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NIA searches 5 locations in IS case

NEW DELHI, Mar 12: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has carried out searches at five places in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra as part of its ongoing investigation to unravel a conspiracy hatched by the global terror group Islamic State (IS) to expand its activities in India, an official said today.

88 posts of Judicial Magistrates lying vacant in J&K

JAMMU, Mar 12: A total of 88 posts of Judicial Magistrates are lying vacant across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir thereby leaving the litigants and lawyers in the lurch. A reply to an application filed under the Right to Information Act has revealed

Kumar posted as IG Admn in CRPF

JAMMU, Mar 12: The Union Home Ministry has ordered posting of senior Indian Police Services (IPS) officer Rajesh Kumar as Inspector General Administration, Directorate in Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). Kumar is an IPS officer of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir cadre, now AGMUT.

Arms recovered in Handwara

SRINAGAR, Mar 12: Police today recovered an old dump of arms and ammunition in Shalnar Hangnikoot area of Handwara in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. A police spokesperson said searches were conducted by Handwara Police in Shalnar Hangnikoot yesterday, during

Arms, narcotics seized in Rajouri

JAMMU, Mar 12: A major tragedy was averted with the timely recovery of some arms and narcotics near the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district by the Army today.

Violence levels down in Valley, Pak can't digest it: DGP

SRINAGAR, Mar 12: Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief Tapan Kumar Deka today said that Kashmir is witnessing change and there is an atmosphere of peace in the Valley

Man kills woman; chops off her body to hide crime in Budgam

SRINAGAR, Mar 12: Police in Budgam today cracked what has been termed as a blind murder case by arresting an accused person involved in the killing of a 30 year old woman from the Soibugh area, whose body

parts were chopped off by the accused, a mason by profession. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Budgam, Tahir Gilani said that on March 8, Police Post Soibugh received an application from Tanveer Ahmad Khan resident of

Top officials of Finance Dept reach New Delhi FM to present J&K's 4th straight annual budget in LS today, increase likely

JAMMU, Mar 12: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present annual budget of Jammu and Kashmir for the financial year of 2023-24 in the Lok Sabha tomorrow along with supplementary demands for grants for the year 2022-23.

She will present fourth straight budget of Jammu and Kashmir in the Parliament in the absence of Legislature in the Union Territory. Excelsior had a day before exclusively reported that annual budget of Jammu and Kashmir will be presented in the Parliament on opening day of budget session after month-long break i.e. March 13.

After presentation of budget, a day each will be reserved in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha for discussion. The budget has to be approved before March 31.

List of business released by the Lok Sabha Secretariat this evening for March 13, said Finance Minister Nirmala

In last year of term; Panchayats, ULBs may get hefty grants

Sitharaman will present a statement of estimated receipts and expenditure of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for the year 2023-24.

Officials said the budget has been given final touches by the Union Finance Ministry in consultations with Finance Department of Jammu and Kashmir.

Senior officials of the Finance Department have reached New Delhi to assist the Union Finance Ministry in case of last-minute queries on the budget.

'Violence down, many giving up arms'

Separatism, terrorism will be dealt with firmly: Shah

HYDERABAD, Mar 12: Noting that the Centre has successfully tackled several internal security challenges in the last nine years, Union Home Minister Amit Shah today stressed that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi Government's policy of zero-tolerance towards terrorism would continue.

Speaking at the 54th Raising Day celebrations of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) here, he said separatism, terrorism and anti-national activities in any part of the country will be dealt with firmly.

Highlighting the role of CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces) and State police in the fight against terror, Shah termed it 'significant' and said it has been demonstrated in the last nine years.

Speaking of the security



Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressing CISF Raising Day celebrations in Hyderabad on Sunday. Another pic on page 4.

situation in parts of the country, he affirmed that violence in Kashmir, insurgency in Northeast and Left Wing Extremism-affected areas is coming down, while people's confidence is increasing.

Kashmir witnesses change, atmosphere of peace: IB chief

IB chief Tapan Kumar Deka and DGP Dilbag Singh speaking to media persons in Srinagar on Sunday.

at the Bakshi Stadium here. "Kashmir is witnessing a change. There is an environment of peace," he said. The IB Director said it was a

continue to be presented in the Parliament," sources said.

During current financial year of 2022-23, Jammu and Kashmir was granted Rs 1,12,950 crore worth budget and for next fiscal year of 2023-24 it could go up as has been the case every year.

The Government is expecting healthy grants for District Development Councils, Block Development Councils, Panchayats and Municipalities in the budget, sources said. This is last year of five-year term of Panchayats and Municipalities. The term will end in December.

Before finalization of annual budget, the Finance Department officials held series of meetings with top officials in the Union Finance Ministry to discuss budgetary proposals of the Jammu and Kashmir administration.

Prior to this, the Finance Department held series of meetings with various departments to know their requirements in the

(Contd on page 4 Col 7)



A nomad boy grazing cattle on the outskirts of Jammu. -Excelsior/Rakesh

PHQ, Div Com office, several politicians served final notices

Power connections of ex-CM, BJP President, several Govt offices disconnected in Jammu

Serving bureaucrats also in the list of defaulters

JAMMU, Mar 12: Jammu Power Distribution Limited (JPDDL) has launched massive drive against the influential and chronic defaulters and disconnected 1156 electricity connections including that of

former Chief Minister Gulam Nabi Azad and President of J&K Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) Ravinder Raina and several Government departments.

Moreover, notices have been issued to several other defaulters which include Jammu and Kashmir Police Headquarters, Divisional Commissioner office and several politicians, who even after being given repeated reminders by the Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited have preferred not to clear their electricity dues.

As per the official figures, electricity consumption across the Jammu region is to the tune of Rs 3500 crore but revenue realization remains Rs 2050 crore which means there is a shortfall of around Rs 1400 crore. In Kashmir valley, electricity consumption is to the tune of Rs 4000 crore but revenue realization is less than Rs 1500 crore as such there is shortfall of Rs 2500 crore.

This clearly indicates that despite high electricity consumption in Kashmir division as compared to Jammu revenue realization remains poor. In such a situation how the Power Distribution Corporation Limited of both the regions will meet the expenditure on providing electricity to the people remains a million dollar question.

Under the Amnesty Scheme, the JPDDL has collected more than Rs 70 crore so far and over 50,000 consumers have taken benefit of the scheme. The disconnection drive is being carried out against those defaulters, who are yet to take the benefit of Amnesty Scheme and in the first

instance connections of 1156 consumers including influential persons and chronic defaulters have been disconnected and final notices have been issued to large number of other defaulters. As per the details available with EXCELSIOR, electricity connection of former Chief Minister of erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir and President of Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) Gulam Nabi Azad has been disconnected as he has failed to clear the arrears to the tune of Rs 4,82,143. Similarly, electricity connection of J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina has been disconnected for his failure to clear arrears and that of BJP leader Surinder Choudhary, who was not only the defaulter but was also having illegal power connection.

Even the defaulting Government departments have not been spared and this can be gauged from the fact that power connections of Works Planner of

(Contd on page 4 Col 1)

Specially abled job aspirants allege PSC, HED dissolving their reservation quota

Bivek Mathur

JAMMU, Mar 12: Highly qualified specially abled job aspirants have written a letter to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha while asking the latter to protect their job quota allegedly being dissolved by the Higher Education Department and Public Service Commission (PSC) while making recruitments.

One of the aggrieved job aspirants, Showkat Ahmad Hajam, said the Disability Act of 2016 and different SROs issued by the Social Welfare Department have mandated it for the recruitment agencies to provide 4% horizontal reservation to persons with benchmark disabilities in job recruitments.

He said in case, in any recruitment year, the recruitment boards or agencies don't find a suitable candidate under "differently abled category" to fill up the 4% vacancies, they (recruitment boards and agencies) have to maintain a roster so that such posts are filled up by virtue of future advertisement notifications.

He further said that the Disabilities Act and the SROs also provide that the share of specially abled candidates' reservation cannot be utilized in favour of other categories at all. "But, to our misfortune, the authorities at Higher Education Department and PSC did not follow these rules properly despite our repeated requests," alleged Showkat Ahmad Hajam.

Citing an example, Hajam,

who has sought LG Manoj Sinha's intervention to address the specially abled job aspirants' issues, said that in 2021 PSC came up with a notification number 09-PSC (DRP) of 2021 dated September 3, 2021 to fill up the posts of Assistant Professors in Government Degree Colleges of Higher Education Department in Jammu and Kashmir, wherein it (PSC) didn't follow the carry forward rule.

"Not only this," he said, "the PSC notification instead of reserving 4% reservation by a separate column as was the case in the notification of 2014, simply added a line to the notification that read, 'horizontal reservation'."

"However as per the notified

rules, the horizontal reservation for candidates belonging to differently abled category shall be notified separately. But no clarification was issued on this error," he said.

"To add insult to the injury", Hajam said, "the PSC issued a short listing/rejection notice against the 2021 notification on September 16, 2022 in which it even ignored the 'differently abled category' of the candidates altogether."

Consequently, he said that he along with other candidates made a representation to the Chairman PSC who revealed that the basic roster was prepared by the Higher Education Department in consultation with the Social Welfare Department.

He said that later he also

(Contd on page 4 Col 3)

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NOTICE
See obituaries on page 7.
Advt Manager



Women protest in Soibugh area of Budgam against woman's murder.

93% work on Banihal-Katra section completed Banihal-Hingni stretch of USBRL project to be completed by June

BANIHAL, Mar 12: Work on a 23-km stretch from Banihal to Hingni on the prestigious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Line (USBRL) project in Jammu and Kashmir is likely to be completed by the end of June, an official said.

The USBRL project is aimed at providing seamless and hassle-free connectivity to Kashmir valley.

Out of the total 272-km USBRL project, 161 km was commissioned in phases with first phase of 118-km Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009 followed by 18-km Banihal-Qazigund in

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