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Kargil conspirator no more

ISLAMABAD/DUBAI, Feb 5: Pakistan's wily former military ruler General Pervez Musharraf, the architect of the Kargil War in 1999, died today in Dubai after battling an incurable disease. Musharraf, 79, lived in self-imposed exile in the UAE to avoid criminal charges against him in Pakistan, died after a prolonged illness at the (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Centre likely to hike DA by 4%

NEW DELHI, Feb 5: The Central Government is likely to increase dearness allowance (DA) for its over one crore employees and pensioners by four percentage points to 42 per cent from existing 38 per cent as per the agreed formula (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

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

The Dearness Allowance for employees and pensioners are worked out on the basis of the latest Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW) brought out by the Labour Bureau every month. The (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

DC bars KCCI from holding press conferences

SRINAGAR, Feb 5: The Deputy Commissioner Srinagar has barred the office bearers of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) from holding any public activities, including press conferences, in view of the upcoming elections of the Chamber.

The order was issued on the ground that such activities constitute a violation of the Model Code of Conduct related to the elections.

According to an order issued by the office of the (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Review plea on demonetisation filed in SC

NEW DELHI, Feb 5: A plea seeking a review of the judgement that upheld the Centre's 2016 decision to demonetise Rs 1,000 and Rs 500 currency notes was filed in the Supreme Court today. A five-judge Constitution bench, in a 4:1 majority verdict, on January 2 had given its stamp of approval, saying the decision-making process was neither flawed nor hasty. The review plea was filed by lawyer ML Sharma, one of the 58 petitioners who had moved the top court challenging the demonetisation exercise (Contd on page 4 Col 5)

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WEATHER
JAMMU:
Possibility of light rain / thundershowers
TEMPERATURE
Max: 23.1 Degree C
Min: 8.3 Degree C
RELATIVE HUMIDITY
RH-I (Morning): 90.0 per cent
RH-II (Evening): 73.0 per cent
Sunset on Monday: 06.09 p.m
Sunrise on Tuesday: 07.22 a.m
SRINAGAR:
Possibility of light rain / snow
TEMPERATURE
Max: 12.0 Degree C
Min: 1.8 Degree C
RELATIVE HUMIDITY
RH-I (Morning): 83.0 per cent
RH-II (Evening): 47.0 per cent
LEH:
TEMPERATURE
Max: 1.4 Degree C
Min: -10.8 Degree C

UT short of posts, may be diverted from AGMUT cadre

MHA holds high-level meet on J&K proposal for elevation of 4 IAS officers as FCs

Working of AIS officers on deputation reviewed

Sanjeev Pargal
JAMMU, Feb 5: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has held a meeting with senior officers of the civil administration of Jammu and Kashmir on the proposal for promotion of four Principal Secretaries to the rank of Financial Commissioners and working of the IAS officers who are on deputation from different States/ Union Territories to the UT.

Official sources told the Excelsior that proposal of four senior IAS officers which was discussed by the MHA with the UT administration for elevation from Principal Secretaries to the rank of Financial Commissioners after it was mooted by the UT are Shaleen Kabra, Principal Secretary Jal Shakti Department with additional charge of Revenue, Bipul Pathak, Director General Institute of Management and Rural Development (IMPARD), Ashok Kumar Parmar, Principal

Secretary, ARI and Trainings and Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department with additional charge of Smart Cities and Proposed New Jammu/Srinagar MDMA. All of them are 1992-93 batch IAS officers of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir cadre which was converted into AGMUT by the Union Home Ministry after abrogation of special status of the State and its bifurcation into two Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh. Sources pointed out that 30 years service is mandatory for elevation as the Financial Commissioner and all four officers fulfil this clause of the Rules.

Presently, there are two Financial Commissioners in place including Atal Dulloo in Agriculture Production Department and RK Goyal, Incharge Home Department. After them, Shantmanu is on top of seniority but he is on Central deputation where he has been

posted as Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).

"Sanctioned posts of Financial Commissioners are less in Jammu and Kashmir but the Union Home Ministry can give some posts from the AGMUT cadre as J&K is now part of that cadre," sources said, adding though the meeting was fruitful the final decision of the MHA will be known only after release of minutes of the high-level meeting which are expected here shortly.

The UT Government reportedly proposed that there is no need for creation of new departments and the officers can hold same or other existing departments as FCs as the Government desires.

The administration is quite confident that the proposal will be through as senior IAS officers of Jammu and Kashmir cadre (now AGMUT) have been working hard for last three years in the wake of series of Central Government decisions.

However, it is the MHA

which has to take final call as Jammu and Kashmir is now the Union Territory.

"If the proposal for elevation of four Principal Secretaries as Financial Commissioners is through, four posts will become available for the elevation of Commissioner Secretaries as Principal Secretaries when they become eligible," sources said.

They pointed out that various other aspects of promotional avenues for the IAS officers posted in Jammu and Kashmir also figured at the meeting.

As per the sources, working of the IAS officers, who are on deputation to Jammu and Kashmir from the Centre and various other States/Union Territories, was also discussed/reviewed by senior Home Ministry officers with the UT administration.

Following abrogation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir and its bifurcation into (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

Officials, counsels to be removed in case of adverse court orders

Record geo-coordinates of retrieved land in revenue records: CS to DCs

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Feb 5: As huge chunk of encroached State and Kahcharai land has been retrieved across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir during the ongoing anti-encroachment drive till date, Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta has directed all the Deputy Commissioners to record geo-coordinates of retrieved land patches in the revenue records so as to avoid any misconception or fraud in future.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that in a recent high-level meeting the Chief Secretary was apprised about the status of the land retrieved in

DPRs to be prepared for better use of evicted patches

each district and the measures taken to maintain the law and order by all the Deputy Commissioners and District SPs. After detailed deliberations, the Chief Secretary directed all the Deputy Commissioners to ensure that the geo-coordinates of the retrieved land are recorded and the entry of the same be made in the revenue records as well as 'Roznamcha' by the concerned Patwari counter-signed by the concerned senior Revenue officer and put in public domain, sources said, adding "this is being done to avoid any misconception or fraud in future".

"The courts where objections/report are supposed to be filed should be informed regarding the compliance of the orders", sources said quoting the directions of the Chief Secretary, who has also made it explicitly clear that for any adverse court order/stay in this regard, the concerned official and counsel appearing or failing to appear before the court would be held accountable and removed with immediate effect.

They informed that all the Deputy Commissioners have further been told to put the retrieved land to the best use. "Any department which intends

to use the retrieved land for a specific purpose such as hospitals, playgrounds, bus-stands, parking spaces, schools, colleges, roads and industries etc can formulate Detailed Project Report (DPR) and intimate the proposal for funding during the financial year 2023-23", sources said.

Additional Director General of Police and Divisional Commissioners of Kashmir and Jammu have also been directed by the Chief Secretary to inquire/investigate any person making negative statements with respect to (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

JAMMU, Feb 5: Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has said that Rs one lakh crore worth works of highways and tunnels etc are going on in Jammu and Kashmir and announced that Zojila tunnel in the Union Territory of Ladakh will be completed in next eight months.

He was responding to a question on national channel on the challenge of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to the BJP leaders to show what they have done in Jammu and Kashmir. "One lakh crore worth National Highways and tunnels are under construction in Jammu and Kashmir. Such a large scale of works were never undertaken in J&K during Congress rule," Gadkari said.

He announced that Asia's largest Zojila tunnel in Kargil district in the Union Territory of Ladakh will be completed with-



Tourists enjoying the snow at Drang in Gulmarg on Sunday. (UNI)

Rs one lakh cr worth highways, tunnels under construction in J&K: Gadkari

Zojila tunnel to be completed in 8 months

Excelsior Correspondent

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He announced that Asia's largest Zojila tunnel in Kargil district in the Union Territory of Ladakh will be completed with-

in next eight months. Gadkari said from Shimla to Manali and Leh Ladakh and from there to Sonamarg-



Gulmarg and Srinagar followed by Katra to New Delhi - Mumbai - Surat, Kanyakumari, Hyderabad and Bengaluru, highways are being constructed.

"If we can construct highways, roads, tunnels on such a large scale in just nine years, why the Congress couldn't do so in 60 years?" the Union Minister asked.

Rahul Gandhi during his 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' in Jammu and Kashmir had challenged any BJP leader to travel and show what they have done in Jammu and Kashmir.

Besides construction of vari-

ous National Highways, roads and tunnels in Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has proposed several new Highways in the Union Territory. Many such works are also under construction in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Nitin Gadkari said that the 36% increase in the Ministry of Road Transport Budget would enable India to have roads like those in the US by the end of next year.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the last full budget of the Modi Government 2.0, allocated the Ministry of Road Transport Rs 2.7 lakh crore.

Praising the Union budget 2023, Gadkari emphasized the importance of focusing on backward areas to improve infrastructure. He said that development comes via roadways and that if roads are good, industries will develop and lead to employment, thereby reducing poverty.

He also spoke of the Government's aim to make India self-reliant and a 'super economy' in the world.

Responding to the Opposition's allegations of this being an "election budget", (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

Top officials of security agencies meet

J&K, Punjab, HP devise joint strategy on terror, narcotics, drone activities

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 5: Top officers of Army, CRPF, NDRF and Police from Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab held joint meeting of three States/Union Territory at Pathankot to review security preparedness and coordination.

The meeting was presided over by General Officer Commanding (GOC) 9 Corps, headquartered at Yol Cantonment in Himachal Pradesh, Lt Gen Pushpendra Singh.

Additional Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Mr Chawla, Himachal Pradesh Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sumedha Dwivedi and

DIG Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range Shakti Pathak represented police of three States/UT at the meeting.

Besides them, Deputy Commissioners/Additional Deputy Commissioners and SSPs of Hoshiarpur, Pathankot, Gurdaspur in Punjab; Samba and Kathua in Jammu and Kangra in Himachal Pradesh; and senior officers from Army, CRPF and NDRF were also present, the officials said.

The meeting comes at a time when militant activities have shown slight increase in parts of Jammu as well as Punjab.

"Focus was also on drone activities in the areas falling close to the International Border in Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts of Jammu region and

Punjab," they said.

Coordination among security agencies operating in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab was high on agenda, they said, adding all the agencies of three States/UT agreed to share credible information about militants, drone activities and narcotics smuggling etc.

Narco smuggling, as per the sources, has become major challenge in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab though it has also spread in Himachal but the menace there was not to the extent as witnessed in JK and Punjab, the officials said.

They added that several decisions were taken at the joint meeting pertaining to tackling (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

Experts from IIT visiting Thathri

Landslide at Ramsoo leaves cracks in houses, five families shifted to safer location

Sanjeev K Sharma

JAMMU, Feb 5: The district administration of Ramban has shifted 4-5 families from a hilly hamlet Sujmatna in Ramsoo to a safer location after their residential houses developed cracks and became more prone to landslide as the two already damaged and vacated structures

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behind these started sliding ahead.

Sources informed that the sliding was triggered by earth-cutting work for widening the National Highway (NH) and the

rainfall some 4-5 days back increased its pace.



People from Navi Basti area of Thathri, Doda stay at a relief camp as their houses develop cracks due to landslide.

When contacted, Tehsildar concerned, Nasir Javid said 4-5 families whose residential struc-

tures came under danger zone have now been shifted to a

passengers when the NH gets blocked. "I have visited the spot in Sujmatna and there were cracks in the affected houses," he said adding: "If the slide proceeds further then there is a possibility of damage to 13 more residential structures there."

The Tehsildar also informed that owners of the two-three affected structures, which were already vacated, have been compensated but now with further land cutting these vacated structures have also started sliding further.

"This is hilly and mostly slide prone area and if it rains again sliding will again start and (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Govt yet to appoint Chairperson, Members of Commission for Protection of Child Rights

Bivek Mathur

JAMMU, Feb 5: Over one and a half month since its constitution, the Selection Committee of J&K Government that was tasked with completing the process of appointment of a Chairperson and Members of the Commission for Protection of Child Rights in Jammu and Kashmir, has not made any headway yet, official sources said.

Pertinently, the procedure for constitution of a committee that will recommend a Chairperson and Members of the Commission to the Government has been laid down in Rule 4(1) of the Jammu and Kashmir Commission for Protection of Child Rights Rules notified vide

SO-542 of the Social Welfare Department, Jammu and Kashmir Government, dated October 21, 2022.

Strictly in accordance with the rules, the General Administration Department, through an order issued on December 16, 2022, made the Chief Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir as the Chairperson of the committee and Administrative Secretary, Social Welfare Department and Secretary, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, as the members of the committee.

"The committee of the officers was asked to follow the procedure prescribed in the Jammu and Kashmir Child Rights Commission Rules, 2022 and make selection of the chairperson and member(s) of the Child

Rights Commission.

"The panel was also asked to prepare a select list of the eligible people for the posts of chairperson and members and submit their recommendations to the Government for making the appointments," official sources said.

They said the committee was also asked to prepare a wait list of two persons for each of the posts (Chairperson and Member) to complete the appointment process.

"But thus far, even applications have not been invited from the interested and eligible candidates," sources added.

One of the panel members, Sheetal Nanda, the Administrative Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Jammu and Kashmir Government, con-

firmed to the Excelsior that the process has not been initiated yet.

"No, the committee hasn't initiated the process yet. But very soon, we will put up the file with Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, who will accordingly lay down the criteria of selections," Nanda said.

The other member of the committee, Achal Sethi, Secretary, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Jammu and Kashmir, also confirmed that the process has not been started yet to appoint a Chairperson and members of the Commission.

For the process to begin, sources said, the Government needs to invite applications from the qualified candidates from the public through an advertisement (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

MeT forecasts snowfall across Kashmir, avalanche warning issued

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Feb 5: The Disaster Management Authority today issued a low danger avalanche warning for the hills of Kashmir while the weatherman has forecasted snowfall across Kashmir.

The low danger avalanche warning was issued for the hills of Ganderbal, Bandipora, Kupwara and Baramulla. People living in these areas are advised to take precautions and avoid venturing in the avalanche prone areas till further orders.

In the meantime, the weatherman has forecasted fairly widespread light snow on February 6 in Kashmir.

A Meteorological Department official said that partly cloudy weather was

expected on February 7-8. "Light to moderate snow/rain was expected at many places during February 9 (night) -11th," the official said.

The minimum temperature saw further increase except at a few places with Srinagar recording a low of 1.8°C against minus 0.4°C on the previous night. Today's minimum temperature was above normal by 2.2°C for the city.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 0.4°C against minus 3.0°C the previous night and it was 1.1°C above normal for the town.

Pahalgam recorded a low of 5.4°C against minus 0.9°C on the previous night and it was 0.8°C above normal for the famous tourist resort.

Kokernag recorded a low of minus 0.0°C against minus 1.8°C

the previous night and it was 2.0°C above normal for the place.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 6.4°C against minus 5.5°C the previous night and it was 0.3°C above normal for the skiing resort.

In Kupwara town, the mercury settled at 2.9°C against minus 1.8°C the previous night and it was 4.9°C above normal for the town.

Ladakh's Leh and Kargil recorded a low of minus 10.8°C and minus 15.4°C respectively.

While Chillai-Kalan, the 40-day long harsh winter period that started on December 21 has ended, Kashmir is under the grip of a 20-day-long period called 'Chillai-Khur'd'. It will be followed by a 10-day-long period 'Chillai-Bacha' (baby cold) which will end on February 28.