

Ladakh raises ex-gratia for martyrs

Excelsior Correspondent
 LEH, Apr 15: Commending Army's Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre (LSRC) for their bravery and sacrifices for the country, Lieutenant Governor Brig (ret'd) B D Mishra today said his administration would increase the ex-gratia for the fallen heroes of the regiment from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 25 lakh.

Revenue Dept puts transfer mechanism in place

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Apr 15: The Revenue Department with a view to break nexus of the officers has decided to ensure that no officer overstays on the post while effecting transfers.

Atiq, brother shot dead; 3 held

PRAYAGRAJ (UP), Apr 15:
 In a dramatic turn of events, jailed gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmad and his brother Ashraf were shot dead by unidentified assailants while they were being escorted by police to a medical college here tonight.

CAPF exams for cops in 13 regional languages

NEW DELHI, Apr 15:
 In a landmark decision, the Home Ministry has approved the conduct of constable (General Duty) examination for Central Armed Police Forces in 13 regional languages, in addition to Hindi and English.

85 test COVID +ve in J&K

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Apr 15: A total of 85 fresh COVID-19 positive cases were reported today from Jammu and Kashmir, 36 from Jammu division and 49 from Kashmir valley.

'No question of apology to Madhav' Cong asks PM to break silence on Satya Pal Malik's remarks

NEW DELHI, Apr 15:
 In the wake of former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik's shocking revelations on the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, Congress Party today came down heavily on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and asked him to break his silence as the matter is related to the National Security of the country.

Will be taken to Pangong lake on LAC with China Y-20 meeting in Leh from Apr 26-29, nearly 70 international delegates to attend

Sanjeev Pargal
JAMMU, Apr 15: Under G-20 summit across the country, Youth-20 meeting will be held in Leh in the Union Territory of Ladakh from April 26-29 during which the foreign delegates from various countries will also be taken to Pangong lake, located on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China besides other places of Buddhist religion.

Official sources told the Excelsior that Ladakh has been allotted Youth-20 meeting from April 26 to 29 in which over 70 delegates from almost all G-20 countries excepting one or two are expected to participate.

"Due to hectic schedule of the international delegates, their visit to Kargil district has been cancelled. Now, students from different colleges of Kargil will be taken to Leh to attend the Youth-20 summit," sources said, adding this has been done to adjust schedule of the visiting

*Kargil trip cancelled, students to be taken to Leh now

members. As per the schedule, the international delegates will reach Leh on April 26 and will take rest on that day to adjust themselves to climatic conditions. The Youth-20 meeting will be held on April 27. One-day sightseeing including visit to Pangong lake and some Buddhist religious places is proposed on April 28 while the delegates will return to New Delhi on April 29.

"Four-day Youth-20 meeting under G20 summit at Leh and visit of the delegates to Pangong lake which flows along the LAC with China in Eastern Ladakh will send strong message to China which had opposed such meeting in the Union Territory," sources said.

The UT administration of Ladakh is making elaborate arrangements for ensuring

smooth Youth-20 summit which, like Jammu and Kashmir, is the first major international event after Ladakh was made the UT following bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir and abrogation of its special status.

Sources said the Central teams of two Union Ministries will visit Leh ahead of Y-20 summit to review arrangements, both in terms of boarding & lodging and security. However, they added, security is not a major concern in the Union Territory of Ladakh which is completely a peaceful area with no signs of militancy.

Despite that elaborate security arrangements will be made with deployment of Ladakh Police and paramilitary forces at the international event's venue, the Hotels where the delegates will stay and places of their visit. Security and other arrangements for the event are

being constantly monitored by Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Brig (Retired) BD Mishra and senior officers of civil and police administration.

China, which boycotted the G-20 engagement meeting in Arunachal Pradesh, is understood to be staying out of the meeting in Leh in April and also a G-20 tourism meeting in Srinagar from May 22 to 25.

All eyes will also be on the attendance of the three G-20 countries that are also members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) - Turkey, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia. The OIC has issued several statements criticizing India for its move to reorganize Jammu and Kashmir in 2019.

Sources said Turkey might be unable to send officials, given the Presidential and Parliament elections that are due to be held next month, while a response is awaited from Indonesia.

It may be mentioned here that Working Group on Tourism of G20 is meeting in Srinagar in (Contd on page 4 Col 2)

Death penalty to son for killing mother

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Principal Sessions Judge Udhampur Haq Nawaz Zargar today awarded death penalty to one Jeet Singh, son of Krishan of Rassain village of Ramnagar tehsil for killing his mother.

"The evidence has shown that the convict after injuring the defence-less mother with sickle, severed the head with an axe. (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

Challenges along Pak, China borders to figure Top Army Comdrs to discuss national security from Apr 17-21

***Rajnath to address conference on Apr 19**

NEW DELHI, Apr 15:

Top Commanders of the Army will carry out a comprehensive review of India's national security challenges along the borders with China and Pakistan and ways to boost the combat capability of the force at a five-day conclave beginning Monday.

The Commanders' conference will also focus on the ongoing reform process in the 1.3 million-strong force and the use of high technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics and virtual reality for various purposes, officials said.

The Army's plan as part of 'Year of Transformation-2023'

along with progress on the Agnipath scheme and ambitious digitisation and automation initiatives will also feature at the conference.

A talk on the future contours of Indo-China relations by former Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale, who also served as India's envoy to Beijing, is also planned during the conference, the officials said.

During the conference from April 17 to 21, the Commanders are expected to carry out an extensive review of the overall situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in view of the three-year border row in Eastern Ladakh.

The Army said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to address the confer-

ence on April 19 where he will also review an equipment display focussing on niche technology, innovation, solutions for surveillance, artificial intelligence, training, robotics, virtual reality and operational logistics.

For the first time, the Commanders' conference is being conducted in a hybrid format exploiting available technology for secure communication, the Army said in a statement.

It said the Commanders and other senior functionaries will meet virtually on the first day and then travel to Delhi for in-person discussions on matters requiring detailed deliberations.

On the first day of the confer-

Inquiry Officer shouldn't be representative of Disciplinary Authority Appointment of Presenting Officer is must in departmental proceedings: HC

Mohinder Verma

***Punishment of dismissal should match gravity of offence**

JAMMU, Apr 15: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has held that in case of imposing major punishment in departmental proceedings the appointment of Presenting Officer is must and the Inquiry Officer has to be independent and not representative of the Disciplinary Authority.

Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal held this while quashing the order of termination of a CRPF constable Mohd Ashraf Shah for being violative of the provisions of the CRPF Act and Rules framed thereunder.

Pointing towards various judgments of Supreme Court, Justice Nargal said, "even if the relevant service rules is silent

about the appointment of a Presenting Officer, absence of a Presenting Officer will make the enquiry totally vitiated as the Inquiry Officer cannot be allowed to assume the role of a Judge as well as a prosecutor".

"In the present case, no Presenting Officer was appointed by the authority in connection with the enquiry. The petitioner was not given any opportunity to appoint his Defence Assistance. Moreover, no notice was issued to him before imposition of penalty against him", Justice Nargal said, adding "in case of imposing major punishment in departmental proceedings,

appointment of Presenting Officer is must and in the absence of the same entire departmental proceedings get vitiated".

He further observed that the principle of bias comes into play where the Inquiry Officer himself leads the "examination in chief" of the prosecution witness by putting questions. "The Inquiry Officer in all fairness has to be independent and not representative of the Disciplinary Authority and if he starts acting in any other capacity and proceed to act in a manner as if he is interested in eliciting evidence to

(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

With peace on borders; farmers on Zero Line start harvesting wheat crop

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, Apr 15: With peace prevailing on Indo-Pak Border and Line of Control (LoC) due to yearlong ceasefire, the harvesting of wheat crop on Zero Line, both on International Border and Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir right from Chhamb in Khour tehsil of Jammu district up to areas falling on Zero Line in Hiranagar sector of Kathua district, has started on the auspicious occasion of Baisakhi yesterday.

The farmers, who could not cultivate their land for about two decades on Zero Line or near the fence are now jubilant seeing the bumper crop on their fertile land which had over the years turned barren due to non cultivation after



A farmer using machine for wheat harvesting near IB in Hiranagar sector of Kathua district. —Excelsior/Pardeep

continuous border skirmishes and shelling from across. However, for last two years the farmers joy knew no bounds after declaration of

ceasefire by Indo-Pak Governments on the initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the decision created a new hope among the border denizens who otherwise had suffered a heavy loss due to non cultivation of their land.

The Government decision brought cheers on the faces of thousands of affected farmers living along LoC and IB in the UT. As Baisakhi festival is considered a good omen for harvesting and it is beginning of har-

(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

HC upholds KU's promotion policy, says not faulty

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Apr 15: The High Court has upheld the promotion policy of University of Kashmir and dismissed the petition of its employees seeking promotion to the post of Assistant Registrars.

Justice Sanjay Dhar said the policy being on the basis of sanctioned strength of each category of posts, as such, no fault can be found with the policy of promotion framed by the respondent-University. "Therefore, it is not open to this Court to interfere in the impugned policy decision taken by the University", the court concluded.

Justice Dhar said the Court would only step in to declare the impugned notification as illegal and issue a direction to the respondents to amend the policy relating

to promotion to the posts of Assistant Registrars if it finds that the impugned policy is irrational and arbitrary. "...there is a sound logic to the criteria and ratio of different categories forming the feeding cadre to the promotion post of Assistant Registrar fixed by the respondents", read the judgment.

The petitioners, who are working as Senior Personal Assistants with the University, had filed the instant writ petition challenging the criteria framed by the respondent for promotion to the post of Assistant Registrar. They were further seeking direction upon the respondent-University to fix the criteria for promotion to the post of Assistant Registrar from amongst Section Officers and Senior Personal Assistants on equal ratio basis.

According to the petitioners, the feeding cadre to the promotional post of Assistant Registrar is Section Officers, Senior Personal Assistants and Law Officers and all the three categories of officers have the same pay scale. It has been submitted that in the previous past, when the Law Officers were not included in the feeding cadre to the promotional post of Assistant Registrar, the ratio for promotion was fixed as 3:1 amongst the Section Officers and Senior Personal Assistants with five years' experience.

Court said the Rules or executive instructions issued by the Executive in exercise of its lawful powers, cannot be interfered with by the Courts unless these Rules or executive instructions are arbitrary or irrational and it is not within the domain of the courts to determine as to whether the recruitment or promotion rules or instructions

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