

Gupta appointed as NIA chief

NEW DELHI, June 23: Former Punjab DGP Dinkar Gupta was today appointed as the new Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), an anti-terror probe agency formed after the 26/11 attack in Mumbai.

Director General of CRPF Kuldip Singh was given additional charge of the NIA in May last year after the retirement of Y C Modi.

According to an official order issued by the Personnel Ministry, the Appointments

ED asks Sonia to depose in late July

NEW DELHI, June 23: The Enforcement Directorate has asked Congress president Sonia Gandhi to record her statement with the agency sometime in late July after it accepted her plea to postpone her deposition in a money-laundering case linked to the National Herald newspaper, officials said today.

She was issued a second summons for June 23 by the agency but the 75-year-old Congress leader could not keep

Selja, Singhvi inducted into CWC

NEW DELHI, June 23: Congress president Sonia Gandhi today appointed former Haryana unit chief Kumari Selja and Rajya Sabha MP Abhishek Manu Singhvi as members of the all-important party working committee.

Former Rajya Sabha member T Subbarami Reddy has been made a permanent invitee while ex UPCC chief Ajay Kumar Lallu has been appointed as special invitee to the CWC.

9 promoted as AEEs

JAMMU, June 23: The Jammu and Kashmir Government today promoted nine Incharge Assistant Engineers in the Jal Shakti/PHE, I&FC Department as I/C Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs).

Those elevated as I/C AEEs are-Pankaj Mohan, Anil Kumar, Viney Khajuria, Surinder Singh Sambhal, Manoj Kumar Sharma, Nirmal Singh, Sham Kishore, Rajesh Sharma and Yogesh Kumar.

13,313 new Corona cases in India

NEW DELHI, June 23: India logged 13,313 new Coronavirus infections taking the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 4,33,44,958, while the active cases rose to 83,990, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated today.

The death toll climbed to 5,24,941 with 38 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated. The active cases comprise 0.19 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was

Baba Chamliyal Mela held with traditional fervour after 2 years

SAMBA, June 23: The annual fair at the Baba Chamliyal shrine along the International Border (IB) in Samba district saw a huge rush of devotees today as it was being held after a gap of two years due to COVID.

According to a police official, nearly one lakh devotees from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir and neighbouring States visited the shrine today.

About 25,000 devotees visited the shrine by this afternoon but the rush of devotees increased after that and continued up to evening. The Management Committee of the

Sinha set to get 2100 votes, Murmu 1400 from UT Prez candidates deprived of 9280 votes from J&K in absence of Assembly, RS representation

***JK not to be part of exercise for second time in history**

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, June 23: With battle lines drawn for the Presidential election on July 18, Opposition candidates Yashwant Sinha is likely to get 2100 votes from Jammu and Kashmir while her rival and formidable candidate of BJP-led NDA Draupadi Murmu is set to fetch 1400 as 9280 votes of the Union Territory will be lost in the absence of elected Assembly and no representation of the UT in Rajya Sabha.

Only five Lok Sabha members from Jammu and Kashmir will be eligible to cast their votes for the 15th Presidential election on July 18. Counting is scheduled for July 21 while President Ram Nath Kovind will complete his term on July 25.

Five MPs who will cast votes for the Presidential election from J&K are Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Dr Jitendra Singh and Jugal Kishore Sharma, both

from BJP, and Dr Farooq Abdullah, Mohammad Akbar Lone and Hasnain Masoodi, all three of National Conference.

Masoodi told the Excelsior that Yashwant Sinha is the joint Opposition candidate and the National Conference MPs will vote for him.

Each MP has vote value of 700 which means Sinha will get 2100 votes from Jammu and Kashmir while Murmu will secure 1400.

Vote value of Jammu and Kashmir MLAs till it was a State was 72. With J&K having been allotted 90-member Assembly, its MLAs would have 6480 votes, all of which will be lost as the UT doesn't have an elected Legislature due to delay in conduct of the Assembly polls.

Further, Jammu and Kashmir will also be deprived of 2800 votes as it has no representation in Rajya Sabha in absence of the Assembly.

J&K has four Rajya Sabha

seats and each MP has 700 vote value.

"With no Legislative Assembly and nil representation in Rajya Sabha, Jammu and Kashmir will not be able to cast 9280 votes in the Presidential election," sources said.

The Legislative Assembly of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will not be a part of Presidential election exercise for the second time in the history of the election to the top Constitutional post.

There have been precedents of Legislative Assemblies of States not being part of the Presidential polls on account of their dissolution, the first such instance being of Gujarat in 1974.

The Assemblies of Assam, Nagaland and Jammu and Kashmir too could not participate in subsequent elections on account of dissolution.

In the present case, the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir is yet to

be constituted after the erstwhile State was bifurcated into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in 2019.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act provides for a Legislative Assembly for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, but the election is yet to be held due to various reasons. Ladakh has been granted the UT without Legislature.

In 1992, the Legislative Assemblies of Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland were dissolved and thus, could not be part of the 10th Presidential polls that elected Shankar Dayal Sharma to the top Constitutional post.

In 1992, Jammu and Kashmir had gone unrepresented in the Presidential polls as the election to the Lok Sabha too could not take place in the erstwhile State in 1991 due to unavailability.

"The value of the vote of an

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Relief, financial assistance enhanced

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 23: Government has ordered enhancement of relief for ex-J&K Militia veterans and their widows and financial assistance in favour of World War-II veterans and widows.

According to the orders, the sanction is accorded to the enhancement of relief for ex-J&K Militia veterans and widows from Rs 2500 per month (rendered more than 15 years to service) and Rs 2000 per month (rendered less than 15 years of service) to Rs 5,000 per month from July 1, 2022.

Meanwhile, sanction is also accorded to the enhancement of financial assistance in favour of World War-II veterans and widows from Rs 4000 per month to Rs 5000 per month from July 1, 2022.



Lotus flowers in full bloom at Pangwal pond in Thalora Mandi area of Samba on Thursday.

-Excelsior/Nischant

Two FIRs lodged by CBI in arms license case J&K Govt not furnishing information to DoPT for grant of prosecution sanction against IAS officers

***As per SC judgment, no formal permission required now**

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, June 23: The Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is not furnishing requisite information to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) of Government of India as such creating hurdles in grant of prosecution sanction against the All India Service officers of J&K Cadre (now AGMUT) who have been booked by the Central Bureau of Investigation in the arms license case.

However, the legal experts are of the opinion that formal prosecution sanction is not required now in the light of the Supreme Court judgment in case titled Dr Subramanyam Swamy Versus Dr Manmohan Singh whereby it was held that if the sanction is not granted within three months after the filing of application the same shall be considered as deemed sanction.

The arms license case of Jammu and Kashmir was handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on the basis

of a recommendation from Rajasthan Director General of Police after the Anti-Terror Squad had busted a racket related to the matter.

The premier investigating agency of the country had registered two FIRs---RCCH-GO51201800007 and RCCHG0512018500006 in pursuance of notification issued by the Government of India with the consent of Jammu and Kashmir Government and after taking over investigation of FIR No. 18 of 2018 dated 17.05.2018 earlier registered at Police Station Vigilance Organisation Kashmir (VOK) on the allegations that during the period between 2012 and 2016, the then Deputy Commissioners of various districts of J&K had fraudulently and illegally issued bulk arms licenses in lieu of monetary considerations.

Recently, Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed filed application under Right to Information Act with the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) in the office of Secretary,

Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India seeking copy of the decision taken upon receipt of File No.GAD (Vig) 10-SP/2020-CBI dated April 9, 2021 in two CBI FIRs relating to arms license case.

The applicant also sought copy of the order whereby prosecution sanction has been accorded by the DoPT in respect of these two FIRs and reasons in case no decision has been taken.

In response to the RTI application, Surya Naryan Jha, Under Secretary and CPIO, who deals with the proposal of sanction for prosecution against IAS officers under Prevention of Corruption Act only, has mentioned, "no proposal for sanction for prosecution of any IAS officer of J&K Cadre (now AGMUT) was under consideration or pending in this department".

"However, it is pertinent to mention here that proposal regarding which information is sought, received in this department, was returned to the J&K Government vide letter dated

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Detailed plans for basic necessities discussed LG reviews security, Shri Amarnath Ji yatra arrangements at UC meeting

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, June 23: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha reviewed the security arrangements and preparations for Shri Amarnath Ji yatra at Unified Command meeting in Srinagar today. The meeting was attended by the Chief Secretary and senior security officers from the Home Department, J&K Police, Army, Intelligence agencies, CRPF, BSF and others.

The officers apprised the Lieutenant Governor about the overall security situation while threadbare discussions were held on various arrangements related to Shri Amarnath Ji yatra.

Detailed plans for telecom

connectivity, health care, fire safety, electricity and water supply, weather forecasting, langar management, sanitation, lodging and disaster management were reviewed by the Lt Governor.

He also reviewed the detailed plans for all basic necessities including the security arrangements that have been put in place by J&K Police in tandem with Army and Central Armed Police Forces for all the yatris and the service providers.

Sinha expressed satisfaction over the arrangements put in place by Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board (SASB) and other departments for the smooth and peaceful conduct of annual Shri Amarnath Ji yatra, which will start from 30th June.

"The Government is com-

mitted to provide the best facilities for yatris. The improvements have been made in the arrangements as compared to the previous years. All necessary facilities including traffic management, health, communication, water sanitation are in place. We are aware of the high altitude related issues and adequate number of oxygen cylinders, medical beds, emergency responders, doctors and nursing staff has been deployed to deal with any emergency situation," Sinha said.

CEO Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board also briefed the meeting about services to facilitate the yatris and do's and don'ts for yatris during the holy pilgrimage.

People of J&K should be given chance to elect Govt: Omar

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, June 23: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah today said that people of Jammu and Kashmir should be given a chance to elect a Government that can listen to them.

Omar told reporters here that an elected Government can reach out to more people than the LG and his Advisors. "How many people can one LG and his three Advisors listen to?" he asked.

Hitting out at critics of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), Omar said this was not unusual. "If PAGD constituents are wrong, why did they join in the first place? And why did they leave? They are not explaining it to the people," he said.

The former Chief Minister



NC leader Omar Abdullah addressing party convention in Srinagar on Thursday.

said the decision about PAGD should be left to the people. "If they (critics of PAGD) have clout with Delhi, let them get the elections conducted. Whatever people decide, we will accept it," he added.

On horse-trading in Maharashtra, Omar said it is not new in Indian politics and the Congress' mistakes while in power at the Centre are being

repeated by the BJP.

"This is nothing new. Misuse of Raj Bhawan, turncoats, horse trading of MLAs. Were we not victims of this in 1984? The mistakes made by Congress are being repeated by the BJP. This has been going on for years now," Omar said.

When asked to comment on

(Contd on page 6 Col 1)

Army, police rescue trapped pilgrims at Pir Panjal NH likely to be cleared today, Ramban-Banihal stretch restored

Gopal Sharma

JAMMU, June 23: While the National Highway authorities were using explosives to crack big boulders at Samroli near Chenani, the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway and Batote-Kishtwar Road is likely to be restored by Friday afternoon.

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

The authorities cleared most of the landslides between Udhampur-Ramban and Banihal by this evening but Maroog and T-2 Tunnel area were still blocked. However, Maroog was cleared late this evening but work on the T-2 Tunnel point just ahead of Kela Morh was in

*** Body of guide found, search for tourist on**



Highway restoration work in progress at Samroli near Udhampur on Thursday. Another pic on page 6.

-Excelsior/K Kumar

progress. The Traffic Police authorities cleared Kashmir bound stranded light motor vehicles through old and narrow

2 Tunnel point was in progress while all other landslides have been cleared except Samroli in Udhampur sector. He said T-2 Tunnel point debris are likely to be cleared by midnight and there after all the stranded heavy vehicles from Ramban, Chanderkote and Nashri area will be cleared towards Kashmir. He said about 1000 trucks at present have been stranded in this belt.

Malik said Gammon Company has engaged heavy machines at Dewal near Samroli. Some boulders are being broken by using explosives. He said this was the troubled area this time all along the highway. The

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Sena ready to quit MVA if rebels return

MUMBAI/GUWAHATI, June 23:

Cong, NCP support alliance

spanning Mumbai, Surat and faraway Guwahati passed. Shinde is camping in Guwahati with rebel MLAs. A day after Thackeray made an emotional appeal to rebel MLAs of his party and offered to resign in a bid to placate them, his trusted aide Raut indicated the Shiv Sena is ready to consider leaving the MVA headed by it, a demand put forward by Shinde who has dubbed the three-party bloc as an "unnatural" alliance.

"You say you are real Shiv Sainiks and will not quit the party. We are ready to consider your demand provided you come back to Mumbai within 24

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)