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Jammu is announcing its Late Evening Batch for
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Heavy rain, floods wreak havoc; Chenab, Tawi flow near danger mark

8 die in Bani landslides, house collapse; Tarnah bridge damaged, traffic diverted to Old Samba-Kathua road

Sinha, Dr Jitendra, Azad express grief over loss of lives

Gopal Sharma

JAMMU, July 19: Five members of a family were among eight persons killed in landslides and house collapse incidents in remote Bani area of district Kathua while Tarnah bridge near Dayalachak on Jammu-Pathankote National Highway was damaged, stalling movement of traffic on this busy highway as heavy rains and floods wreak havoc across the region today.

All the major rivers of the region including Chenab, Tawi, Ujh, Basantar, Tarnah etc were flowing near danger mark while Jammu-Srinagar, Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch and Mughal Road and dozens of other roads were closed due to landslides in the region.

Due to falling of boulders and inclement weather, on-foot Yatra to Mata Vaishnodevi shrine from Katra base camp was suspended during morning hours and the helicopter and battery car service was also stalled. Katra-Reasi-Mahore road was also closed for vehicular traffic movement. Due to landslides at several places Mughal Road connecting Poonch-Rajouri districts with Kashmir via Shopian was also closed.

Reports from Kathua said that due to heavy rain in remote Bani area since last night till morning hours today, a Kucha house of one Mushtaq Ahmed collapsed at village Surjan where five members of a family were buried alive. The locals said that a

**Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com*

PMGSY road is being constructed along this house and due to cutting work there was fear of landslide as agency/contractor initiated no protection work. Due to heavy rain and landslide, the house collapsed and five members of the family were buried under the debris.

The locals informed Police at Bani Police Station. SDM Bani Satish Sharma was also there at the headquarters. A police team, assisted by SDRF and Army jawans from the local unit rushed to the area and launched rescue operation. After long and hectic efforts all the five dead bodies including a woman and four children were recovered.

Body of a woman being retrieved from debris after landslide in Bani area of Kathua. More pics on page 3. — Excelsior/Pardeep

The deceased were identified as Zareena Begum (45), wife of Mushtaq Ahmed, Mushtaq's two children- Shahbaz (14 yrs) and Arbaz (3 yrs); Mohd Asif (12), son of Abdul Qayoom and Nazia Banoo (11 yrs), daughter of Abdul Qayoom, all residents of Surjan.

One Sham Lal (45), son of Tara Chand, resident of Bhullari village in Bani was buried alive under landslide when he was sitting under a hill for easing himself during morning hours today. His body was also later extricated from the debris.

Ajay Singh (13), son of Mohinder Singh, resident of Sitti village in Bani had gone to his fields in Bani area alongwith his brother. He was also buried alive under debris after land slide while his brother escaped with some injuries.

Naseem Begum (50), wife of Mohd Rafiq, resident of Madhota washed away in mud slides while working in fields. Her minor child, however, was rescued by the local villagers. Her body was later removed from the mud.

(Contd on page 4 Col 1)

Pillars of Tarnah bridge sink due to heavy flood in river near Dayalachak on Jammu-Pathankot highway on Wednesday. — Excelsior/Pardeep

'Increase private industrial estates'

Women-led enterprises will shape J&K's future: LG

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 19: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha chaired a high-level meeting with senior officials to review status of Industrial Investment and to discuss strategies on boosting investments in a fast-track mode.

The Lt Governor was briefed on investment in different sectors, status of land allotment, new Industrial estates, recent steps taken by the Department to fast-track grounding investment, policy initiatives, promoting start-ups among youth especially technology based and scalable startups and achievements in exports of major products like carpets, papier machie, shawls and chain stitch.

He directed for proactive steps to increase private industrial estates equipped with necessary infrastructure.

Emphasising that the women-led enterprises will shape the future of J&K, Sinha said they must ensure their increasing presence in the economy and designate more exclusive industrial estates for women entrepreneurs like the one established in Udhampur to facilitate women-run businesses and startups.

The Lt Governor underscored that 2023 will be the year of Agro-Industrial revolution powered by Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) and

increased production in Agriculture & Allied Sectors that will offer vast opportunities to agro-industries.

He directed the officials that the potential of new cold storage, cold chains must be tapped to ensure rapid economic growth flows to rural areas of UT.

In order to scale up further infrastructure, the Lt Governor directed officials to push for greater private investment in inland ports, container depots and food processing units.

Directions were also issued to develop a mechanism for regular meetings with representatives of old industrial estates to resolve their issues.

Highlighting that GI Tagging has offered enormous potential to transform handicraft sector and to boost export, Sinha said authenticity of products like Pashmina must be ensured for export.

The Lt Governor also directed the concerned officials to accelerate the development of basic amenities like connectivity, power and water facilities in the new industrial estates.

He called for replicating the best models of industrial estates developed in other parts of the country.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Shaleen Kabra, Financial Commissioner Revenue; Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, Forest Department; Santosh Dattatreya Vaidya, Principal Secretary, Finance Department; H. Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary, Power Development Department; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner /Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department and senior officers attended the meeting.

Bail denied to 4 LeT militants

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 19: Additional Sessions Judge Doda Amarjeet Singh Langeh today rejected the bail applications of four LeT militants namely Showket Ali, Akhter Hussain, Abdul Rashid and Shafkat Hussain, who attacked Police Post Kahara and killed one SPO on May 8, 2017.

After hearing both the sides, the court observed, "targeting a police picket with a perplexingly meticulous plan in an obviously atrocious manner resulting in serious gunshot injury to one SPO and death

(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

CBK charge sheets ex-Bank Manager, Clerk

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 19: The Economic Offences Wing of the Crime Branch Kashmir (CBK) today filed a charge sheet against the former Branch Manager and clerk of Burdwan Central Cooperative Bank Branch Hajin.

The charge sheet was filed in the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Bandipora, based on the case FIR No. 23 of 2016.

The CBK said that Abdul Razak Wani, the then Branch

(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

Govt cuts price of subsidized tomato to Rs 70 per kg

NEW DELHI, July 19:

The Government has reduced prices of subsidised tomatoes to Rs 70 per kilogramme from tomorrow from Rs 80 per kg now to provide relief to common man from high retail prices.

From Friday last week, the central Government is selling tomatoes at subsidized rates. Cooperatives Nafed and NCCF are selling on behalf of the Government.

(Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Suspicious bag found on NH

Excelsior Correspondent

SAMBA, July 19: Traffic on the Jammu-Pathankot National Highway was suspended for over an hour following the detection of a suspicious bag outside an Army camp in Samba district.

The black bag was found in the afternoon lying below a highway flyover at Maheshwar area.

Army and police personnel cordoned off the area and a Bomb Disposal Squad was called in to check the bag, forcing suspension of traffic on the highway as a precautionary measure.

(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

Forest Guard killed, Forester injured in militant attack

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, July 19: A Forest Guard, injured in a militant attack in Pulwama district last night, died at a hospital here today.

Militants fired upon a team of Forest department employees who had set up a checkpoint to apprehend timber smugglers near the Bangender Bridge in Pulwama last night injuring two employees.

The injured - Imran Yousaf Wani, Forest Guard and Jahangir Ahmed Chechi, Forester- were taken to a hospital, wherefrom Wani, who had received a bullet injury on his thigh, was shifted to SMHS Hospital in Srinagar.

Chechi had minor injuries and was discharged after first-aid and Wani died at the SMHS hospital.

A case has been registered and an investigation is underway.

According to police spokesman, Police Station Rajpora received an information through reliable source that militants had fired upon

**Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com*

a team of Forest Department of district Budgam causing injuries to two employees, who had laid a checkpoint to apprehend the timber smugglers near Bangender Bridge falling under the jurisdiction of PS Rajpora in district Pulwama.

"Regarding the incident, a case vide FIR No. 79/2023 under Sections 16,20 UAP (Act), 307 IPC and 7/ 27 IA Act was registered in PS Rajpora and investigation has been initiated," he said.

"Soon after the incident the whole area was cordoned off by Police, Army and CAPFs and an intensive search operation was launched," he said.

"During the search of the scene of crime, two empty fired cartridges of AK-47 ammunition and one bullet head was recovered from the spot," he added.

Court rejects ACB's closure report against X-En, others

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 19: Additional Sessions Judge Udhampur Dinesh Gupta today rejected the closure report filed by Anticorruption Bureau in FIR No 1/2016 and issued direction for further investigation in the matter.

As per the FIR, a Joint Surprise Check was conducted against PWD (R&B) Division Udhampur for drawing Rs 24.25 lakh against the construction of bridge over Devak Nallah at Benisang whereas no such bridge was actually constructed and it came to the fore that the then Executive

(Contd on page 4 Col 3)

Reason behind fire being ascertained

Capt killed, 3 soldiers injured in Siachen Glacier fire incident

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 19: An Army Captain was killed and three soldiers were injured when fire engulfed their camp at Siachen Glacier, the highest battlefield in the world, in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

The incident took place at the Siachen Glacier at the height of 18875 feet from sea level at around 3 am today, official reports said.

**Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com*

They said four Army personnel suffered injuries in the incident.

While the Army's Regimental Medical Officer, Captain Anshuman Singh, succumbed to serious burn injuries, three other personnel suffered smoke inhalation and second-degree burns, the reports said.

The injured have been safely

Capt Anshuman Singh

air evacuated for further treatment, and their condition is stated to be stable, they added.

They said there was no loss of ammunition and other stores.

Reasons behind the fire couldn't be ascertained immediately.

Body of the fallen soldier will be airlifted to his home town after wreath laying ceremony and completion of other formalities.

The inhospitable climate and avalanche-prone areas have claimed more lives than any gunfire in the Glacier. In view of harsh weather, the Army can deploy one soldier in Siachen for a period of only few months.

For the past several years, no shots have been fired by the Indo-Pak troops which man the Glacier on their sides.

At Siachen, the Indian Army spends as much as 80 per cent of its time preparing soldiers for deployment. A war memorial on the banks of the Nubra River has the names of Indian soldiers who laid down their lives on the Glacier.

Meanwhile, Northern

(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

LS bulletin confirms listing of 3 UT bills

Questions on J&K, Eastern Ladakh to figure in Parl Monsoon session

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, July 19: A number of questions pertaining to security situation in Jammu and Kashmir and Sino-Indian standoff in Eastern Ladakh have been listed in Monsoon session of Parliament beginning tomorrow.

The questions are apart from three Reservation Bills pertaining to Jammu and Kashmir which are among 31 bills scheduled to be taken up in the session which will last till August 11.

The questions pertaining to Jammu and Kashmir include security scenario in the Union Territory, terror incidents, infiltration etc.

Questions on India and China standoff in Eastern Ladakh which has already completed three years have also been submitted by some of the Members of Parliament (MPs).

Some Opposition members are likely to ask for discussion on Eastern Ladakh situation.

Situation in Eastern Ladakh falling along Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China remained calm for past quite some time barring brief incident of erection of four tents by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) at buffer zone in Chushul recently which were immediately removed on intervention of the Indian troops.

Disengagement of troops from more areas is likely to be discussed in next meeting of the Commanders of the two Armies.

Situation on anti-militancy and anti-infiltration fronts in Jammu and Kashmir has also improved further with the killing of many top militants including commanders of various outfits.

For the session, which concludes on August 11, the Government has lined up 31 bills, including three pertaining to Reservation in Jammu and Kashmir.

The bills include one seeking changes in the list of Scheduled Tribes for Jammu and Kashmir

Another bill on Jammu and Kashmir seeks to include the Valmiki community as a synonym of Chura, Bhangi, Valmiki and Mehtar in the list of Scheduled Castes of Jammu and Kashmir.

The third bill proposes to omit Other Social Castes (OSC) category from the list of reservation in J&K and replace it with Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Castes to be included in the list of OBCs and percentage is to be decided by the Government.

Lok Sabha bulletin released today has confirmed that three Jammu and Kashmir Reservation bills will be listed in Monsoon session of Parliament.

Excelsior had last week exclusively reported that three Reservation bills pertaining to Jammu and Kashmir have been listed in Monsoon session of the Parliament.

Whether these bills come up for discussion and passing in the Parliament will be seen as two of them had also been listed in budget session but couldn't be listed due to uproar by both Government and treasury benches.

Presently, there is no reservation to OBCs. Only four percent reservation has been given under Other Social Castes (OSC) category.

(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

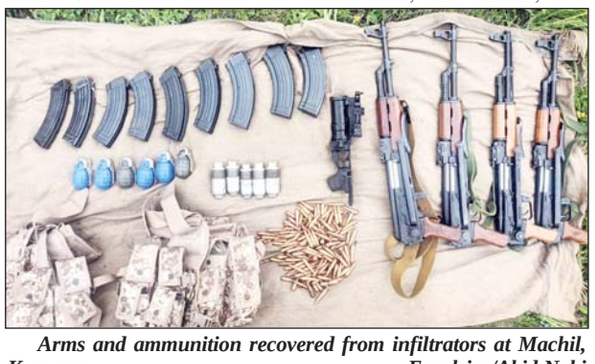
2 infiltrators killed in Machil; huge cache of arms, ammunition recovered

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 19: Two infiltrators were killed along Line of Control in Machil sector of Kupwara district today and huge quantities of arms and ammunition were recovered from them.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said here that based on specific intelligence provided by BSF, duly corroborated by other intelligence agencies of likely infiltration through Machil sector, a joint operation by Army, BSF and Police was planned and multiple ambushes were laid along the likely routes of infiltration.

"On the intervening night of 18/19 July 23 at around 2300 hours, own troops detected suspicious movement along the Line of Control," he said adding, "the movement of (militants) was continuously tracked through surveillance devices. At around 0455 hours contact was established with (them). Intense fire fight ensued resulting in elimination of two foreign (militants)".



Arms and ammunition recovered from infiltrators at Machil, Kupwara. — Excelsior/Abid Nabi

A thorough joint search operation was launched along with police in the morning, resulting in recovery of four AK series rifle, one UBGL, five UBGL grenades, nine magazines, 175 AK rounds, six hand grenades, tactical vests and large quantity of "war like" stores.

(Contd on page 4 Col 7)

5 radicalised terror suspects held in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, July 19:

Five people who were radicalised to carry out terror attacks have been arrested by the Central Crime Branch with firearms and ammunition along with 12 mobile phones confiscated from them, Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda said today.

Seven pistols, 45 live cartridges, a bunch of walkie-talkies, and some daggers were seized from the terror suspects, the police officer said, adding that provisions of the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act were slapped against them.

The suspects were identified as Sohail, Omar, Jahid, Mudasir and Faisal. The five suspects were arrested near a place of

(Contd on page 4 Col 5)

Pahalgam track yatris stopped at Chanderkot

Despite inclement weather, over 17,000 pay obeisance at holy cave

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, July 19: As the inclement weather and heavy downpour failed to dampen the spirits of Amarnath Ji pilgrims, on the 19th day of yatra over 17,000 pilgrims paid obeisance to naturally formed Ice Lingam of Lord Shiva in Himalayan cave in South Kashmir's Anantnag district today.

Officials said 17,223 pilgrims performed darshan at 3888 metre high holy cave from twin tracks of Baltal and Nunwan-Pahalgam by this evening taking the total number of pilgrims who visited the cave shrine in last 19 days to 2,84,732. The yatris are totally delighted in visiting the holy cave and the inclement weather

Amarnath Ji pilgrims at Yatri Niwas Chanderkot, Ramban. Another pic on page 4. Excelsior/Parvez

coupled with heavy downpour and flash floods failed to dampen their spirits as thousands of pilgrims from different parts of the country are daily reaching the holy cave to pay obeisance to Lord Shiva, they added.

Among the yatris who performed darshan at holy cave today included 12,722 male, 13579 female, 539 children, 380 Sadhus and three Sadhvis, officials said.

(Contd on page 4 Col 5)