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BVR appointed CEO NITI Aayog

NEW DELHI, Feb 20:
Former IAS officer B V R Subrahmanyam was today appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NITI Aayog replacing Parameswaran Iyer, who has been named as the Executive Director of World Bank.

Subrahmanyam, a 1987-batch Indian Administrative Service (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

SIU conducts raids in Tral

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 20: The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) Awantipora in Pulwama district today conducted raids at two dif-

* Pic on page 4
Video on www.excelsiornews.com
ferent locations in the Tral area of South Kashmir.

The searched locations were residential houses of Jamsheed (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Ladakh Admn withholds PHE CE's salary

Excelsior Correspondent
LEH, Feb 20: Ladakh Administration today ordered to withhold the salary of Chief Engineer, PHE/L&FC for his alleged absence from the duty. A charge sheet with a statement of imputation has also been forwarded to Union Territory of (Contd on page 4 Col 5)

17 Armed batch Inspectors among 41 promoted as DySPs

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Feb 20: Government today ordered stop-gap placement of 41 Inspectors as Deputy Superintendents of Police (DySPs) in their own pay and grade. As per an order, Inspectors Vishal Shore, Vinod Kumar, Manjeet Singh, Gulzar Ahmad, Rakesh Jamwal, Kirpal Singh, (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

HC notice on no Penal Code for foreigners in J&K

NEW DELHI, Feb 20:
The Delhi High Court has issued notice to the Union of India on a petition against the absence of a Penal Code in operation for foreign nationals in Jammu and Kashmir.

Comm to probe irregularities

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Feb 20: The Government today constituted a Panel that will inquire into the financial irregularities in Kupwara and Kulgam districts under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchay Yojana (PMKSY)-Watershed Development Component (WDC) 2.0. (Contd on page 9 Col 3)

Task Force (s) constituted for implementation of projects Govt sets into motion exercise for 24x7 water supply in J&K

Nishikant Khajuria
JAMMU, Feb 20: Union Territory Government has set into motion the exercise for implementation of 24x7 water supply projects under the AMRUT 2.0 in Jammu and Kashmir. However, implementation of the projects include 100 percent consumer metering with each meter GIS tagged and tariff based on volumetric consumption. Kick starting the exercise in this connection, the J&K Government today ordered constitution of Union Territory Level Task Force and City Level Task Force(s) for planning, design and

Two Admn Secys among 3 apply for deputation MHA to extend stay of AIS officers posted in J&K, Ladakh by 3 months initially

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Feb 20: In a significant decision, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has decided to extend deputation of All India Services (AIS) officers to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, who were sent to the two Union Territories in view of shortage of the officers, by at least three more months which could be further extendable, if necessitated, while three senior IAS officers have applied for the Central deputation and two of them have been given clearance.

Official sources told the Excelsior that two IAS officers, posted as Deputy Commissioners in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, whose deputation of two years has ended, have been given three months extension. However, as Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are yet to come out of shortage of officers, a decision has been taken that all AIS officers posted in the two Union Territories will be granted minimum extension of three months followed by

*Six officials to be deputed to two UTs shortly

another three months, if necessitated.

However, the AIS officers, who want to return to the Centre or States, where they were posted before proceeding on deputation to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, will be allowed to leave the Union Territories, they said, adding the MHA is ready with a list of AIS officers who could be deputed to the two UTs following return of officers from the deputation as shortage of IAS officers still exists.

Meanwhile, three senior IAS officers posted in Jammu and Kashmir have applied for Central deputation. They include two Administrative Secretaries, one of them a woman.

"The Jammu and Kashmir Government has given NOC to both the senior officers and their deputations will now be cleared by the Department of Personnel and

Trainings (DoPT) and Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) before they formally proceed to the Centre," sources said.

Both of them are tipped to get prestigious postings in New Delhi, sources said, adding deputation of one of them will be for a period of two years and five years for the second one. Both the IAS officers have held several prestigious postings in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sources said another senior IAS officer has also applied for the Central deputation but he is yet to get NOC from the Government.

Few days back, the Central Government had posted senior IAS officer of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir cadre (now AGMUT) Dr Mandeep K Bhandari to Jammu and Kashmir from the Central deputation.

Sources said the MHA is ready with a list of six AIS officers who could be posted in the (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

PIL seeking prosecution sanction in corruption cases

DB grants last opportunity for filing latest ATR

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 20: In a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking prosecution sanction in the corruption cases, a Division Bench of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court comprising Chief Justice N Kotiswar Singh and Justice Tashi Rabstan has granted last and final opportunity to Senior Additional Advocate General Monika Kohli for filing the necessary affidavits/ latest status/Action Taken Report in terms of order dated December 27, 2022.

Vide order dated December 27, 2022, the Division Bench had directed the General Administration Department of J&K Government and Department

of Personnel and Training of the Government of India to file the latest status/ATR in terms of the four compilations filed by Advocate General DC Raina on December 15, 2021 highlighting the cases awaiting the prosecution sanction from competent authorities against the IAS/JKAS officers involved in corruption cases.

The Division Bench headed by Chief Justice had directed Deputy Solicitor General of India Vishal Sharma to file the requisite affidavit on behalf of DoPT Govt of India within the same period.

These significant directions were passed in the much publicized Public Interest Litigation (09/2012) titled Sheikh Mohd Shafi & another Vs UOI & Ors wherein the petitioners have highlighted the non-

grant of prosecution sanction in corruption cases involving bureaucrats serving in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Union Territories.

When the much publicized PIL came-up for hearing, Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed with Advocates Supriya Chouhan and Mohd Zulkarnain Chowdhary appearing for the PIL, submitted that despite the clear directions issued on December 27, 2022, the Govt of Jammu & Kashmir did not file the requisite status/ ATR disclosing the reasons for non-grant of prosecution sanction against the tainted bureaucrats.

Advocate Ahmed further submitted that the Govt of J&K is non-serious in granting prosecution sanction in corruption (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

NGT sets up Panel headed by J&K CS

NEW DELHI, Feb 20:
Taking the suo moto cognizance of a media report stating damage in structures in Doda district, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered for the constitution of a joint committee to be headed by the Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir to suggest remedial measures and prevent environmental damage.

Report stated damages in 21 structures in the Doda district.

The Tribunal said, "this is a matter of concern, calling for stringent preventive and remedial measures inter alia to regulate the (Contd on page 4 Col 5)

Panthers Party office sealed

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Feb 20: Ahead of formal re-joining of Panthers Party by Harsh Dev Singh, Government today sealed the party office at Gandhi Nagar Jammu.

The party office situated at 30-B Gandhi Nagar, was allotted to Prof Bhim Singh- founder of the Panthers Party, for residential purpose when he was Member of Legislative Council.

According to Vilakshan Singh, President of Jammu and Kashmir (Contd on page 9 Col 3)

Reducing Army presence Govt's prerogative: Farooq

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 20: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah today said reducing the Army footprint in Jammu and Kashmir was a prerogative of the Government.

"That is a matter for the Government. How much they will reduce or increase is their prerogative. I have no say in it," he told reporters at the National Conference headquarters here. The Lok Sabha member from (Contd on page 4 Col 6)

Panel to suggest measures against road accidents

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Feb 20: The Government today constituted a committee to suggest measures for making Batote-Doda-Kishtwar Road accident free.

The five-member committee will ascertain the reasons for increasing cases of road accidents in the hilly terrain of Chenab Valley on Batote-Doda-Kishtwar Road and suggest measures for making this stretch accident free. (Contd on page 4 Col 4)

Bridge develops cracks

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 20: A vital under-construction bridge coming up at a cost of Rs 4 crores over Hardkhari rivulet in Haril area of Handwara in Kupwara district has developed cracks.

The locals reached the site to express their resentment and were later joined by BDC member Mawar Tahir Ahmad.

The BDC member said he received a complaint from locals, who alleged the authori- (Contd on page 4 Col 5)



Bee farming on the outskirts of Jammu.

—Excelsior/Rakesh

Inaugurates NZ Youth Festival at Katra SMVDSB devoted to provide better facilities to pilgrims: LG

Excelsior Correspondent

KATRA, Feb 20: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today visited the holy shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji and paid obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum.

He was accompanied by Mahamandleshwar Swami Vishveshwaranand Giri Maharaj and other Board members and prayed for peace, prosperity and happiness for all.

During his visit, Sinha inaugurated Tripti Bhojanalaya and Prasad Kendra cum Souvenir Shop at the holy shrine.

"Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board is fully devoted to (Contd on page 9 Col 1)



LG Manoj Sinha offering prayers at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji shrine on Monday.

ney more convenient, organized and memorable for the devotees, he added.

The Lt Governor, who is also the Chairman of the SMVDSB took first-hand appraisal of the progress of the ongoing construction work of Durga Bhawan and other facilities.

SMVDSB has decided to develop Shankaracharya temple near Katra. Durga Bhawan will be dedicated to devotees before Navratri festival this year. It will provide accommodation to 3000 (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

pilgrims per day near Bhawan, the Lt Governor said.

Chief Executive Officer SMVDSB Anshul Garg briefed the Lt Governor about ongoing projects and the efforts of the board for upgrading and expanding the facilities for the pilgrims.

Meanwhile, the Lieutenant Governor inaugurated the North Zone Youth Festival 'KSHITILJ' at Spiritual Growth Centre, Katra today.

The 3-day North Zone Youth (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

Anantnag-Poonch, Ladakh to figure in 60 seats As a run up to 2024 LS polls, BJP to launch Minority Outreach Prog from Mar 10

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, Feb 20: As a run up to next year's Parliamentary elections, Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Minority Outreach programme across the country from March 10 this year with focus on Jammu & Kashmir UT also.

According to party sources, as a part of the programme, 64 districts in 14 States and Union Territories all over country have been identified in this regard in the first phase. They included Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, Goa, Haryana, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Ladakh, Maharashtra, Kerala and Bihar. (Contd on page 9 Col 1)

Sources said this has been a major policy decision of the party to woo minorities taken in its National Executive meeting held last month in which Prime Minister, Narendra Modi called for reaching out to the minority community especially the Pasmanda (backward) Muslims.

The decision was also ratified in Morcha's National Executive meeting held at Raipur (MP) in first week of this month, sources said, adding the meeting while endorsing the decision and taking a cue from PM's call has decided to take up pro people policies of Modi Government to every nook and corner of the country inhabited by minority community members.

Sources said in this regard, (Contd on page 9 Col 1)

Even after 7 years of announcement, Admn fails to make BSL-3 Lab functional in GMC Jammu

Govind Sharma

JAMMU, Feb 20: Although seven years have passed when the announcement regarding installation of Bio Safety Level (BSL)-3 Lab in Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu was made by Jammu and Kashmir Government, yet the administration of the Medical College has failed to make this facility functional while ignoring suffering of the patients.

As per official sources, the BSL-3 lab, one each for Kashmir and Jammu regions were announced by the J&K Government in the year 2015 after the outbreak of Swine Flu in the erstwhile State so that such pandemics could be tackled effectively in the future. (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Accordingly, funds for the tune of Rs 6.3 crore were released for the Lab at GMC Jammu and Rs 5.63 crore for the Lab to be established in CD Hospital Srinagar. Sources said while both the labs were announced simultaneously, the Lab in Chest Disease Hospital Srinagar was made functional in the year 2018 on fast track basis but the Lab at GMC Jammu is still in installation stage.

Sources revealed that after four years of announcement of the Lab in GMC Jammu, the administration of the Medical College woke up from slumber in the year 2019 and allotted the task of installation of the Lab to Biosafe India Limited, the company which had installed the Lab in CD Hospital Srinagar. They said the company started the work soon after allot-

ment but first it left the work midway due to non-payment of dues and then due to outbreak of COVID-19 and resultant lockdown.

Disclosing present status of the Lab work, sources said while the Company has installed the Lab completely but it could not be made functional in the absence of a dedicated power supply line, DG Set and RO Plant, which were not included in the DPR made earlier. They said last year a fresh DPR was made with provision of a dedicated Power Transformer, DG Set and RO Plant and after approval of the Government and release of funds to the tune of Rs 1.5 crore, tendering was done. (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

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