

PM chairs CCS meeting

NEW DELHI, Mar 13:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to review India's security preparedness and the prevailing global scenario in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

Modi, official sources said, emphasised on integrating latest technology in the security apparatus and reiterated that every effort must be made to make India self-reliant in the defence sector so that it not only strengthens our security but also adds to the economy.

Modi was also given a detailed overview of global tech usage in the defence sector and India's advances in it, they said.

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Parl session resumes today

NEW DELHI, Mar 13:

The second part of the Parliament's Budget session begins tomorrow with the Opposition set to corner the Government on a range of issues, including rising unemployment, a reduction in the interest rate on employees' provident fund and the evacuation of Indians stranded in war-hit Ukraine.

Top of the Government's agenda would be getting Parliament's approval to the budgetary proposals.

The Government has also listed the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill for consideration and passing in the Lok Sabha.

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Woman dies, 10 test +ve in Jammu

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU/SRINAGAR/LEH, Mar 13: A woman died of COVID-19 and 10 others tested positive in Jammu division today while 16 fresh cases were reported in Kashmir valley and 15 in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

An 80-year-old woman hailing from Sai Vihar in Paloura died of co-morbidities and COVID-19 in the Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu today. She was unvaccinated.

Fresh death has taken COVID toll in Jammu division to 2327 and Jammu district to 1223.

Among 10 cases in Jammu region, seven were reported in

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EC announces RS poll schedule for 5 seats in Punjab

CHANDIGARH, Mar 13:

As the term of five Rajya Sabha members elected from Punjab is going to expire in April, the Election Commission (EC) has announced the schedule for the biennial election to the Upper House of Parliament from the State.

The term of office of Rajya Sabha members Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa (Shiromani Akali Dal), Partap Singh Bajwa (Congress), Shwair Malik (BJP), Naresh Gujral (SAD) and Shamsheer Singh Dullu (Congress) is due to expire on April 9.

Punjab's Chief Electoral Officer S Karuna Raju today said

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Panel to visit J&K on March 28, 29 for sittings Delimitation Comm finalizes proposals, invites public objections till March 21

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Mar 13: The Delimitation Commission for Jammu and Kashmir today finalized its proposals and published them in the Gazette of India and Jammu and Kashmir inviting objections and suggestions till 5 pm on March 21.

The Commission announced that it will visit Jammu and Kashmir on March 28 and 29 for public sittings.

The Commission didn't increase number of Lok Sabha seats in Jammu and Kashmir. Also it didn't reserve any Parliamentary constituency for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). However, it reserved seven seats for SCs and nine for STs in the Legislative Assembly.

The Commission is headed by Justice (Retired) Ranjana Prakash Desai and comprised Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sushil Chandra and State Election Commissioner (SEC) KK Sharma.

The Commission has incorpo-

No reservation in 5 LS segments; of 16
Assembly seats, 13 reserved in Jammu

Dissent notes of 3 NC MPs;
BJP Member incorporated

rated two detailed dissenting notes signed by all three National Conference Lok Sabha MPs—Dr Farooq Abdullah, Mohammad Akbar Lone and Hasnain Masoodi and Jugal Kishore Sharma, BJP MP along with the report. All of them are Associate Members of the Commission. Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Dr Jitendra Singh is fifth Associate Member.

Jugal Kishore's dissent note pertained to naming of Bahu Assembly segment as Bahu Lochan, Jammu East as Jammu Tawi, Jammu North as Muthi-Domana and Darhal as Budhal, inclusion of Maira Mandarian and Chowki Choura areas in Akhnoor constituency instead of Khour, addition of Pargal in Khour instead of Akhnoor, inclusion of Katli in Samba segment instead of Ramgarh and exclusion of Rajpura from

Ramgarh and its inclusion in Samba seat. The dissent note was included in the report as these suggestions haven't been accepted by the Commission.

The National Conference joint dissent note pertained to different Parliamentary constituencies besides challenging the very constitution of the Panel pending Supreme Court verdict on Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act.

The statement by the Commission said number of Parliamentary seats in Jammu and Kashmir will remain five. Kashmir and Jammu divisions now have two Lok Sabha seats each while one seat is spread over both the divisions. Jammu has Jammu-Reasi and Udhampur-Doda constituencies while Kashmir has Srinagar-Budgam and Baramulla-Kupwara. Anantnag-Poonch seat is part of both the divisions.

The Commission said no

Parliamentary constituency has been reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

It added that Jammu and Kashmir will have 90-seat Assembly and, of them, seven segments will be reserved for SCs and nine for STs.

The statement said the Commission has published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary and in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, its proposals for the delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir for the purpose of elections to House of People (Lok Sabha) and Legislative Assembly.

"Copies of the Gazette are available for reference with the Chief Electoral Officer, UT of Jammu and Kashmir and the Election officials in all districts of the Union Territory. Objections and suggestions to the peoples can

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Third straight budget of UT in Parl in absence of Assembly Sitharaman to present J&K's budget in LS today, to be passed before March 31

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 13: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present annual budget of Jammu and Kashmir in Lok Sabha tomorrow. This will be third straight budget of J&K to be presented in the Parliament in absence of elected Assembly in the Union Territory.

Top officials of Jammu and Kashmir especially those affiliated with the Finance Department have already reached New Delhi to be available for giving final touch to the budget along with the Union Finance Ministry officials and remain available in the capital for any queries.

Sitharaman will present budget of J&K in Lok Sabha at 12 noon tomorrow, official sources told the Excelsior.

Excelsior had today exclusively reported that the Jammu and Kashmir budget will be presented in the Parliament by the Union Finance Minister next week and that top officials of the Union Territory have been sounded about it and asked to remain present in the Union capital.

Jammu and Kashmir's

*Govt hopes nearly Rs one lakh cr
allocation will boost development

budget had to be presented in the Parliament in the absence of elected Assembly in the Union Territory due to delay in conduct of Assembly elections.

Sitharaman will be presenting third straight budget of Jammu and Kashmir in the Parliament tomorrow.

She had presented J&K's budget for 2020-21 on March 17, 2020 and 2021-22 on March 17, 2021. Tomorrow, she will present the budget for 2022-23.

The budget for 2019-2020 was adopted by the then State Administrative Council (SAC) here while budget of 2018-19 was last to be presented in the Assembly of erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir by then Finance Minister Dr Haseeb Drabu before the Government collapsed after withdrawal of support to Mehbooba Multi-led coalition Government by the BJP in June 2018.

There were reports that Jammu and Kashmir might get

around Rs one lakh crore worth budget for third consecutive year. In 2020-21, the UT was allocated Rs 1.01 lakh crore in the budget which went up to Rs 1.08 lakh crore in 2021-22.

The UT Government is quite confident that it will be a hefty budget which will lead to more infrastructure development in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Government is also expecting significant budgetary allocations for both urban and rural local bodies though spending by the District Development Councils (DDCs), Block Development Councils (BDCs) and Panchayats remain an area of concern.

"Healthy grant for DDCs, BDCs and Panchayats will lead to further development in rural areas," sources pointed out.

Health Department is another area in which Jammu and Kashmir could get major focus, they said.

Prior to presentation of the

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Sonia says ready to make any sacrifice, CWC reposes faith in her

NEW DELHI, Mar 13:

Days after its drubbing in five States, the Congress' top decision-making body today unanimously decided that party president Sonia Gandhi should continue till organisational polls after she expressed readiness to "make any and every sacrifice" in the party's interest.

The Congress Working Committee, during its nearly five-hour meeting, reposed full faith in her leadership, urging her to effect immediate corrective changes to strengthen the party and meet the political challenges ahead of the next round of elections.

Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said every Congress worker and leader wants Rahul Gandhi to lead the party, but as the process of organisational



Congress president Sonia Gandhi and party leader Rahul Gandhi during CWC meeting in New Delhi on Sunday. (UNI)

polls is underway, the next president will be decided through it.

Amid calls for large-scale reforms to revive the party's dwindling electoral fortunes, AICC general secretary KC Venugopal, at a press conference after the CWC meeting, said the party president

will immediately take corrective measures to revamp and re-strengthen the organisation.

The Congress will hold a 'Chintan Shivir' (brainstorming session) soon after the Budget Session of Parliament and the CWC will meet again before that,

Venugopal said. The session is scheduled to end on April 8.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot suggested that the 'Chintan Shivir' be held in his state.

Later, leaders said this brainstorming session of three-four days would chalk out the future roadmap and strategy in order to address challenges.

Several leaders, after the meeting, said that Gandhi in her introductory remarks said she is ready "to make any and every sacrifice as Congress workers and the CWC wish in the interest of the party".

These comments were seen by many as her readiness to even quit if required and felt necessary by the party leadership.

She listened to all leaders at the CWC meet and left the decision to

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High-level meeting to be held in New Delhi MHA to review situation in J&K after attacks on Panchayat members, others

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 13: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is likely to review security situation in Jammu and Kashmir in view of recent attacks on civilians including the Panchayat members and security personnel who had come home on leave in the Valley, in a meeting in the Union capital shortly.

Either Union Home Minister Amit Shah or Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla will chair the meeting to review security scenario in Jammu and Kashmir, sources said.

Shah will visit Jammu on March 19 to attend CRPF Raising Day Celebrations at MA Stadium.

However, during his visit, no other programme including the security review meeting or party function is scheduled so far. The review meeting is expected to be held in the Union capital before Shah travels to Jammu.

The review meeting will be attended by top officials of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), Intelligence agencies and others on killing of Panchayat members and security personnel on leave and steps required to prevent such killings in future.

Pilgrimage to holy Amarnath Ji shrine is also scheduled between June and August in South Kashmir Himalayas and the Central Government doesn't want any kind

of increase in level of violence in the Valley for peaceful yatra.

A number of militants including top commanders of various outfits have been killed in the Kashmir valley this year so far. However, the MHA will devise a strategy to stop the civilian killings.

Officials were of the view that situation is well under control in Jammu and Kashmir including the Valley but the militants at the behest of Pakistan want to keep the pot boiling by indulging in civilian killings by striking at the soft targets.

A CRPF jawan Mukhtar Ahmad, who was at home on leave, was killed by militants in Shopian

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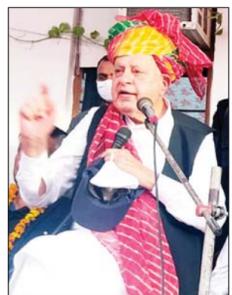
Outsiders being facilitated to take over Jammu's businesses: Farooq

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 13: National Conference president and former Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah alleged that Jammu businesses were facing the brunt of present bureaucratic rule in the Union Territory and locals were being sidelined to pave the way for outsiders.

"People of Jammu are witnessing slow death to their exclusive jobs and those at the helm of affairs have brought the entire region to this appalling condition," he said while addressing a party convention in Samba late last evening.

Contending that Jammu's local economy was being strangled as outsiders were being facilitated to take over businesses here,



Farooq Abdullah gave reference of the proposed opening of Retail stores here that has triggered anxieties among local traders.

"My Dogra brothers well understand that the assault on their trade is not a case in isolation. Everyone here in Jammu knows

that such a measure is part of the systematic pattern to elbow out locals, the Dogras from the businesses and pave the way for the outsiders, who have already taken away a sizeable share in mining and other contract allotments, directly or indirectly, in the region after August 2019," he added.

Farooq Abdullah further alleged that the uncertainty, unaccountability, unemployment and development deficit, which have gripped Jammu for the past eight years appear far from over.

"While the economy fast dissipated and development came to a grinding halt, the ever growing unemployment, inflation, development deficit, administrative inertia, wanton demolition drives seem to be the only notable feature of the

(Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Direction issued by CS many months back yet to be acted upon Dissemination of information in all official languages remains least priority for deptts

Mohinder Verma

*Even GAD doesn't have
languages interface of website

JAMMU, Mar 13: The much-needed dissemination of information in all the official languages has remained least priority for the Government departments even one and half year after the approval of the Parliament and issuance of formal notification by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice. The intensity of the non-seriousness can be gauged from the fact that even General Administration Department doesn't have languages interface of its website.

In the month of September 2020, both the Houses of Parliament passed the Jammu

and Kashmir Official Languages Act and the same received the assent of the President of India on September 26, 2020. The Act was notified by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice on September 27, 2020.

The Section 3 of the Act states: "With effect from such date as the Administrator (Lieutenant Governor) may, by notification in the official gazette, appoint in this behalf, the Kashmiri, Dogri, Urdu, Hindi and English languages shall be the official languages to be used

for all or any of the official purposes of the Union Territory".

A provision in Section 3 states that the English language may continue to be used, for those administrative and legislative purposes, in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for which it was being used before the commencement of the Act. As per another provision, the business in the Legislative Assembly of the Union Territory shall be transacted in the official language or languages of the Union Territory.

In the Committee of Secretaries meeting held on October 12, 2020, the then Chief Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam held discussion on the implementation of Official Languages Act and accordingly directions were issued to all the concerned for completion of formalities as expeditiously as possible, official sources told EXCELSIOR.

Thereafter, the Committee of Secretaries in its meeting held on December 1, 2021 again discussed the issue and accordingly Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta directed: "All the departments shall review their websites and take steps to commence dis-

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4 held in Pulwama

Killer of CRPF man, associate arrested in Shopian

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Mar 13: Police in Shopian arrested the killer of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel along with a militant associate, besides four other militant associates were arrested from Pulwama district.

Police in Shopian have arrested a militant identified as Rukhsar Sadiq Thoker, son of Mohammad Sadiq Thoker, resident of Rangmarg-Sedow who had killed a CRPF personnel Mukhtar Ahmad Doie yesterday at Check Chotipora area of Shopian.

Police said that on his disclosure weapon of offence (pistol)

was also recovered from his possession.

Police said that during the course of investigation, he disclosed the identity of another militant associate who facilitated him in the commission of crime.

He has been identified as

*Watch video on
www.excelsiornews.com

Amir Ahmad Dewan, son of Khursheed Ahmad Dewan resident of Bohrihallan, Shopian who too was arrested and on his disclosure motorcycle (Pulsar) used in the commission of crime was also recovered.

During further questioning, police said, Rukhsar Sadiq con-

fessed that he is a close associate of active militant Abid Ramzan Sheikh commander of the LeT and is hybrid militant of the organization.

Police said that he further revealed that he along with his associate had committed the crime on the directions of Abid Ramzan Sheikh in order to spread the terror in the area. "Investigation in the case is going on. Further leads are expected," police added.

Mukhtar Ahmad was on leave when militants shot him from close range. He was rushed to hospital where he was declared as brought dead.

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Russian airstrike hits base in western Ukraine, kills 35

LIVIV, Mar 13:

Waves of Russian missiles pounded a military training base close to Ukraine's western border with NATO member Poland, killing 35 people. The strike followed Russian threats to target foreign weapon shipments that are helping Ukrainian fighters defend their country against Russia's grinding invasion.

More than 30 Russian cruise missiles targeted the sprawling training facility that is less than 25 kilometers (15 miles) from the closest border point with Poland, according to the Governor of Ukraine's western Lviv region. Poland is a key location for routing Western military aid to Ukraine.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine, Lviv had largely been spared the



Smoke billows out of a military training base after Russian airstrike in western Ukraine on Sunday.

scale of destruction unfolding further east and become a destination for residents escaping bombarded cities and for many of the nearly 2.6

million refugees who have fled the country.

The training center in Yavoriv (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

AMUL DOODH 30g
PEETA HAI
INDIA
₹47* / 1 L
Amul
Taaza
500 mL: ₹24* | 15g Protein
*MRP (incl. of all taxes), transportation and cooling charges included. Conditions apply. For any clarification/ availability, please contact us on: 7006019658