

PM reviews J&K issues

NEW DELHI, Jan 7: The development work carried out in Jammu and Kashmir in last six months and issues related to the security sector of the country were discussed in a meeting of the council of ministers chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi today, sources in the Government said. A presentation on the development work in Jammu and Kashmir was made in the meeting, the sources said, adding it was noted that development activities are now moving at a faster pace.

Besides it, strategic issues and matters related to the (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Militant killed in Awantipora

Excelsior Correspondent
 SRINAGAR, Jan 7: A militant of Hizbul Mujahideen was killed in an encounter in Awantipora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district

* Pic on page 6
 Video on
www.excelsiornews.com

The militant was identified as Shahid Ahmed Gadhani, a resident of Arwani area of Bijbehara in Anantnag district. He had joined militancy just a week ago.

Police said that on a credible (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

2 IEDs defused in Rajouri

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Jan 7: Security forces today detected and defused two powerful IEDs near the Line of Control (LoC) at Jhanghar in Nowshera and Kerri in Rajouri district.

However, there was no official confirmation of the recovery of IEDs. Reports said the IEDs were recovered by the alert troops during patrolling on the LoC. They called the Bomb Disposal Squads which successfully defused the IEDs.

Major tragedies have been averted with timely detection of the IEDs, reports said. Troops have been maintaining very high alert on the LoC in view of ceasefire violations by Pakistani army and infiltration attempts by the militants.

PIL into currency defaced by K-separatists

NEW DELHI, Jan 7: The Supreme Court asked the Centre today to look into a PIL seeking CBI probe into the RBI exchanging defaced currency notes worth Rs 30 crore allegedly belonging to a separatist group of Kashmir, and said "the issue may be of national importance".

The top court asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to have a copy of the petition and look into it. (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Foreign diplomats to visit Kashmir

Excelsior Correspondent
 SRINAGAR Jan 7: Government is planning visit of around two dozen diplomats from various countries to Kashmir later this week for on the spot assessment of the situation.

The delegation is scheduled to be conducted by the Army in Kashmir as was the Members of European Parliament (MEPs) delegation in October but this time some more members are added to those who will meet the delegation. (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Suspect held in Kaluchak

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Jan 7: Samba police tonight arrested a suspect in Kaluchak area following specific inputs about his pro-militant activities.

Confirming the arrest, police sources said the suspect was being quizzed to ascertain his links with the militants.

Police declined to disclose identity of the suspect saying it could sabotage investigations. Further questioning and investigation of the suspect was on till late tonight when the reports last came in.

New political front on cards with focus on domicile rights

8 top political leaders meet LG, lists 15 major demands including Statehood

Another split in PDP on Mufti's 4th death anniversary

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Jan 7: In first major political activity in Kashmir post August 5 abrogation of special Constitutional provisions of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcation of the State into two Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, eight former legislators including three ex-Ministers today met Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu at Raj Bhawan here this afternoon and submitted him a memorandum listing their demands which included restoration of Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, safeguarding rights of the people over land and jobs, release of detainees, withdrawal of cases against

youth etc.

The delegation comprised Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, former Finance Minister, Ghulam Hassan Mir and Mohammad Dillawar Mir, also both former Ministers, Zaffar Iqbal, former MLC, Javed

were directly affiliated with the PDP presently while Ghulam Hassan Mir was part of the PDP till 2008 when he parted ways with the party and floated his own political party—Democratic Party Nationalist (DPN).



Political leaders in a meeting with Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu in Jammu on Tuesday.

Hassan Beig, Noor Mohammad Sheikh, Choudhary Qamar Hussain and Raja Manzoor Ahmed, all former MLAs.

Qamar was former MLA from Poonch and belonged to Jammu region while rest seven leaders hailed from the Kashmir Valley.

Significantly, seven of them

While the PDP had split even before August 5 after fall of the PDP-BJP Government in June 2018 with many party leaders revolting against party president Mehbooba Mufti, the meeting of seven prominent PDP leaders with the Lieutenant Governor and coming up with new demands

is being seen by the political observers as another major split in the PDP especially at a time when Mehbooba has been detained by the Government for past over five months.

While Mehbooba's daughter Iltija Mufti, who was operating her mother's twitter account, has taken very hard stand against abrogation of Article 370 and converting Jammu and Kashmir State into the Union Territory, the memorandum submitted by the Lieutenant Governor had no mention of restoration of Article 370 though it called for return of Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

Moreover, the virtual split comes on the day of fourth death anniversary of PDP patriarch (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

PDP disallowed to commemorate Mufti's death anniversary

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Jan 7: The People's Democratic Party (PDP) was not allowed to hold a meeting on the eve of the death anniversary of its patron, late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, with Mehbooba Mufti's daughter not being allowed to move out from her residence.

The party had sought a permission from the Divisional Commissioner, to hold a public gathering on the occasion. However, the administration had not given them any reply so far.

Party spokesperson, Abdul Hameed Koshin told reporters here that they have not heard

any word from the administration with regard to holding a meeting on the eve. The party workers later held a meeting at the party headquarters instead.

On the other side, Mehbooba Mufti's daughter-who has been quiet vocal post abrogation of

Article 370 and downgrading the erstwhile J&K State to the level of Union Territory-also tried to come out of her residence at Gupkar at 11 in the morning. However, she was not allowed.

While talking to the media



People offering prayers at the grave of Mufti Sayeed on Tuesday.

persons waiting outside the gate, Iltija said that she is not being allowed to move out and that the police have confined her to the residence.

"I am not even being allowed to talk to the media persons; the PM can go and meet his mother while talking an array of the media persons along with him, why cannot I go to pay a visit to my grandfather's grave?" she asked.

After much altercation with the police personnel at the gate of her residence, Iltija was taken away from the gate and asked to secure a permission to go out of the residence, to which she asked the police if the Section 144 was in place that she was not being allowed to move out.

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

4 convicts in Nirbhaya case to be hanged on Jan 22

NEW DELHI, Jan 7:

Four convicts in the sensational 2012 Nirbhaya Gang rape and murder case will be hanged on January 22 at 7 am in Tihar jail, a Delhi court said today.

The order was pronounced by Additional Sessions Judge Satish Kumar Arora who issued the death warrants against the four death row convicts — Mukesh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Sharma (26) and Akshay Kumar Singh (31).

During the hearing, the prosecution said there was no application pending before any court or the President right now by any of the convicts and the review petition of all the convicts was dismissed by the Supreme Court.

While urging the court to



Girls celebrate after Delhi court issued death warrant for the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case, in Patna on Tuesday. (UNI)

issue the death warrants, the prosecution said, "In between the issuance and the execution of death warrants, if the convicts want to file curative petitions, they can do so."

(Contd on page 6 Col 1)

Hope spring will again come to Kashmir: Chopra

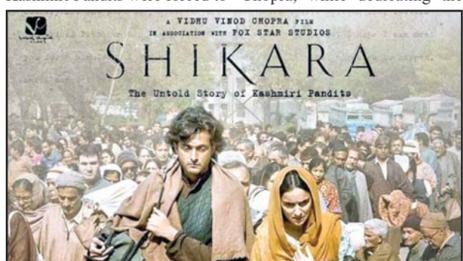
Trailer of Shikara-a movie on exodus of KPs launched

Nishikant Khajuria

MUMBAI, Jan 7: Asserting that his upcoming movie "Shikara" is the story of lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits (KPs) who were forced to leave their homes in the Valley in the year 1990 and are refugees in their own country, Director Vidhu Vinod Chopra today hoped that spring will again come to Kashmir, rest of India and the world.

Quoting famous Kashmiri couplets, which means "snow will melt, winter of despair will be over and the spring will come", the Director said, "I hope and pray that spring comes again to Kashmir, rest of India and the world. "It took me 11 years to complete this project, the day after an idea was floated," he said, while speaking to the

media at the trailer launch of "Shikara," in Mumbai. "In 1990, more than 4 lakh Kashmiri Pandits were forced to leave their homes in the Valley. They still shiver when they hear the word 'Aazadi'. 'Shikaara' is



The movie describes the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus in early 90s from the Valley. On January 19, it will be three decades of exile. "I am really happy with the making of "Shikara" and I want the nation to watch this film. I am sure India will watch it, especially those four lakh migrated Kashmiri Pandits and they will see change in their lives," he added.

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

the story of these people and also of mine who are refugees within their own country," said Chopra, while dedicating the

The filmmaker said that "Shikara" has been largely shot in Kashmir. "It is the story of resilience in the face of insurmountable odds. It is also the story of a love that remains unextinguished through 30 years of exile," he asserted.

Chopra said that whenever some movie is made as previously it was like "Lage Raho Munnabhai" or "3 Idiots", it left

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)



Mata Vaishno Devi pilgrims enjoy snowfall enroute the cave shrine on Tuesday. -Excelsior/Karandeep

Army porter dies in avalanche; 2 rescued NH closed for 2nd day, 4500 vehicles stranded

Power supply to many areas snapped

Gopal Sharma

JAMMU/ SRINAGAR, Jan 7: An Army porter was killed while two others were rescued when an avalanche hit a post near the Line of Control (LoC) in Mandi area of Poonch late this evening, as the continued rain across J&K and snowfall in Kashmir and hilly areas of Jammu region created havoc, whereas, the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained closed for the last two days.

While the National Highway authorities cleared landslides at Digidole and two places at Boom and Karol area of Chanderkote

*Watch video on
www.excelsiornews.com

today but with the heavy snowfall in Jawahar Tunnel area, the movement of vehicles has been completely suspended on the highway. The light motor vehicles stranded at Ramban which were cleared for Kashmir were again stopped in Banihal area this afternoon as heavy snowfall continued at Pir Panchal.

Reports from Poonch said that due to avalanche at Doda Sankh area, near Kobra Post

Meanwhile, Kashmir continued to be lashed by rains and snowfall for second consecutive



Stranded trucks near Nagrota on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. Another pic on page 6. -Excelsior/Rakesh

in Mandi area, a local porter, Zaffar Iqbal, son of Mohd Farid, resident of Shalla Dangri in Mandi was killed while two other porters hailing from Mandi were rescued by the Army jawans late this evening. Tragedy struck when they had gone to deliver ration supply to an Army post at the higher reaches near the LoC. The injured porters were being shifted to Army hospital Poonch.

The snowfall continued and about one and a half feet snow accumulated near Jawahar Tunnel leading to the continuous blockade of the National Highway. It also caused slippery road conditions at many places on this stretch.

"Despite snowfall, around (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

HoDs too slack in furnishing progress reports to Div Coms, DCs Field visits on weekly basis: Majority of Admn Secys fail to ensure compliance

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Jan 7: Majority of the Administrative Secretaries in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have failed to ensure strict compliance to the repeated verbal and written instructions regarding mandatory field visits on weekly basis to review the progress on developmental works. Even Heads of the Departments (HoDs) are adopting dilly-dallying approach in furnishing progress reports of projects being inspected by them to the Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that from time to

Apathy deprives people of opportunity to air grievances

time thrust was laid on mandatory field visits by the Administrative Secretaries of the departments so as to take timely note of the impediments in the execution of developmental works. Though some sort of compliance was shown to these instructions yet the exercise never continued uninterrupted.

Following the imposition of Governor's Rule in the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir this aspect once again received the required attention and on July 8, 2018, the then Governor of erstwhile State Satya Pal Malik while chairing a meeting disclosed that Administrative

Secretaries, Heads of the Departments (HoDs) and Chief Engineers would be asked to visit all the districts to facilitate developmental works.

"The Administrative Secretaries, HoDs and other officers are required to conduct frequent tours to facilitate removal of hurdles in the developmental works and ensure their timely execution", the then Governor had specifically mentioned in the meeting.

Thereafter, the necessity of conducting field visits by the Administrative Secretaries was discussed in numerous meetings

of the Committee of Secretaries chaired by the Chief Secretary and finally written instructions in this regard were issued by the General Administration Department.

"The Governor has been pleased to direct that all the Administrative Secretaries shall undertake field visits on weekly basis to review the important State and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, developmental works and other related matters of their departments and submit a status report to the Chief Secretary inter-alia highlighting the issues which require intervention for

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

SUNDAY OPEN

FOR ALL QUESTIONS ON DIAMONDS, THERE IS ONLY ONE ANSWER

FOREVERMARK
 A DIAMOND IS FOREVER

Fortofino

Aquaf Market, Gandhinagar, Jammu | 87170 00200
 Forevermark Boutique, Sec. 17-C Chandigarh | 8872331111