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Militants roam freely in Pak: Akhtar

LAHORE, Feb 21: The perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks are still roaming freely in Pakistan and Pakistanis should not feel offended when India talks about the 2008 carnage, lyricist and poet Javed Akhtar has said.

In a viral video from the seventh Faiz Festival organised here in memory of celebrated Urdu (Contd on page 9 Col 1)

Farooq for rehab of landslide victims

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 21: National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah today

*Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

urged the administration to provide relief and rehabilitation to the affected families of landslide in Ganderbal district.

Dr Abdullah visited the fam- (Contd on page 9 Col 3)

The Kashmir Files bags top honours

MUMBAI, Feb 21: Vivek Agnihotri's The Kashmir Files bagged top honours at the Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2023.

The much-acclaimed film was awarded as the Best Film at the film festival award ceremony.

On winning the award, The (Contd on page 9 Col 3)

MDS seats increased to 4 in GDC&H

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 21: The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW), Government of India has granted permission for increasing the intake capacity of MDS from 3 to 4 Government Dental College & Hospital (GDC&H),

(Contd on page 9 Col 5)

5 IFS officers promoted

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Feb 21: The Government has promoted five officers of Joint AGMUT Cadre of Indian Forest Services (IFS) from J&K to the post of Conservator of Forests (CF).

Those promoted are- Shokat Ali Chaudhary (AGMUT-2008), Sajjad Hussain Mufti (AGMUT-2008), Tawheed Ahmed Deva (AGMUT-2009), B Mohandaas (AGMUT-2009) and Syed Nadeem Hussain (AGMUT-2009).

IT searches Uflex premises in J&K, other States

NEW DELHI, Feb 21: The Income Tax Department today conducted searches at

*Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

multiple premises linked to packaging major Uflex as part of an investigation against the company for alleged tax evasion, officials said.

(Contd on page 9 Col 3)

HC for fixing seniority of AWs

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 21: The High Court has quashed the Government order whereby seniority of Anganwari Workers (AWs) has been fixed from the date of acquiring higher qualification instead of their initial appointment and directed the authorities to fix their seniority on the basis of initial engagement.

(Contd on page 9 Col 5)

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Normalcy due to PM's decisive leadership: Pradhan
Big changes in J&K; it's now getting full benefits of development, progress: Jaishankar

Sanjeev Pargal
NEP has changed entire scenario: Dr Jitendra

JAMMU, Feb 21: External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar said today that Jammu and Kashmir is now availing full benefits of development and progress like rest of India because of the

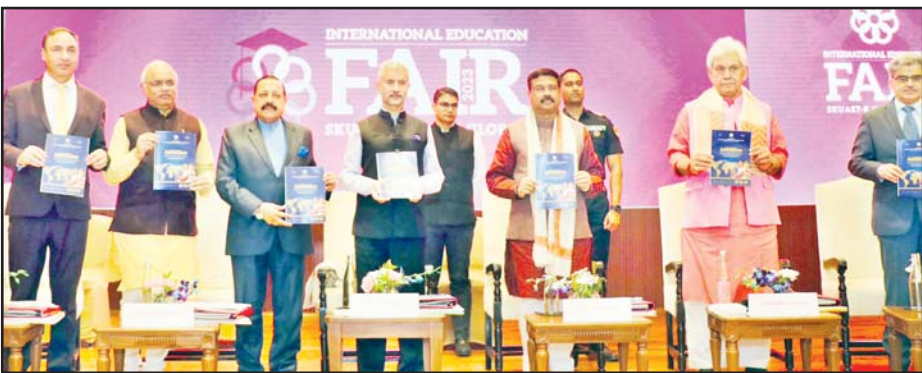
2023' organized by SKUAST Kashmir at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in New Delhi this evening in the presence of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of State in the Prime

Minister said the changes brought people of Jammu and Kashmir especially the youth into national mainstream which was very important. With this, the youth were, in fact, connected to international mainstream like other parts of India, he added.

"This is not just an educational event for me but an important region of India is connected to what is happening in the world. This will bring more international students in the country. This policy of partnership between Education Ministry and Ministry of External Affairs will fully succeed," Jaishankar said.

He added that presently there are 20,000 to 25,000 international students in India, a number which is very small and we have ability to scale up the numbers. "As we have good relations in the world, number of the international students can go up," he said.

Jaishankar also referred to 2023 as 'International Year of (Contd on page 9 Col 3)



Union Ministers S Jaishankar, Dharmendra Pradhan and Dr Jitendra Singh, LG Manoj Sinha and others at an event in New Delhi on Tuesday.

changes brought by the Central Government three and half years ago leading to youth's entry into national mainstream.

He was addressing 'International Education Fair-

Minister's Office (PMO) Dr Jitendra Singh, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) president Dr V Sahasrabudhe among others. "The process which was to abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution of India granting special status to erstwhile State of J&K which were scrapped by the Central Government on August 5, 2019. The External Affairs

Houses up to 1000 sq ft area exempted J&K orders imposition of Property Tax in Municipal limits from Apr 1

Minimum rates for 100-200 sq ft shops

However, residential houses up to a built-up area of 1000 square feet have been exempted from the purview of Property Tax while smaller assets have been taxed at very lower rates. The tax rates are, however, far

less as compared to Chandigarh, Delhi and Ludhiana. People living in posh localities like Gandhi Nagar in Jammu and Rajbagh in Srinagar with values of their assets being more than Rs 5 crore, will have to pay Rs 500 per month while people having 3 BHK apartment will have to pay just Rs 100 per

FOR RESIDENTIAL ESTABLISHMENTS (Tax Payable in Rs)				
Property	Jammu/ Srinagar	Chandigarh	Delhi	Ludhiana
Residential House/Flat upto 1000 Sqft	0	600-1000	300-7000	150-3500
Flat/Apartment 1500 Sqft	100-1150	900-1500	500-10000	300-10000
Residential Independent 2000 Sqft	225-2500	1200-2000	650-14000	400-13000

month. Similarly, small commercial (Contd on page 13 Col 7)

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 21: The Union Territory administration today ordered imposition of Property Tax in Municipal areas of the Union Territory from April 1.

The tax rates will be five per cent of Taxable Annual Value (TAV) for residential properties and six per cent for commercial properties.

Several key posts of officers too lying vacant J&K Water Resources Regulatory Authority remains headless since Jan last year

Functioning suffering, decisions on key issues pending

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Feb 21: The functioning of Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority is suffering immensely as administration has not paid any serious attention towards appointment of new Chairperson and one Member during the past over one year. Moreover, several key posts of the officers are lying vacant in the Authority, which otherwise is vested with the responsibility of regulating water resources across the Union Territory.

Former Chairman of Central Water Commission G S Jha was appointed Chairperson of

Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority on October 22, 2020 by the Government in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 139 of the Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources (Regulation and Management) Act, 2020.

Similarly, in the month of April 2021, the Government appointed A Paramesham, Chairman Krishna River Management Board and Kishore Chandra Naik, former Chairman, Central Ground Water Board as Members of the Authority.

G S Jha completed his tenure on attaining the age of 65 years in the month of January 2022 while as A Paramesham resigned

(Contd on page 9 Col 5)

Govt approves construction of multi-level parking at GMC Jammu at Rs 18 cr

Irfan Tramboo

SRINAGAR, Feb 21: The Health and Medical Education (H&ME) Department has approved the construction of the Multi-Level Parking in the Super Speciality Block of Government Medical College (GMC), Jammu at the estimated cost of Rs over Rs 18 crores.

The concerned have been directed to execute the work strictly as per the details provided and item-wise rejections in the original DPR duly vetted by Development Commissioner (Works), PW(R&B) Department, while it has been noted that the proposals shall be strictly devised and designed as per the latest relevant I.S codes and specifications of MoRTH/CPWD.

"...the same is authenticated and proof checked by the competent authority (NIT/DIQC), before taking up the execution of the works in hand and the Electrical/Mechanical/Electronic Components are to be authenticated and technically vetted by the competent authorities of the relevant field," the H&ME said.

Further, as per the conditions laid, it has been stated that the standard specifications are to be followed as per CPWD, NBC and IS standards and as defined in CPWD Plinth Area Rate Schedule for the type of structures, proposed in the DPR, which the H&ME said, are to be followed and adopted for the execution of the works.

"The architectural drawings are to be duly approved by the project authority and the work (Contd on page 9 Col 7)

Govt hikes wages of DRWs

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 21: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has enhanced the wages of Daily Rated Workers (DRWs), including Casual Labourers engaged in all the Government departments, Municipalities and Local Bodies.

(Contd on page 9 Col 1)

SIA raids across Kashmir

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Feb 21: The Sate Investigation Agency

*Pic on page 9
Video on www.excelsiornews.com

(SIA) carried out raids at multiple locations across Kashmir this morning as part of its investigation of a narco-militancy (Contd on page 9 Col 1)

Tenga likely to be new KCC&I president

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Feb 21 : After three years delay, the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCC&I)

(Contd on page 9 Col 7)

Jammu-Sgr NH blocked

Excelsior Correspondent

RAMBAN, Feb 21: The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was blocked after landslides near Banihal last night.

Official sources said that due to road widening activity recently, some boulders hit the hillock at Shelgarhi near (Contd on page 9 Col 3)



Panoramic view of Sunset over Surinsar lake in Jammu.

'Cinema halls, schools, businesses running smoothly' Pak exported terror to J&K for 3 decades; peace restored after 370 abrogation: LG

Stone pelting, hartals have become things of past

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 21: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today said that peace has returned to Jammu and Kashmir; investments and tourists are coming and stone pelting and strikes have become things of the past.

Addressing 'International Education Fair-2023' organized by SKUAST Kashmir at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in New Delhi this evening, Sinha said schools, businesses, cinema halls and shopping malls are now operating smoothly in Kashmir and the UT is marching on path of development under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Describing Jammu and Kashmir as crown and Switzerland of India and paradise on earth, the Lieutenant Governor said during last three decades the land of historians, Sufis & Saints was disturbed by terrorism exported from the neighbouring country, a reference towards Pakistan.

"Everybody knows the neighbouring country had become breeding ground for terrorism. For three decades, they exported terrorism to India and the world. However, three years after abrogation of Article 370, peace has come to Jammu and Kashmir. Investments are coming up. There has been increase in domestic and well as foreign tourists," he said.

Asserting that stone pelting and strikes have become thing of past, Sinha said the schools, business, cinema halls and shopping malls are running in Kashmir without any interruptions.

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir is marching on the path of development," he added.

Sinha expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister for accelerating development of J&K and transforming it into a favourite destination for students, travellers and entrepreneurs.

He said with this initiative, J&K has launched a dedicated

programme for foreign students. "Our aim is to invite international students to J&K for short-term and long-term courses in various disciplines & strengthen the international connect. Over the past three years, we have focused on strengthening education sector, developing knowledge workers for sectors like industries, agriculture & health care. Sincere efforts have been made to convert the knowledge dividends into wealth for process of innovation & growth," the Lt Governor said.

He also observed that the initiative of SKUAST-Kashmir will set an example for other Universities of the country as well.

"Apart from campuses nestled in nature's paradise, professional faculties, high standard of living, J&K is also offering variety of courses starting from Artificial Intelligence, Robotics to Agri science, Yoga, Sanskrit & interface with the industries for research & innovation," he further said. (Contd on page 9 Col 3)

Take Modi's welfare schemes to masses: Sood People of J&K paying for blunders of Cong, NC, PDP: Chugh

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, Feb 21: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), national general secretary, Incharge J&K, Tarun Chugh today accused the Congress, National Conference (NC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) of 'putting J&K into flames with their wrong policies.'

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a party meeting here, today, Chugh alleged that the people of J&K are paying for the blunders of these three parties. He said that during 1987 and 1988, the then Governor of J&K, Jagmohan had sent many letters to then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi informing his

Government about the deteriorating situation in Kashmir and his apprehensions that militancy may engulf the erstwhile State if corrective steps were not taken but the Congress Government at Delhi failed to take any cognizance of the same.

While decrying the role of Congress, he said these all letters are in public domain in Delhi at present. He said instead of taking a preemptive action, Congress later opposed Jagmohan and this resulted that Kashmir was engulfed by militancy in 1989-90 when National Conference and Congress were ruling in alliance in the then State and Dr Farooq Abdullah

was heading the Government. He said during this time the Kashmiri Pandits were made target by militants and many members of the community were killed resulting into their mass exodus. (Contd on page 9 Col 7)

Known for scenic beauty, Pahalgam lacks TRC

Suhail Bhat

SRINAGAR, Feb 21: Pahalgam, a popular tourist destination in Kashmir, continues to operate without a Tourist Reception Centre (TRC) more than eight years after the old building was destroyed in a massive fire.

Pahalgam is known for its scenic beauty, lush green forests, and gushing rivers. It has been a go-to destination for tourists from around the world. However, the lack of a TRC has become a cause for concern for tourists and locals alike.

The old TRC building was gutted in a massive blaze in 2014, and since then, no efforts have been made to construct a new TRC. The authorities have

failed to take any action despite the demands of the locals and the tourist industry.

Officials privy to the details said that the reconstruction of the TRC in Pahalgam was stalled after the then Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, asked the Tourism Department to find an alternate location for its construction.

He said that the then Chief Minister had found the current location "unfit" for the TRC as he believed the structure could block the scenic view of mountains. "So, it stalled the reconstruction process," he said.

However, despite repeated requests from the locals and the tourism industry, no alternate location till been finalized till date, and the TRC remains non-

existent. This delay has caused inconvenience to tourists and has affected the tourism industry in Pahalgam.

"Pahalgam is a world-class tourist resort, and thousands of people visit this place to enjoy nature's beauty. Yet it is regrettable that we lack a TRC, which is essential for a tourism destination. It is regrettable that the government is unable to locate a suitable site for the restoration of the TRC," Mushtaq Ahmad, a local hotelier said.

The lack of a TRC has also become a hindrance in the promotion of Pahalgam as a winter tourism destination. In recent years, the Government has been making efforts to promote Pahalgam as a winter destination (Contd on page 9 Col 5)

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