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**India, US keen to conclude drone deal**

WASHINGTON, Feb 2: India and the United States are keen for an early conclusion of the 30 MQ-9B predator armed drones deal at a cost of over USD 3 billion, which will help New Delhi strengthen its overall surveillance apparatus along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and the Indian Ocean.

In the works for more than five years, the "ball is now in India's court", officials familiar with the development said Wednesday, without explaining

**Pole appointed CEO J&K**

SRINAGAR, Feb 2: The Election Commission of India today appointed Pandurang Kondbarao Pole, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, as Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) J&K. "In exercise of the powers conferred by Representation of the People Act, the Election Commission of India in consultation with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir hereby designates Pandurang Kondbarao Pole, IAS (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

**India gets 1.75 lakh Haj quota**

NEW DELHI, Feb 2: India's Haj quota for this year has been fixed at 1,75,025 according to the bilateral agreement with Saudi Arabia, the Government said today.

In a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Minority Affairs Minister Smriti Irani said the Ministry has had a number of interactive sessions on Haj management with stakeholders, including Haj Committees of the States and Union Territories, wherein requests for restoration of

**India questions WB decision on 2 JK power projects**

NEW DELHI, Feb 2: India today questioned the World Bank's decision to appoint a Court of Arbitration and a neutral expert under two separate processes to resolve differences between New Delhi and Islamabad over the Kishanganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects in Jammu and Kashmir.

**HC seeks NIA's response on Nayeem's bail**

NEW DELHI, Feb 2: The Delhi High Court today sought response of the National Investigation Agency on a plea by separatist leader Nayeem Ahmad Khan seeking bail in a terror-funding case involving 26/11 Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed.

**Briefed on anti-militancy ops CDS reviews security situation in Kashmir**

SRINAGAR, Feb 2: Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan today visited the Line of Control (LoC) and hinterland formations of Army in Kashmir where he was briefed about the security situation.

**Katra bus blast; Narwal, Shastri Nagar terror strikes worked out Govt teacher-turned LeT militant sheltered by JKP Inspector arrested in Jammu**

**Sanjeev Pargal**  
JAMMU, Feb 2: Jammu Police have worked out four terror attacks—three on outskirts of Jammu City and another at Katra, the base camp of holy Mata Vaishno Devi Ji shrine in Reasi district, with the arrest of a Government teacher posted at village Pagihalla in Mahore tehsil, who was putting up at Peerbagh Colony at Sunjuwan in the rented accommodation of a Jammu and Kashmir Police (JKP) Inspector.

**Cop's role under scanner, FIR lodged for not getting tenant verification | Perfume IED recovered for first time being examined by experts: DGP**



DGP Dilbag Singh flanked by senior officers addressing a press conference (left), perfume IED recovered by police (middle) and militant arrested in Jammu (right) on Thursday.

Affiliated with Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) terror outfit, the militant identified as Mohammad Auraf Sheikh alias Arif, 32, son of Ghulam-ud-Din Sheikh, a resident of village Pagihalla in Baransal area of Gulabgarh in Reasi district, he was working as a Government teacher and was posted at Government Middle School Pagihalla.

Initially, he was posted as Rehbar-e-Taleem (ReT) teacher in May 2010 but his services were later regularized on completion of probation term.

With his arrest, police have worked out twin terror attacks at Narwal Transport Yard on January 21, 2023, blast in a passenger bus at Katra carrying Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji pilgrims on May 14, 2022 and explosion near power transformer at Shastri Nagar on February 11, 2022.

Initially, police had dismissed reports of bus in Katra catching fire due to sticky bombs describing it as an incident of fire but later confirmed that it was terror attack.

Arif had stayed in the house of a JKP Inspector at Peerbagh Colony in Sunjuwan on outskirts of Jammu City from December 2021 to March 2022 and December 1, 2022 to January 2023. However, the JKP Inspector hadn't informed police for tenant verification which might have led to the militant's arrest earlier preventing Narwal terror attacks.

"In view of this, Jammu Police have lodged First Information Report (FIR) against the JKP Inspector," sources said, adding investigations are on to find out whether the Inspector was aware of

Inspector hadn't informed police for tenant verification which might have led to the militant's arrest earlier preventing Narwal terror attacks.

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(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

**Gujarat's lion, Karnataka's sloth bear, others to delight visitors Jambu Zoo to be thrown open to public in March-April this year**

**Mohinder Verma**  
JAMMU, Feb 2: Jambu Zoo near Nagrota will be thrown open to the public in March-April this year as only finishing touches are pending and Central Zoo Authority has also agreed to conduct inspection shortly for the registration purpose in the light of the mandatory clearance obtained by the Department of Wildlife of the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that work on all the major components of Jambu Zoo funded by Jammu and Kashmir Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation (JKIDFC)

**\*Central Zoo Authority to conduct inspection shortly**

has been completed and at present finishing touches are being given which will be completed by end of March as Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has given clear directions for throwing open the zoo to the public in March-April this year.

The blacktopping of internal roads of the zoo and laying of tiles on the pathways will begin within next few days and completed well in time. Likewise, tenders are being floated for outsourcing of tickets, cafeteria, parking lot and kiosks and everything will be in place by the end of next month, sources informed.

Moreover, the Department of Wildlife has already obtained all the mandatory clearances and formally approached the Central Zoo Authority for registration purpose. "Before giving registration the Central Zoo Authority team will conduct inspection of the Jambu Zoo and the same is expected anytime this month", sources informed.

The registration of Central Zoo Authority is imperative as apart from the primary function (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

**Ladakh to construct 174.44 lakh litres capacity reservoirs**

**Bivek Mathur**  
JAMMU, Feb 2: The UT administration of Ladakh has been planning under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) reservoirs of capacity 174.44 lakh litres to provide 55 Litre Per Capita Per Day (LPCD) water to individual rural household on a regular basis.

This information was shared in the Lok Sabha in reply to a written question of Member Parliament from Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgayal.

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

**Principal attached for unauthorised use of biometric**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
SRINAGAR, Feb 2: The Government today attached Principal Government Degree College Qazigund in Anantnag district for making unauthorised use of biometric and marking online attendance from different locations.

A Government order said that In-charge Principal GDC Qazigund, Mujahid Ahmad has

**Temps below zero in Kashmir**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
SRINAGAR, Feb 2: The minimum temperature today stayed below sub-zero level in Kashmir barring Srinagar.

A Meteorological Department official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 0.4°C, the same as on previous night. Today's minimum temperature was above normal by 1.1°C for the city.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 2.0°C against 0.2°C the previous night and it was 0.1°C above normal for the town.

(Contd on page 6 Col 5)



A view of Laser Show in Bagh-e-Bahu, Jammu. —Excelsior/Rakesh

**Shopping complex of Hurriyat leader demolished Authorities retrieve land from former Union MoS, Forest Minister's kin**

**Fayaz Bukhari**  
SRINAGAR, Feb 2: The Administration in Anantnag today razed the shopping complex of Hurriyat Conference leader, retrieved the State land from the widow of former Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and kin of former Forest Minister.



Encroached land being retrieved from son of ex-Forest Minister and NC leader Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad Shah at Qazigund on Thursday. —Excelsior/Sajad Dar

An official said that the authorities demolished a shopping complex owned by Hurriyat leader Qazi Ahmed Yasir in Anantnag, as it was raised on Government land.

The shops were demolished this morning in Anantnag, which retrieved two canals of State land from the occupation of Mahtaba widow of former Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Mohammad Maqbool Dar in village Nowgam Shangus in district Anantnag.

The Revenue officials in Tehsil Qazigund retrieved encroached land from kin of former Forest Minister and senior NC leader Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad Shah. The land, measuring, 1 kanal and 18 marlas is registered as Kahcharai in Estate Kurigam of Tehsil Qazigund. The land had been encroached upon by a kin of Shah.

A Revenue official said that the land, valuing more than Rs 1 crore, had been illegally encroached upon

and is one of the many such patches of land retrieved from clutches of influential land grabbers. In the meantime, all shops that were sealed in Aftab Market Lal Chowk in Srinagar last evening were de-sealed today.

An official said that the shops were unsealed as the administration is concerned about the livelihood of the shopkeepers. "All the shops have been de-sealed and rest of the process will follow," he added.

Meanwhile, Kashmir Traders Alliance (KTA) president, Aijaz Shehaldar said that he along with Lal Chowk Traders Association general secretary Sheeraz Ahmad met Tehsildar South over sealing of

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

**'Anti-encroachment drive pro-people' State land being retrieved from vested interests in public interest: CS**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
JAMMU, Feb 2: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today remarked that the encroached State land is being retrieved from the big vested interests only with the purpose of reverting it back for public use.

He was speaking in a meeting of UT, divisional and district administration to take stock of measures being taken to streamline the anti-encroachment drive.

Dr Mehta maintained that these measures are aimed at helping common people. He observed that this land belongs collectively to the masses and retrieved land shall be used for the benefit of all of them. He stated that no person has any legal right to usurp the rights of commoners.



The Chief Secretary further pointed out that such measures should be supported by the public as the retrieved and shall be used for public utility such as hospitals, schools, play grounds, bus stands, industries, parking spaces etc. It shall accelerate all round development in J&K, he said.

He directed the Deputy Commissioners to safeguard the

habitations and livelihoods of poor and downtrodden. He enjoined upon them to develop DPRs for carrying out developmental works on such lands at the earliest so that fruits of these efforts reach the masses.

He stated that some people are voluntarily giving up the encroached lands. He told them to set an example for others and give in writing their testimonies.

Dr Mehta also directed the IT Department to create a dedicated portal for reflecting the actual quantum of State/ Kachharie/Common land retrieved in all the districts is put in public domain for their information. He advised the Revenue Department to carryout Geo-referencing of these public assets so that the same is preserved for the public without ambiguity.



CDS Gen Anil Chauhan during his visit to Kashmir on Thursday.

the launch pads that are inside the Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) near the LoC where scores of militants are waiting for the infiltration. He was told that despite snowfall the Army along the LoC is on high alert to counter any such attempts by the militants.

**CBI empowered with general consent to investigate offences in erstwhile State: HC**

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
JAMMU, Feb 2: While dismissing bunch of petitions, High Court has held that Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is empowered with general consent to investigate offences in the erstwhile State of J&K.

A common question of law as to whether the Central Bureau of Investigation is vested with jurisdiction to investigate offences committed within the territorial jurisdiction of erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir prior to its bifurcation into two Union Territories, has arisen in all these petitions.

It was contended by counsels appearing for the petitioners that the Central Bureau of Investigation lacks jurisdiction to investigate the FIRs which have been impugned

in these petitions because no consent in terms of Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act has been accorded by the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir to the investigation of the instant cases.

According to the petitioners, the Central Bureau of Investigation, before undertaking investigation of the impugned FIRs, was bound to obtain consent of the State Government in individual cases in terms of Section 6 of the DSPE Act and because the same has not been done, as such, the CBI lacks inherent jurisdiction to investigate the impugned FIRs and to file challan against the petitioners.

After hearing battery of lawyers for the petitioners, Advocate General DC Raina for the UT and TM Shamsi for the

Union of India, Justice Sanjay Dhar observed, "a bare perusal of the record reveals that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has accorded a general consent to CBI exercising its jurisdiction in the State of Jammu and Kashmir for investigation of offences mentioned in the letter".


"Had it been a case of consent on case to case basis then the particulars of the case, the particulars of the FIR or the facts of the case regarding which the consent was accorded would have been mentioned in the communication which is not the case.", High Court said, adding "it contains particulars of as many as 13 categories of offences in respect of which Government of Jammu and Kashmir has accorded its consent in terms of Section 6 of the Act. It (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

**AMUL MILK PRICES HAVE BEEN REVISED.**

Product	SKU	Existing MRP (₹)	Revised MRP (₹)
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	1L	63	66
Amul Shakti	500 mL	29	No Change
	1L	58	27
Amul Taaza	500 mL	26	27
	1L	51	54
Amul Slim 'n' Trim	500 mL	22	23

\*MRP (incl. of all taxes). Conditions apply.

The new prices will be effective from the morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb, 2023 in Jammu and nearby markets.



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