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## 4 of family found dead in Ramban

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
RAMBAN, Jan 28: Four members of a family were found dead under mysterious circumstances in the snow-covered far-away Balihote village of Ramban today.

\* Watch video on [www.excelsiornews.com](http://www.excelsiornews.com)

Police sources said that initial reports suggest they may have died due to asphyxiation or severe cold, however, the actual cause of death (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

## HC directive to issue degrees

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
SRINAGAR, Jan 28: The High Court has directed the Jammu University (JU) to issue provisional degrees to its students for qualifying their MD and MS Ayurveda Post Graduation course in the campus in order to pursue their next academic career and prospective employment.

Few candidates approached the court through seeking direction upon the University to issue their (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

## Court orders attachment of Hurriyat office

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
SRINAGAR, Jan 28 : A Delhi Court has ordered attachment of the office of All Parties Hurriyat Conference at Raj Bagh, here.

Additional Sessions Judge, New Delhi district, Shaliender Malik, said the immovable property i.e. building office of All Parties Hurriyat Conference is ordered to be attached.

The order passed by an NIA court in New Delhi was under (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

## Forecast of heavy snowfall on Jan 30

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
SRINAGAR, Jan 28 : The Weatherman today forecast heavy snowfall in Kashmir on January 30 and said that it may affect surface and air traffic.

A Meteorological Department official said that light snow and rain was expected at scattered places in the next 24 hours.

On January 30, the MeT department forecast (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

## Ex ATP in SDA suspended

**Excelsior Correspondent**  
JAMMU, Jan 28: Housing and Urban Development Department today placed a former Srinagar Development Authority (SDA) employee under suspension.

"Pending enquiry into his conduct and in terms of Rule 31(1) of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956, Wahid Ali Sodagar, then I/c Assistant Town Planner, Srinagar Development (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

## Centre set to release pending grants of Urban, Rural Local Bodies

**Sanjeev Pargal**

JAMMU, Jan 28: The Central Government has decided to release grants for Rural and Urban Local Bodies to pace up developmental works in both rural and urban areas even as the Finance Department today said that balance 25 percent funds under the Capex Budget for the current financial year will be released only after expenditure level rises to 70 percent of the released funds.

Official sources told the Excelsior that grants pending for Urban and Rural Local Bodies will be released by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) shortly as this is their last year of term. Five-year-term of both the bodies will expire around December this year and elections for them have to be conducted in November-December.

"Even next financial year's grants will also be released with beginning of next fiscal year on April 1, 2023 to ensure that whatever works the Panchayats and Municipalities can do during their remaining period of term can be executed before new representatives take over the helm of affairs in December-January," sources said.

However, term of the Block Development Councils (BDCs) is till November 2024 while that of District Development Councils (DDCs) is till December 2025.

Sources said the grants for Rural Local Bodies including Panchayats, BDCs and DDCs and Urban Local Bodies including Municipal Corporations, Councils and Committees will boost developmental works in both urban and rural areas.

"Even since elections were held to Panchayats, BDCs, DDCs and Municipalities (Panchayat and Municipal elections were held prior to abrogation of Article 370 while that of BDCs and DDCs were conducted after that), the Central Government has been releasing timely grants to both the bodies," sources pointed out.

Recently, the Rural Development Department had announced release of pending amount to Rural Bodies under the 14th Finance Commission for specific works which had earlier been frozen.

Meanwhile, the Finance Department has reminded the Departments of a rider on release of remaining 25 percent funds under Capex (Capital Expenditure) Budget during current financial year of 2022-23.

The Finance Department has released 75 percent funds under Capex budget during current financial year of 2022-23.

"While releasing 75 percent funds under Capex budget, it has been mentioned that balance 25 percent funds shall be released only when expenditure level is 70 percent of the released funds," an order issued by the Finance Department said.

It said all Departments shall incur expenditure as per actual execution level of the projects and emphasis shall be laid on projects which are going to be completed during current financial year of 2022-23.

The bills shall be accordingly preferred at the Treasuries for payment, the order said.

The Finance Department order intimated to all the Departments that under Capex Budget, balance 25 percent funds in respect of the works shall be released provided the expenditure is 70 percent or above out of the already released funds.

It added that the Treasury Officers shall entertain bills as per released funds in respect of each work against work done claims.

Sources said the decision was aimed at economy and austerity measures and rationalization of expenditure by the Government Departments.

(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

## Will give boost to developmental works

## Centre set to release pending grants of Urban, Rural Local Bodies

**\*FD imposes rider on release of remaining 25 pc funds**

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(Contd on page 6 Col 3)

## Cong has to be fulcrum of any Oppn against BJP: Jairam Mehbooba, Priyanka join BJY in Pulwama under tight security

**Fayaz Bukhari**

SRINAGAR, Jan 28: People's Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti and Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi joined Rahul Gandhi at the Bharat Jodo Yatra in South Kashmir as the party's foot march reached its final destination of Srinagar.

The yatra resumed from Awantipora where former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, her daughter Iltija Mufti and mother Gulshan Mufti joined Gandhi.

Large number of people, mostly supporters of the PDP, joined the rally amid tight security. There was a large security presence in the rally after Rahul yesterday alleged a security breach.

Mehbooba, who walked several kilometers with Rahul, said the Bharat Jodo Yatra is like a breath of fresh air in Kashmir as it allowed people to come out of their homes in numbers for the first time since 2019.

"Rahul Gandhi's yatra comes like a breath of fresh air in Kashmir. It is the first time since 2019 that Kashmiris have come out of their homes in such massive numbers. It was a great experience to walk with him," Mehbooba tweeted.

**Kharge seeks adequate security for BJY**

NEW DELHI, Jan 28: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah seeking his intervention in ensuring adequate security to the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir.

His letter to Shah comes (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

Priyanka Gandhi walked alongside the former Congress president amidst tight security (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka wave at crowd as they lead Bharat Jodo Yatra in Kashmir on Saturday. Another pic on page 6.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh speaking at the Conclave in Kathua on Saturday.

Jitendra Singh today made it clear that the Treaty does not debar India to make water for non consumption use.

Talking to reporters here today on the sidelines of inauguration of two-day young Start-Up Conclave, Dr Jitendra Singh

alleged that the neighboring country has from time to time created controversies on Indus Water Treaty which has never been violated by India since it was signed by two riparian countries in 1960.

Dr Jitendra Singh said under (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

## Appraisal of employees' performance under Article 226

## Govt directs deptts to conduct internal reviews, submit reports

**Mohinder Verma**

JAMMU, Jan 28: Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has directed all the departments to conduct internal reviews and submit reports so that performance of the employees can be analyzed in the light of the provisions of Article 226 of the J&K Civil Services Regulations.

Moreover, thrust has been laid on timely completion of departmental proceedings already initiated against the employees.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that in a recent high-level meeting, Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta expressed concern that some of the departments have failed to undertake an internal review which is not a desirable practice.

"This process cannot be delayed further," sources said quoting the observation of the Chief Secretary.

On this, the Additional Chief Secretary Home, who heads the screening committee constituted to review the cases under Article 226, informed that departmental proceedings are not being completed in a time bound manner and asked the departments to expeditiously conclude proceedings initiated against various Government employees as such employees can be considered for review under Article 226.

"The Chief Secretary endorsed the view of the Additional Chief Secretary Home and asked the departments, which are yet to undertake internal reviews, to complete the same urgently", sources informed and said that formal instructions in this regard have also been issued to all the departments through the General Administration Department.

As per the Article 226 of the J&K Civil Services Regulations, the Government is empowered to review the performance of the employees on completion of 22 years of qualifying service or on attaining 48 years of age with respect to parameters like integrity, effectiveness, efficiency and utility.

In the month of October 2020, the Government, on the directions of the Lieutenant Governor, made some additions in the Article 226 and now the Government is competent to conduct exercise to review the performance of Government (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

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Visitors seen next to frozen waterfall during a cold winter day in Drung area of Tangmarg. -Excelsior/Aabid Nabi

## 'Timeless bond between TN, JK'

## J&K has shown remarkable improvement on sustainable development goals: LG

CHENNAI, Jan 28:

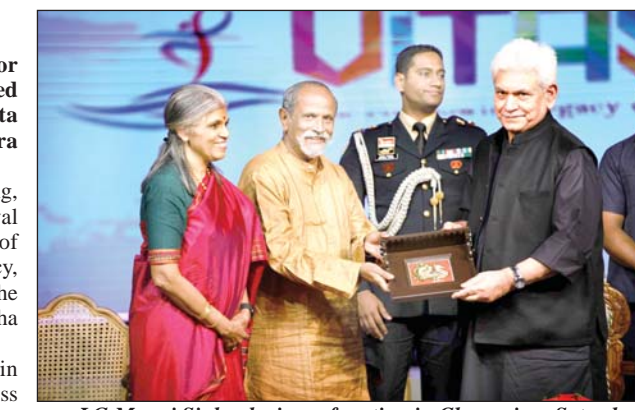
Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today attended and addressed the Vitasta Festival at Kalakshetra Foundation in Chennai.

Addressing the gathering, he said that the 4-day festival is the biggest celebration of J&K's culture, literary legacy, cuisine, arts & music and the spirit of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.

Events like Vitasta in Chennai open up the limitless world of literature, art, history, heritage and culture and encourage us to think and expand our horizon, he added.

"There is a timeless bond between Tamil Nadu and Jammu Kashmir. I strongly believe that Jammu Kashmir and Tamil Nadu are eternally connected since time immemorial. Both the regions illumined the entire nation with intellectual brilliance & glorious tradition of peace & harmony", said the Lt Governor.

Underscoring the need to promote the rich history of Jammu Kashmir, music and social cultural tradition across the country through Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme, (Contd on page 6 Col 3)



LG Manoj Sinha during a function in Chennai on Saturday.

Sinha said that different cultures of Kashmir, the northernmost State and diversity of our country serve to enlighten society and throughout our history, have proved to be a powerful instrument to strengthen our unity.

"I am truly grateful to the Prime Minister for unlocking the power of diversity with the spirit of oneness. Continuous cultural exchanges are taking place among the youth of J&K and Tamil Nadu under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Programme exposing young generation to each other's language, literature, performing art, cuisine and traditional festivals", he added.

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the northernmost State of the country is connected with Tamil Nadu, the southernmost State of our great nation to really indicate the diversified culture and customs and spiritual link between Vitasta and Kaveri River, observed the Lt Governor.

"The richness of our tradition lies in our diversity. From Kalhana to Vallathol, Thiruvalluvar to Lalleshwari and from Subramanya Bharti to Nund Rishi, we have been blessed with an unbroken (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

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## We stand here today because of soldiers' sacrifices: Farooq

**Avtar Bhat**

SAMBA, Jan 28: Former Chief Minister and president, National Conference (NC), Dr Farooq Abdullah today said that it was due to the supreme sacrifices of the valiant soldiers and police personnel that we are here today.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a religious function organised by Sant Shri Balyogeshwar Dass Ji, he said "It is because of their supreme sacrifice that we feel secure and safe today".

Dr Abdullah said that Jammu has always stood the test of time and some forces tried hard to disturb the peace and amity in the J&K but the people defeated their designs".

While referring to holding of Maha Vishnu Yagya by Sant Shri Balyogeshwar Dass Ji for the peace of martyrs, he said this is a noble cause and the people across the barriers of religions and regions are participating in it.

"This shows the unity in diversity of our culture and age old civilisation", Dr Farooq said, adding that Government whatever can do for the welfare of the martyrs families will do but the Sant Ji is trying to lessen their pain and thereby working for a great noble cause.

He said "We have to stand by those who laid down their lives for the nation and appealed Sant Ji to hold such functions in Kashmir and Ladakh as well after weather improves in these two regions. The people also laid down their lives in these two regions for nation, he added.

Dr Abdullah said these martyrs will not come back now but holding such functions for the peace of their soul and welfare of their families is really inspiring.

He said after he heard that Sant Ji is holding such a programme at Samba he was moved and decided to visit this place to pay tribute to him for this noble cause.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah who visited the venue of Maha (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

## Encroached land retrieved from 2 ex Ministers, DDC Chairman

**Excelsior Correspondent**

JAMMU/SRINAGAR, Jan 28 : Authorities today retrieved encroached land from two former Ministers including Dr Haseeb Drabu and Prem Sagar Aziz and DDC Kathua Chairman Col (Retd) Mahan Singh.

Over 100 kanals of land, which was illegally occupied by former Finance Minister Haseeb Drabu, kin of ex-MLC and others, was retrieved during the ongoing eviction drive in south Kashmir's Shopian district.

An official said that around 100 kanals of land that was illegally occupied has been retrieved in the district today.

He said of total 100 kanals of land, 15 kanals high-value (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

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State land retrieved by Revenue officials in Basohli on Saturday.

orchard land was illegally occupied by former Finance Minister Haseeb Drabu and the kin of ex-MLC.

Meanwhile, acting tough and tightening its noose on the land encroachers, (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

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