

MoD, MHA sign MoU on Tattoo ground

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 31: The Ministry of Defence signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ministry of Home Affairs through Government of UT of

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J&K for transfer of Defence land measuring 139.04 acres situated at Tattoo ground to Ministry of Home Affairs for the promotion of tourism and other developmental activities in the region.

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HC quashes Govt order to takeover Madrassas

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 31: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has quashed a Government order to takeover some madrassas in Kishtwar district, saying an official order issued last year cannot be universally applied to all such institutions in the Union Territory.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar passed a three-page order last week after hearing a petition that challenged a July 3 order of the Kishtwar Additional Deputy Commissioner, directing the management of Charitable

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Parmar posted as Chairman BPE

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 31: The Government tonight ordered transfer of Ashok Kumar Parmar, Principal Secretary to the Government, Skill Development Department as Chairman, Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), J&K with immediate effect.

Pak intruder shot dead

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 31: A Pakistani intruder was shot dead along the International Border (IB) in Arnia sector this morning.

"On the intervening nights of July 30-31, the vigilant BSF troops observed a suspicious movement across the IB in Arnia and an intruder was noticed approaching towards the fence," a BSF spokesperson said.

He said the alert troops acted swiftly and neutralised the intruder, thereby thwarting the infiltration attempt.

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Police freezes bank accounts of drug smuggler

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 31: Aiming to combat the menace of drug trafficking, police today froze the bank accounts and seized an amount of Rs. 16.33 lacs belonging to a drug smuggler in Baramulla.

Baramulla Police led by SDPO Uri Shokat Ali assisted by SHO PS Uri froze bank accounts and seized cash to the tune of Rs. 16.33 lacs belonging to drug Smuggler namely Maqsood Ahmad Bhatti son of Bagh Ali Bhatti resident of Madiyan Kamalkote after obtaining legal sanction from competent authorities, police said.

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IMD predicts normal monsoon in Aug-Sept

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, July 31: India is most likely to see normal rainfall during the second half of the monsoon season (August and September) following excess precipitation in July, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said today.

It said normal to above normal rainfall is very likely over east central India, parts of the east and northeast region and most subdivisions along the Himalayas.

Below normal rainfall is predicted in most parts of

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'Now people enjoy music on Jhelum banks till late night' Every effort being made to ensure rule of law is maintained in J&K: LG

Feelings being expressed without fear of terror network

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, July 31: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today said every effort is being made to ensure that rule of law is maintained in Jammu and Kashmir and people lead a life free of fear, corruption and drugs; and employment-rich.

He said this while addressing India Foundation's roundtable discussion on development scenario in Jammu and Kashmir through video conferencing.

India Foundation president Ram Madhav, former BJP general secretary Incharge Jammu and Kashmir, BVR Subrahmanyam, CEO NITI Aayog and former Chief Secretary J&K, Alok Bansal, Director, India Foundation and Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain (Retired), who served as General Officer Commanding (GOC) Srinagar-based 15 Corps, eminent personalities and experts and functionaries and

5.9 million tonnes of lithium reserves in Reasi J&K Govt will take decision on auctioning lithium mineral blocks

Nishikant Khajuria

JAMMU, July 31: The decision regarding auctioning of the recently discovered Lithium mineral block in Reasi district will be taken up by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir while successful experimentation has been done for extraction of lithium from mineral concentrate in laboratory scale.

This was informed by Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs, Pralhad Joshi in the Rajya Sabha today.

"Geological Survey of India has carried out a preliminary exploration i.e. G3 stage mineral exploration project on Bauxite, Rare Earth Elements and Lithium in Salal- Haima areas

No centre set up for NEET Super Specialty exam by NBE in Kashmir

Irfan Tramboo

SRINAGAR, July 31: A significant number of doctors aspire to appear in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test for Super Speciality (NEET-SS)-2023, but they face a major hurdle as the National Board of Examination (NBE) has failed to establish an examination centre in the Kashmir valley.

Nearly 450 doctors, currently working in various hospitals in Kashmir, and otherwise, are scheduled to take the Super Speciality Examination in September this year. However, the absence of a designated examination centre in the Valley leaves them with no choice but

29th batch of 1,550 leaves for darshan

6,353 pay obeisance at holy cave

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, July 31: On the 31st day of darshan of ongoing annual Amarnath Ji yatra, over 6,000 pilgrims drawn from different parts of the country paid obeisance to naturally formed Ice Shivlingam at 3888 metre high Himalayan cave in South Kashmir district of Anantnag today.

Officials said that 6,353 pilgrims offered prayers at holy cave from twin tracks of Baltal and Nunwan by this evening taking total number to 3,97,499.

The pilgrims who performed darshan today included 5,048 male, 1,156 female, 78 children and 65 Sadhus. Officials said that it rained for some time during the day in entire yatra area but the yatra proceeded smoothly without any hindrance.



LG Manoj Sinha addressing India Foundation's roundtable discussion through video conferencing on Monday.

members of India Foundation shared their views.

"Every effort is being made to ensure that rule of law is maintained in Jammu and Kashmir. Our effort is to see to it that common man and society live the life free of fear, corruption and drugs; and employment-rich, peacefully," Sinha said in his address.

Asserting that a major change has come in Jammu and Kashmir under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said 1.40 crore people of the UT are now living peaceful and prosperous life without any dic-

tate, fear and pressure.

"Thinking of the people has also changed. And this change is for peace. Daily life of the common man has witnessed sea change. Four years back, markets used to shut at 6 pm, there were no people on road and localities were deserted.

"Now you can see restaurants open till late in the night. People enjoy ice cream, guitar and music on the banks of Jhelum river during late hours," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said changes brought in by the Prime Minister have

resulted into end of discrimination process and now there are equal opportunities of development for all sections.

"For the first time since independence, the common citizen of J&K can think freely and express their feelings without any fear from separatist-terrorist network. It is one of the biggest transformations common man is witnessing under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Sinha said.

Asserting that peace is first step in the journey of development, he said: "We do not

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Rath's suspension extended for 6 more months

NEW DELHI, July 31:

The suspension of IPS officer Basant Rath, who served the Jammu and Kashmir Police in various capacities, has been extended by six months till January 2024, according to an order issued here.

The Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the 2000 batch was placed under suspension in July 2020 for allegedly displaying insubordination to his superiors despite a court order.

As per the order issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, Rath shall continue to be under suspension for a further period of 180 days from July 31, 2023.

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Ex Pr. Secy Delhi shifted to Ladakh

NEW DELHI, July 31:

Former Principal Secretary (Services) in the Delhi Government Ashish More was transferred by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to Ladakh today, officials said.

More was the first senior officer to be removed from his post, hours after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government in Delhi was given control over matters related to Services by the Supreme Court in its verdict on May 11.

A controversy had erupted after the AAP Government accused more, a 2005-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Arunachal Pradesh Goa Mizoram and Union Territories (AGMUT) cadre, of not complying with an order of Delhi Services Minister Saurabh Bhadraraj.

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Lala's associate held, taken on remand

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 31: The State Investigation Agency (SIA) continued raids in Poonch district for third consecutive day today in connection with narco-terror case involving don Rafiq Lala and others.

The SIA has also taken the custody of Lala's close associate Mohammad Farooq and will be subjecting them to cross-questioning on return from the border district to extract more clues.

The SIA teams led by senior officers took both the accused to Raja Sukhdev Singh District Hospital Poonch for medical examination.

Farooq was later produced in the Poonch court for transit remand as the SIA has to take him to Jammu.

Sources said houses, shops and other premises of nearly

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If din persists, legislation may get through without debate

Senior officers from J&K reach Delhi as 4 bills likely to be taken up anytime now in LS

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 31: Senior officers of the civil administration reached New Delhi today in anticipation of tabling of four Reservation bills of Jammu and Kashmir for passing in Lok Sabha anytime now this week.

Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta also reached New Delhi this afternoon. Besides, other concerned Administrative Secretaries are also camping in the capital.

As per the officials, all four Reservation bills on Jammu and Kashmir which have already been introduced in Lok Sabha are likely to be taken up for passage on any working day now this week, as the Parliament is scheduled to adjourn on August 11.

The bills may even be taken up tomorrow or following day, they said.

After the bills are approved by the Lok Sabha where the BJP enjoys majority on its own, they will be tabled in Rajya Sabha for passing.

"If the bills are cleared by both Houses of Parliament, they will go to the President of India

for assent," the officials said.

There has been uproar in Parliament most of the time with Opposition seeking discussion on Manipur violence.

"Senior officers have reached New Delhi to be present in the Officers' Gallery to assist the concerned Ministers in case of debate on the bills," the officials said.

As per the sources, all four bills are likely to be taken up for discussion and passing in single day as all of them pertained to Jammu and Kashmir.

"Even if pandemonium persists from the Oppositions, the bills are likely to be taken up for discussion and passage," they said.

One of the bills pertained to nomination of two Kashmiri migrants including one woman and a Pakistan occupied Jammu Kashmir (PoJK) refugee in Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir by the Lieutenant Governor while the other is about grant of Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to Pahari Ethnic Tribe, Paddari Tribe, Gadda Brahmins and Kolis.

Third bill proposed to change nomenclature of Other Social Castes (OSCs) to Other

Backward Classes (OBCs) for grant of reservation while fourth bill will include Valmikis in the list of Scheduled Castes.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023 provides for nomination of not more than two members, one of whom shall be a woman, from the community of Kashmiri migrants, and one member from displaced persons from Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir, to the Legislative Assembly of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Delimitation Commission, while undertaking the delimitation process of Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, had received many representations from the Kashmiri migrants as well as from the displaced persons from Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir regarding reservation of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to preserve their political rights and identity, they said.

"It is proposed to amend Section 2 of the Reservation Act

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Changes being carried out in draft on suggestions of panel New Vigilance Manual likely to be approved, notified shortly

All latest guidelines of CVC also incorporated

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, July 31: The new Vigilance Manual of the Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau drafted on the pattern of Central Vigilance Commission is likely to be approved and notified by the Government shortly as at present certain changes are being carried out on the recommendations of a high-level committee constituted in this regard.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that the Vigilance Manual, which is presently being followed by the Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption

Bureau, was notified several years back and till date the same is serving as a reference book for vigilance administration although several significant developments have taken place after the bifurcation of erstwhile J&K State into two Union Territories.

In the middle of 2021, the need for preparing new Vigilance Manual on the pattern of Central Vigilance Commission, which has jurisdiction over the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, was felt and accordingly the Director of the Anti-Corruption Bureau constituted a team of officers for the

task. After detailed exercise the draft of the new Vigilance Manual was submitted to the General Administration Department, which has administrative control over the Anti-Corruption Bureau, for the approval of the competent authority.

"After deliberations over the draft Vigilance Manual in the General Administration Department, a high-level committee was constituted to analyze the same and make necessary recommendations for incorporation in the Manual", sources said while disclosing

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Govt initiates inquiry against Dy Mayor on allegations of corruption

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 31: Government has appointed a Secretary in the Housing and Urban Development Department as Inquiry Officer to investigate the allegations of corruption against the incumbent Deputy Mayor of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC).

"In terms of Section 34 of the Jammu and Kashmir Municipal Corporation Act, 2000, the sanction is hereby accorded to the appointment of Anil Koul, JKAS, Secretary in the Housing and Urban Development Department, as the Inquiry Officer to conduct a detailed inquiry into the allegations of corruption against Parvez Qadri Deputy Mayor,

Srinagar Municipal Corporation, on the basis of inputs/report received from Anti-Corruption Bureau, J&K Srinagar," read an order issued by Principal Secretary to the Government Housing & Urban Development Department, Prashant Goyal.

"The principles of natural justice shall be adhered to during the process of inquiry," the order added.

Anti-Corruption Bureau Srinagar (ACB) last year launched an investigation into the allegations of corruption by Qadri.

As per the officials, over Rs 1.5 crore illegal transactions have been reported directly into Qadri and his family account. They said that the money has been paid by vari-

ous persons including the contractors. They said that there were also allegations of cash amounting to over Rs 5 crore received by Qadri.

They said that the ACB sent its report about the corruption charges against Qadri to the Housing Department for further compliance.

One Abid Ahmad Dar, had brought the charges of corruption against Qadri in Police Station Shaheed Gunj but he later withdrew the complaint. In the complaint, Dar had alleged that Qadri took money from him for construction of a shopping complex.

As per officials, police have also sent its report on the allegations of corruption to the higher ups who in turn sent it to the Housing Department.

'Mufti sought assurance from PM on Art 370'

Mehbooba calls for unity to defeat BJP

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, July 31: Former Chief Minister and president of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Mehbooba Mufti today called for forging unity to defeat the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"If Shia, Sunni, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Bodh, Gujjar, Bakewal and Pahari forge unity, the BJP would be forced to raise the white flag," Mufti said here while addressing the party's 24th Foundation Day.

Mehbooba said that her father Mufti Mohammad Sayeed imposed a condition before Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Government formation in Jammu and Kashmir in 2015.

She said that he had sought assurance that the Article 370 of the Constitution will not be

removed by the Centre.

"When Mufti sahib had 28 seats (in the 2014 Assembly polls), he met Modi and gave his list of conditions for Government formation. He took the assurance from the BJP Government (at the Centre) that (Article) 370 will not be touched. He tied their hands. He was not after power, otherwise he would not take three months to form the (coalition) Government (in Jammu and Kashmir)," she said.

She alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) backtracked from its commitments and accused it of trying to put pressure on the people of Jammu and Kashmir into subjugation.

Mehbooba said her father was not power hungry and wanted to take Jammu and

Kashmir out of problems and troubles. She, however, added that her party is not going to raise the white flag that the saffron party wants.

"I want to tell the BJP that in Lal Chowk in 1949, the late Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru unfurled the national tricolor in the presence of thousands of people and today you are coming to unfurl the flag amid unprecedented security arrangements and no Kashmiri stands there. Is this what they call the achievement?" she asked

Mehbooba said during her father's first term as Chief Minister, significant progress was made on both the reconciliation and development fronts in Jammu & Kashmir, which included the talks between

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Yatris heading towards holy cave on Monday.

Officials said the majority of yatris who performed darshan at holy cave in last 31 days have returned to their home States by now and others are on their way. They said the yatris who performed darshan today also left for Baltal base camp and Panchtarni transit camp.

They said the rush has however, come down during last

some days as compared to first three weeks of the yatra. Officials said that 1,447 yatris were staying at Sheshnag during last night while 2,089 pilgrims had a night stay at Panchtarni.

Officials said that 5,806 pilgrims were staying at Baltal base camp during last night while 2,036 left from there for

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