): 50.0 per cent

LEH: TEMPERATURE: Max: 4.0 Degree C, Min: -2.1 Degree C

Executing agencies not adhering to mandatory provisions

NH widening works creating environmental, health hazards

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Feb 17: In a testimony of adverse impact of development, the National Highway widening works have continuously been creating environmental and health hazards in Jammu and Kashmir with large number of children and aged persons falling prey to serious chest diseases. However, agencies concerned have yet not started adhering to the mandatory provisions despite repeated instructions from the Government.

Now, in order to take holistic view of the grave issue and in the light of the fact that more developmental works would

begin in near future, the Government is contemplating to have Social Environmental Framework so that all the pre and post constructional issues in respect of all mega projects are taken into account for necessary remedial measures well in time.

The serious environmental and health hazards being posed by the National Highway widening works have been highlighted by the Committee on Environment of Legislative Assembly in its latest report.

"The dumping of construc-

tion material and debris on road side by the concerned executing agencies is causing adverse effect/negative impact on environment besides putting the people residing in the peripheries of the National Highway to numerous hardships", the report said, adding "large number of children and old aged persons have been caught up in serious chest diseases due to presence of dust in the air".

"There is no focus on timely removal of material post dis-

mantling of buildings and other structures during the road widening process", the House Panel said, adding "lack of coordination between various agencies entrusted with the task of lifting the muck and other material from the sites is responsible for the prevailing situation".

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GST unearths tax evasion by hotels, malls

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 17: In a major case of the enforcement against tax evasion of GST in the State, the Central GST Commissionerate of J&K has detected an evasion of Goods and Service Tax to the tune of Rs 2 crores by prominent hotels and marriage banquet halls of Jammu.

On the basis of credible information collected, the officers of Central GST on the directions of Commissioner, Gyan Sarvar and under the supervision of Additional Commissioner, C L Dogra conducted surveys simultaneously at as many as 10 premises of prominent hotels and marriage banquet halls of Jammu. These hotels have been

found to be blatantly paying tax at a lower rate than what was required to be paid under GST. These hotels were using their party halls for different functions like marriage ceremonies and other social gatherings and were supplying food and beverages from their in-house restaurants.

"This activity is classifiable as banquet supplies and chargeable to 18% of GST. However, these hotels and marriage banquet halls were showing these supplies as food supplies in their restaurants, thereby paying 5% GST instead of 18%, thus leading to evasion of a huge amount by misusing the provisions of notification 46/2017 dated 14.11.2017 in respect of food supply and banquets. The

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