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Man posing as PMO official in Kashmir sent to jail

Excelsior Correspondent
 SRINAGAR, Mar 17: Kiran Bhai Patel, who posed as a PMO official and got the requisite perks, including a bullet-proof car and scores of security personnel, had three cases registered against him in his home state Gujarat, police said on Friday.
 He was arrested here on March 3 but his deception that (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

Charges framed against Fazili, Fahad

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Mar 17: Special Judge designated under NIA Act, Jammu, Ashwani Kumar framed charges against two accused namely Abdul Ala Fazili and Peerzada Fahad Shah in a State Investigation Agency (SIA) investigated case FIR No. 01/2022 of PS SIA Jammu.
 The case pertains to an information received by PS CIJ (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Sharma Panel gets 6 months extension

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Mar 17: The Government today granted another six months extension to Justice (Retd.) GD Sharma-led committee for submitting its final recommendations.
 The Panel headed by former High Court judge Justice (Retd.) GD Sharma comprising Munir Ahmad Khan (Retd. DGP) and Rup Lal Bharati (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

Govt forms Panel to verify service records

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Mar 17: The General Administrative Department of J&K Government has accorded sanction for constitution of Committees at Administrative Department and District/Directorate Level, for verifying service records of employees whose initial appointment orders are available, albeit, the (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Property of man attached

Excelsior Correspondent
 SRINAGAR, Mar 17: Authorities today attached property of a man for providing (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

JK State Laws governing Comms repealed

NEW DELHI, Mar 17: The Jammu and Kashmir administration today told the Supreme Court that State laws, which had led to setting up of commissions like human rights committee, have now been repealed and some fresh panels were set up under Central statutes after the abrogation of Article 370.
 An affidavit to this effect (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Only LGVs to be allowed on Zojila Pass

Excelsior Correspondent
 GANDERBAL, Mar 17: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today visited district Ganderbal where he convened a meeting of officers for managing opening/closure Zojila Pass.
 The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir, SSP Ganderbal, Nikhil Borkar, SSP (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Discussion on budget remains stalled in LS FM assures release of 50 pc funds to J&K well ahead of FY to take up works

Sanjeev Pargal
***If din persists, budget may be passed without discussion**
 JAMMU, Mar 17: Passage of Jammu and Kashmir budget remained stalled in Lok Sabha due to uproar leading to adjournment of the Parliament till 11 am on Monday but there were indications from the Union Finance Ministry that it would be passed before March 25 even if uproar persists and the Union Territory will get 50 percent budget well ahead of the beginning of next financial year from April 1, 2023.
 After discussion followed by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's reply, the budget was scheduled to be passed in Lok Sabha on Tuesday (March 14) i.e. a day after it was introduced in the House amid uproarious scenes. The budget was tabled in Lok Sabha by Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Choudhary on March 13 and Rajya Sabha on March 14. On both the occasions, the budget was laid on table of the Houses amidst furore from both the sides.
 After approval from Lok Sabha, the budgetary proposals are to be debated in Rajya Sabha followed by the Finance Minister's reply after which the budget will be passed.
 "The budget can be released only after the Parliament nod," official sources told the Excelsior.
 They said senior officers from Jammu and Kashmir including Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, who has also been looking after the Finance Department in the absence of any Administrative Secretary Finance, Planning Secretary Raghav Langar, other bureaucrats and most of senior officers of the Finance Department camped in New Delhi till today as the budget was scheduled to be discussed in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.
 However, the discussion couldn't take place as both Houses of Parliament are being daily adjourned due to pandemic on a host of issues by treasury as well as opposition benches.
 If the din persists in Parliament, the Government will be left with no option but to move the budget for passage without debate.
 Meanwhile, the Union Finance Ministry is understood to have assured the Jammu and Kashmir administration that 50 percent of the budget might be released in advance after the Parliament nod well before the start of next Financial Year so that developmental works, including those under Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs), Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) and UT sector are taken up.
 "Development works in Jammu and Kashmir will not be allowed to suffer," sources said.
 Rest of the budget will also be released shortly, they said, adding release of 50 percent budget will help the administration of the Union Territory to immediately initiate works and projects already identified for next year's budget.
 Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Choudhary had on March 13 presented Rs 1,18,500 crore worth annual budget for financial year of 2023-24 for Jammu and Kashmir in the Parliament, an increase of Rs 5500 crore over current fiscal.
 The Finance Minister listed priorities for Jammu and Kashmir in the annual budget as good governance, strengthening of grassroots democracy, promoting sustainable agriculture, facilitating investment and industrial growth, employment generation, accelerated development and inclusive growth, women empowerment and doubling Gross Domestic Product (GDP) within five years.
 This was fourth consecutive budget of Jammu and Kashmir which was presented in the Parliament.
 Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had presented J&K's budget for 2020-21 on March 17, 2020, 2021-22 on March 17, 2021 and 2022-23 on March 14, 2022.
 The budget for 2019-2020 (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

Dedicated portal to be created for recording progress Govt takes serious note of slow paced enquiries, inconclusive RDA cases

***Ensure strict compliance of standing instructions: CS**
Mohinder Verma
 JAMMU, Mar 17: Several departments are not strictly following the standing instructions and guidelines issued by the Government for timely completion of enquiries and initiation of Regular Departmental Action (RDA) and this has been viewed seriously by Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, who has issued directions for monitoring progress on regular basis by the General Administration Department.
 The guidelines for Regular Departmental Action were circulated by the General Administration Department vide Circulars No.28 dated September 27, 2013, No.48 dated December 12, 2018 and No.18 dated March 26, 2019.
 As there was no strict compliance to these guidelines, the present dispensation reiterated the guidelines vide Circular No.6-JK(GAD) dated February 3, 2020 with the direction to all the departments to ensure implementation of the same in letter and spirit.
 However, despite all this the compliance level is still not up to the satisfaction of the Government and this can be gauged from the fact that in a recent high-level meeting the Chief Secretary noticed slackness on the part of several departments, official sources told EXCELSIOR.
 Taking serious note of slow paced enquiries, long-pending and inconclusive Regular Departmental Action cases in various departments, the Chief Secretary directed all the departments that the process to conduct the RDAs should be strictly in consonance with the standing instructions and guidelines, sources informed, adding the Chief Secretary has also directed the General Administration Department to explore the possibility of creating a dedicated portal for recording the progress of the RDA cases as early as possible.
 All the departments have also been asked to ensure that guilty officers are not exonerated unnecessarily and innocent officers are not penalized for no fault of theirs, sources further informed, adding "Government is of the opinion that processing Regular Departmental Action cases in a timely manner is (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

DC quashes ALC certificates of two JKAS officers, other siblings in Poonch

Gopal Sharma
 JAMMU, Mar 17: While delivering a rare and historical adjudication, the Deputy Commissioner Poonch quashed ALC certificates of two JKAS officers, who had managed selection in the Combined Administrative Services through Public Service Commission in the Jammu and Kashmir during 2017.
 Both the officers hailed from Mendhar Sub Division of Poonch district and are real brother and sister. While delivering the important order in his court, District Magistrate, Poonch Inder Jeet cancelled the ALC (Resident of Actual Line of Control) certificates of Sumit Kumar Sharma and his sister, appellants Mobeen Khan and Alyas Khawaja told that the judgment is historical, detailed and reasoned one where the court touched the in depth of matter by quashing the ALC certificates of all the siblings except respondent No. 3, Jyoti Sharma, daughter of Harbans Lal Sharma, resident of Ari, at present Gohlad in Mendhar.
 These ALC certificates were challenged in the court of District Magistrate Poonch by one of the JKAS aspirants, Anjum Imtiaz, daughter of Imtiaz Ahmed Khan, resident of Harni in Mendhar on May 29, 2018, with the appeal that these certificates issued in favour of Sumit Kumar Sharma, Sunaina Sharma, Jyoti Sharma, Amit Kumar Sharma, children of (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

'NC, PDP took wrong advantage of special status' BJP to forcefully counter misinformation campaign of Oppn: Sood

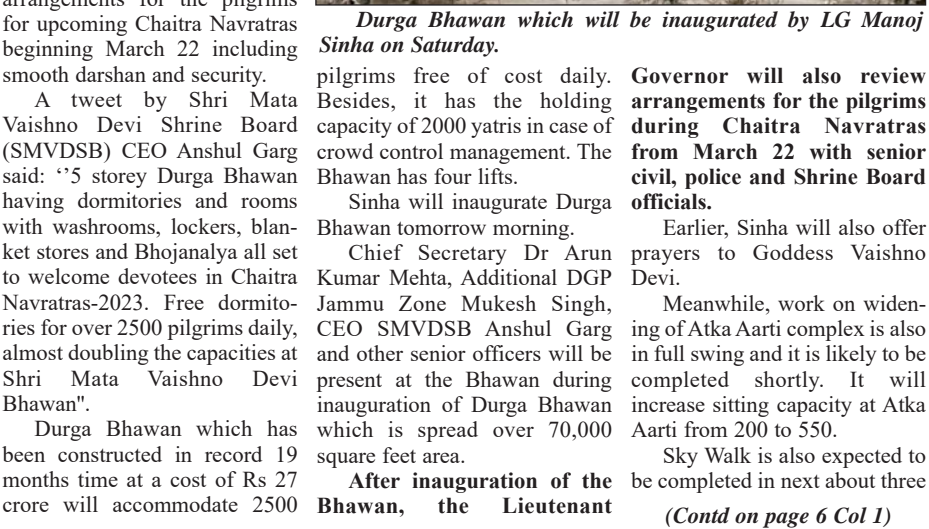
Avtar Bhat
 REASI, Mar 17: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) while lashing out at opposition parties for launching a misinformation campaign against party today asked its cadres to aggressively fight the false propaganda and misinformation campaign launched by the opposition parties against BJP.
 BJP Seh Prabari, Ashish Sood while addressing booth level activists at Madi in Reasi district today asked party men to counter the opposition propaganda and misinformation campaign against BJP forcefully. He said in this era of information warfare the party cadre needs to make use of social media in exposing these parties for looting the resources of the UT and the Government and fearing that they will get exposed for the malpractices and corruption committed by them the leaders of these parties have started launching a misinformation campaign against Narendra Modi Government saying that CBI and other agencies are being misused by the Government to harass opposition leaders," Sood said.
 BJP leader said this is a false propaganda and it is bereft of truth. "If someone has amassed the wealth in his room and if the same is unearthed in the raid of CBI or other agencies what Government has to do in that? he asked adding "Do they expect (Contd on page 6 Col 1)



Tourists enjoying at snow-filled Guldanda in Bhaderwah tehsil of Doda district on Friday. - Excelsior/Tilak Raj

It will have free accommodation for 2500 yatris LG to inaugurate Durga Bhawan at Mata Vaishno Devi shrine today

***Will also review Navratra arrangements**
Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Mar 17: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will tomorrow inaugurate Durga Bhawan having accommodation for 3000 pilgrims daily, 2500 of them free, and holding arrangements for 2000 others in case of crowd control management at Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan.
 Sinha will also review arrangements for the pilgrims for upcoming Chaitra Navratras beginning March 22 including smooth darshan and security.
 A tweet by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) CEO Anshul Garg said: "5 storey Durga Bhawan having dormitories and rooms with washrooms, lockers, blanket stores and Bhajanalya all set to welcome devotees in Chaitra Navratras-2023. Free dormitories for over 2500 pilgrims daily, almost doubling the capacities at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan".
 Durga Bhawan which has been constructed in record 19 months time at a cost of Rs 27 crore will accommodate 2500 (Contd on page 6 Col 1)



Durga Bhawan which will be inaugurated by LG Manoj Sinha on Saturday.

Disruption on NH hits traffic movement MeT predicts rain in plains, snowfall on hills in J&K

Excelsior Correspondent
 JAMMU, Mar 17: While brief frequent disruptions hit the smooth movement of traffic on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in Ramban sector since last night, Meteorological office today predicted rain and thunderstorm at scattered places in plains and snowfall on the higher reaches in Jammu and Kashmir during next 24 hours.
 Intermittent rain continued in most parts of Jammu region on the second consecutive day today, experiencing further fall in temperature. People in Jammu again took out woollen clothes with further reduction in temperature.
 Official sources said that Mehar, Seri and Cafeteria Morh area of Ramban witnessed brief disruptions in the movement of vehicular traffic due to frequent shooting stones and landslides during past 24 hours. The authorities restored one-way road and it created massive traffic jamming for hours. The load carriers with essentials were allowed to move towards Kashmir this afternoon.
 This place had witnessed many highway casualties in the past. Meanwhile, higher reaches of Doda, Bhaderwah, Kishtwar, Ramban, Reasi, Poonch and Dudu-Basantgarh (Udhampur) besides Bani in Kathua area witnessed snowfall today while intermittent rain continued in many parts of Jammu region during past 24 hours.
 A MeT spokesman said that intermittent rain, thunder-storm accompanied by gusty winds will rock scattered places whereas snowfall is likely over higher reaches from March 18 to March 20. But from March 21 onwards (Contd on page 6 Col 3)



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