

Won't ally with PDP: Azad

NEW DELHI, July 1: The Congress today ruled out any alliance with the PDP in Jammu and Kashmir for "now or in the future", denying reports in a section of the media on a possible tie-up between the two parties.

Asked to comment on the reports, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad said that there was no question of any alliance with the PDP, which lost power in the State after the BJP withdrew support from the

HM assures all help to J&K

NEW DELHI, July 1: Home Minister Rajnath Singh today assured Jammu and Kashmir Governor N N Vohra of all possible Central help to deal with the flood situation in the State, officials said.

During a telephonic conversation with the Governor, the Home Minister enquired about the flood situation in certain parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Singh assured all possible support and cooperation to the State in dealing with the situation, a Home Ministry official said. (PTI)

48 killed in U'khand mishap

DEHRADUN, July 1: A private bus fell into a deep gorge in Uttarakhand's Pauri district this morning killing at least 48 people and injuring 10 others, police said.

The "overloaded" bus was carrying 58 passengers, they said.

"The accident occurred near Gween village, close to Dhumakot, when the bus on way to Ramnagar fell into a 200 metre deep gorge killing 45 persons on the spot and leaving 13 injured," Pauri SP Jagat Ram said.

Swaraj's trolling outrageous: Mehbooba

SRINAGAR, July 1: Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti today said she was horrified by the "vicious" trolling of External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj on social media and described it as outrageous.

"Horrified by the vicious trolling @SushmaSwaraj ji has been subjected to. Absolutely outrageous!" Mehbooba wrote on Twitter.

The PDP president said if even the Minister was not spared from trolls, what hope

Water recedes below danger mark

SRINAGAR, July 1: The water level in river Jhelum today receded below danger mark in Srinagar and South Kashmir bringing respite to the people while Government closed down schools in Kashmir valley tomorrow as a precautionary measure.

The water level in Jhelum receded three feet in Srinagar since last night and it is now flowing below danger mark of 18 feet. The water level at Ram Munshi Bagh, Srinagar was

MHA to bear entire cost of project

Centre approves construction of 'Seema Bhavans' in 5 distts

To be equipped with Class, Medical Rooms

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, July 1: The Central Government has cleared the proposal for construction of 25 to 30 'Seema Bhavans' in five border districts of Jammu region to accommodate the border dwellers in case of Pakistan shelling and firing. The Centre will bear entire cost on the construction of the 'Bhavans' and the State Government will have to facilitate the construction.

The 'Seema Bhavans', which will have the capacity of accommodating 500 to 1000 persons at a time depending upon location of the border areas, will be equipped with large Halls, Class Rooms, Medical Room, Warder Room, Dining Hall, 20 toilets and 20 boardrooms, official sources told the Excelsior.

"Initially five to six 'Seema Bhavans' will be constructed in

every district and the number could go up depending upon the requirement," sources said, adding that the 'Bhavans' have been approved for Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts, which fall along the International Border and Rajouri and Poonch districts on the Line of Control.

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs, which had mooted construction of 'Seema Bhavans' for the border districts and then approved them, will be bearing expenditure incurred on them and the State Government will only have to facilitate the constructions. Entire cost of the project will be reimbursed by the Home Ministry, sources said.

The Central Government has asked the State Government to start construction of 'Seema Bhavans' initially five to six in one border district. The number of the 'Bhavans' can be raised subsequently depending upon the requirement in the districts.

The Deputy Commissioners of all five districts, according to sources, will identify land for construction of the Bhavans and start construction process after completion of formalities. The Bhavans will be located in areas, which will be completely safe from Pakistan shelling and firing. At the same time, the Deputy Commissioners have been asked to construct the Bhavans close to the border areas population so that the dwellers could easily shift there in case of shelling and firing from Pakistan side.

Sources maintained that 'Seema Bhavans' would be in addition to community and individual bunkers, which have already been approved for the border people of five districts by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh at the cost of Rs 413.5 crore.

These bunkers will also be

BSF giving befitting reply: DG

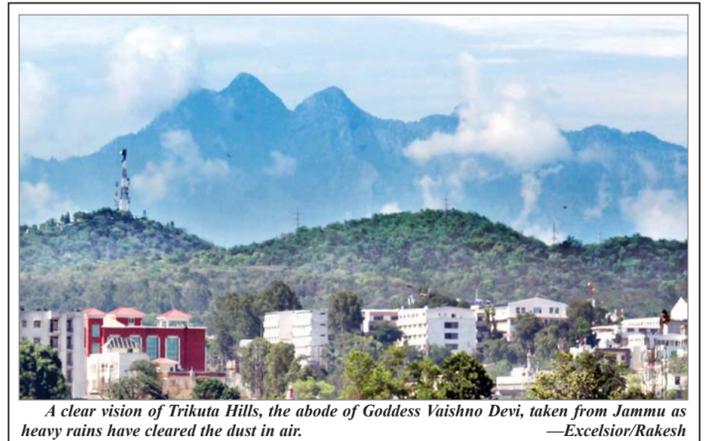
CHANDIGARH, July 1:

Border Security Force Director General K K Sharma today said that the force has been giving a befitting reply to unprovoked firing incidents on the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistan.

He also stated that the BSF planned to plug gaps along the country's borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh by rolling out a Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS).

The BSF DG was interacting with the media here after laying the foundation stone of Administration Block of headquarters, Special DG, Western Command, Chandigarh.

Senior BSF officers, including K N Chaubey, Mukul Goel and H S Dhillon, were among others present on the occasion. "BSF plays a very important role in guarding two very important borders of Pakistan and Bangladesh. We have different kinds of challenges on both the borders whereas on the Pakistan side, we know that we have a hostile neighbour. We know they keep on trying to infiltrate militants," the BSF



A clear vision of Trikuta Hills, the abode of Goddess Vaishno Devi, taken from Jammu as heavy rains have cleared the dust in air. —Excelsior/Rakesh

No focus on demarcation of water sources, removal of encroachments Notified 8 months back, implementation of J&K State Water Policy yet to begin

Even discussion not initiated to work out modalities

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, July 1: In yet another testimony of absolute non-seriousness of the administration, implementation of Jammu and Kashmir State Water Policy has not begun even eight months after its notification following approval by the State Cabinet. This has established that no importance is being given to optimum use of scarce water resources, demarcation of water bodies and removal of encroachments.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that in order to regulate water resources and ensure their judicious, equitable and sustainable management, allocation and utilization, the Government in the year 2010 enacted Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources (Regulation and Management) Act.

As per Section 4 of this Act, the Government was supposed to prepare State Water Policy and Plan for effective development, management, planning, utilization and monitoring of water resources in the State.

However, this provision of the law failed to receive due attention of all the concerned authorities including Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources

Regulatory Authority for several years. In the meanwhile, some Public Interest Litigations (PILs) were filed before the State High Court seeking strict implementation of Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources (Regulation and Management) Act.

The Division Bench of the State High Court on numerous occasions passed directions for strict adherence to the provisions of the law including preparation of State Water Policy and Plan. After dilly-dallying approach of several years, draft policy was prepared and submitted to the Government for approval.

As per the State Cabinet Decision No.71/5/2017 dated June 7, 2017, a Cabinet Sub-Committee headed by the then Deputy Chief Minister was constituted to examine the draft and submit report within a period of one month. However, this process also took unreasonably long time and finally State Cabinet on October 23, 2017 approved Water Policy and Plan.

On October 25, 2017, the Department of PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control notified the policy while exercising the powers conferred by Section 2 of the J&K Water Resources

(Regulation and Management) Act, 2010. It was specifically mentioned in the notification that Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment shall also be associated as an important stakeholder in the implementation of the policy.

However, even eight months after the notification of the policy its implementation has yet not begun due to absolute non-seriousness on the part of all the concerned authorities, sources said, adding "the shocking aspect is that even no discussion between J&K Water Resources Management Authority, senior functionaries of the PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control Department and Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment has been initiated to chalk out the strategy for effective implementation of the policy".

When contacted, officers of PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control and Forest, Ecology and Environment Departments confirmed that no discussion has been conducted on the implementation of policy so far. Interestingly, several officers of these departments are not even aware of the broad contours of the policy.

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4 of a family, driver dead in mishap

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, July 1: Five persons including four members of a family died as a vehicle carrying them met with an accident in North Kashmir's Bandipora district today.

*Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

Four people belonged to a single family including the husband, wife and their two children and the driver of the vehicle died on the spot while three others suffered injuries in the accident.

The vehicle bearing registration number JK01F-9547 which was on its way to Gurez from Kangan skidded off the road and turned turtle at Tragbal area of Gurez and fell down into a deep gorge.

Five passengers died on the spot while as three others suf-

fered injuries and were evacuated to a nearby hospital for treatment where the condition of one person is stated to be critical.



Ill-fated vehicle lying in a gorge at Tragbal, Gurez on Sunday. —Excelsior/Abid Nabi

An eyewitness said that when he reached on the spot, the blood stained bodies of passengers were lying near the vehicle.

An official while confirming the incident said that the deceased family met with an accident on Kangan-Gurez road and all the family members died on the spot while three others suffered injuries.

"The family of a lecturer who hails from Gurez and presently were living in Kangan while on their way to Gurez met with an accident and unfortunately all the members of the family died on the spot. We recovered the dead bodies and the injured persons were rescued and taken to the hospital where the condition of one person deteriorated and was shifted to the Srinagar hospital," he said.

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Reservation for IB people on pattern of LoC being worked out: Dr Jitendra

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, July 1: Union Minister of State in PMO with independent charge for Development of North East Region (DoNER), Dr Jitendra Singh disclosed here today that the provision of granting reservation in higher education and jobs to people living along International Border (IB) on the same pattern as available to the people living along Line of Control (LoC) are being worked out by the Government.

Speaking to media persons here after a meeting to review the status of various civil work projects undertaken by the Government of India through CPWD, Dr Jitendra Singh



Union Minister in PMO, Dr Jitendra Singh reviewing Central projects with CPWD authorities at Jammu on Sunday. —Excelsior/Rakesh

alleged that the denial of reservation to the people living along the International Border is a dubious legacy of the erstwhile Congress and UPA Governments, which had selec-

tively issued orders reserving seats in higher education and jobs for people living along LoC, simply on the basis of vote bank considerations and had

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RDD to clear Rs 300 cr liability of SICOP, JAKFED

Many MGNREGA works stalled as cement supply to 3 distts stopped

Gopal Sharma

JAMMU, July 1: All the Rural Development blocks in the four districts of Jammu region including, Kathua, Udhampur, Samba and Jammu are facing severe crisis as due to non-supply of cement, many works have been stalled there for the last more than five months.

Official sources told the Excelsior that all the BDO Blocks under Rural Development Department procure material including cement, steel, crates etc from the Government agencies including SICOP, JAKFED, JK Cements,

NCCF etc. For executing MGNREGA and other works, concerned ACDs lift the quota of cement in bulk as per demand projected by the BDOs, from these agencies. But for the last more than five months most of the works in the blocks falling in these districts, have been suspended.

While some of the BDOs disclosed that the supply of material to various blocks of these districts has been stopped after an order issued by the Commission/ Secretary RDD, a few Assistant Commissioners Development claimed that a huge liability worth over Rs 300 crore of SICOP, JAKFED and

other agencies has been pending. They have stopped supply of material as they were demanding clearance of their money, pending for the last several years.

Sources further revealed that as per the guidelines of the MGNREGA, the concerned DDOs (Block Development Officers) have to maintain the ratio of 60:40 (Labour component: Material), but it has been observed that many BDOs have crossed the limit of 70% in terms of material component including cement, steel, tiles etc due to reason best known to them.

Kathua, Samba, Udhampur and Jammu dis-

tricts were found having gone far beyond the limit. In view of maintaining balance the Commission/ Secretary Sheetal Nanda issued orders to stop the material supply to these districts for some time. But with this restriction, many works being executed in various blocks of these four districts have been suspended and the general public is the biggest sufferer while the concerned officers who failed to maintain this ratio and created violation were left to go scot free.

Giving more information, the sources in the department

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Yatra resumes from both tracks, over 10,000 perform darshan

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 1: After remaining suspended for three consecutive days, the yatra resumed from both Baltal and Pahalgam-Chandanwari tracks with 10,935 pilgrims tracking obeisance at holy cave of Swami Amarnath on fourth day of darshan today.

*Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

According to official sources, 8,000 pilgrims left from Nunwan base camp to holy cave via traditional Pahalgam route and 36 km long Chandanwari track. Out of them, 5000 left from Nunwan base camp while others left from Pahalgam, who were staying in various hotels and lodges there for last few



Yatris on way from Pahalgam to Chandanwari on Sunday. —Excelsior/Sajad Dar

days. Sources said that 10,935 pilgrims left for darshan via shortest Baltal track early this morning while 1245 left via chopper. In addition to this, 1178 returned towards Jammu from Baltal base

camp this morning. Sources said 5000 pilgrims also reached Nunwan base camp from Jammu by this evening and 5775 pilgrims are camping in the camp for night. They will leave

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Militant, OGW arrested; plot to recruit youth into HM foiled

Arms recovered, hunt on for others

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 1: Police today arrested a Hizbul Mujahideen militant and an Over Ground Worker (OGW) in Kishtwar district and recovered arms and ammunition from their possession. With the arrests, a terror module of the Hizbul outfit has been busted and their plot to carry out strikes at different places and revive militancy foiled.

Police identified the arrested Hizbul Mujahideen militant as

Rameez Ahmed Wani son of Master Javed Ahmed Wani, a resident of Tandar Dachan.

On the disclosures made by the arrested militant, police conducted raids and arrested one active OGW of Hizbul

Mujahideen identified as Nissar Ahmed Ganie son of Bashir Ahmed Ganie, originally a resident of Amratgarh, Charala of Doda and presently putting up at Deewar Link Road, Kishtwar.

During sustained interrogation of Nissar Ahmed, police recovered three magazines of AK-47 rifle from his possession along with 90 live rounds.

"Nissar had assumed a Moulvi type of attire and was also running a madrasa in

Kishtwar town with the name Darul-Uloom Usmania since 2013. In the premises of madrasa, he had established his office and under the garb and guise of madrasa manager and teacher, he was continuing his over ground activities for the militants," sources said.

Nissar also disclosed that consignment of arms & ammunition recovered from the custody of militant Rameez on his arrest was also arranged by him from another active OGW and money for the same from Hizb organization was paid by him to the OGW from whom the Chinese pistol and grenades were recovered, sources said.

They added that Nissar was involved in procuring

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