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SIU initiates LR to arrest 13 militants

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 27: The State Investigation Unit (SIU) of Jammu under the supervision of DIG SIU Jammu Zone has initiated a special drive to apprehend 13 terrorists by obtaining Non-Bailable Warrants (NBA) against them.

In a press statement, the SIU identified the "A" category terrorists involved in various anti-national activities as Shahwaz Kanth alias Munna alias Umer (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Rahul asked to vacate official bungalow

NEW DELHI, Mar 27: Disqualified Lok Sabha member Rahul Gandhi was asked to vacate the Government bungalow allotted to him by April 22, official sources said today.

The Housing Committee of the Lok Sabha took the decision following which the Secretariat of the House served the notice on the former Congress president, a Z-plus protectee who (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

Nepal puts Amritpal on surveillance

KATHMANDU, Mar 27: Nepal today put fugitive radical preacher Amritpal Singh, who is believed to be hiding in the country, on its surveillance list after India requested it not to allow him to flee to a third country and arrest him if he attempts to escape using an Indian passport or any other fake passport.

The Department of Immigration has put Singh on (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

EPFO to decide interest rate today

NEW DELHI, Mar 27: The retirement fund body EPFO is likely to announce the rate of interest on employees' provident fund (EPF) deposits for 2022-23 tomorrow at its two-day meeting beginning today.

EPFO had lowered the interest on EPF for 2021-22 to an over four-decade low of 8.1 per cent for its about five crore subscribers, from 8.5 per cent in 2020-21 in March 2022. (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

Calls for detecting theft, wrong metering LG appraises multi-pronged strategies to meet power demand in summer

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 27: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha chaired a high-level meeting to review the power scenario in Jammu Kashmir, at Civil Secretariat here today.

He appraised the multi-pronged strategies to meet the high electricity demand in summer season and directed for integrating reforms for making power sector robust and resilient.

Sinha directed for effective enforcement through a dedicated enforcement wing for the detection of theft of electricity, wrong metering, enquiring into public complaints, unauthorized extensions in load and surprise checking.

He also directed for immediate steps to ensure functioning of all the meters on 11 kV, and repair of the damaged meters within one month.

Smart meters must be saturated feeder-wise to protect consumer interests and quality standards. It will empower the



consumers and help them to conserve energy and usage in an efficient manner, the Lt Governor said.

He sought a report on steps taken to reduce AT&C losses. He further directed the department to fix the responsibility and draw up an action plan for reducing the losses within a specific timeframe.

The Lt Governor emphasized on training and capacity building of PDD staff; online registration of new consumers; massive awareness drive; proper maintenance of power infrastructure and constitution of teams of officers for monitoring physical condition of equipment.

He passed explicit directions

for ensuring power supply to new industrial estates and railway tunnels.

The Lt Governor also reviewed the steps taken towards quality control; completion of languishing projects, revenue realization and network strengthening.

H. Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary, Power Development Department briefed the LG on the effective measures taken to bridge the demand and supply gap.

It was informed that additional capacities were created during the winter to enable peak demand and 10 percent more power was supplied as compared to last year.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Shiv Anant Tayal, Managing Director, JPDCL; Ch. Mohd. Yasin, Managing Director, KPDCCL; Chief Engineers and senior officials attended the meeting, in person and through virtual mode.

13 officers transferred

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 27: The Government today ordered transfer and postings of 13 JKAS officers.

Rakesh Sharma, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Hiranagar, holding additional charge of Sub-Registrar, Hiranagar has been transferred and posted as Deputy Director, District Employment & Counselling Centre, Jammu.

Abhishake Abrol, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Jammu (South), was transferred and posted as Deputy Secretary to the Government, School Education Department.

Vinay Kumar, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Vijaypur, has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner (Nazool), Jammu, vice Jasmeet Singh, who shall await further orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department.

Manisha Koul, Deputy Director, District Employment and Counselling Centre, Jammu, has been transferred and posted as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Hiranagar. She will also hold the charge of the post of Sub-Registrar, Hiranagar, in addition to her own duties, till further orders. (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Rs 1.18 lakh cr budget, Rs 3711 cr grants approved Parl nod to J&K budget, Supplementary Grants as RS considers, returns bill amid din

No discussion, FM's statement due to Oppn protests

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Mar 27: The Rajya Sabha today gave nod to Jammu and Kashmir annual budget for the year 2023-24 after considering and returning the J&K Appropriation Bill to Lok Sabha amid slogan shouting by the Opposition members on Adani issue. Supplementary grants for the year 2022-23 were also considered and returned.

With this, J&K's budget to the tune of Rs 1,18,950 crore for 2023-24 and supplementary grants worth Rs 3711.7176 crore for 2022-23 have been cleared by the Parliament.

The Union Finance Ministry headed by Nirmala Sitharaman will now release the budget for next year as well as supplementary grants for current fiscal year to Jammu and Kashmir shortly.

Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Choudhary tabled Jammu and Kashmir's budget in Lok Sabha on March 13 and Rajya Sabha on March

14 with no speech in view of din in both the Houses. It was cleared by Lok Sabha on March 21 within 20 minutes amid protests and was considered and returned by Rajya Sabha today again within 10-15 minutes during sloganeering by the Opposition members.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was present in the Rajya Sabha when Jammu and Kashmir's annual budget was taken up for consideration but it was moved by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Choudhary for consideration and returning.

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Thakur was in the chair.

However, neither the Finance Minister could make any statement nor any member was able to speak on budget during consideration in the Rajya Sabha because of continued sloganeering by the Opposition members.

It may be mentioned here that there is no MP in Rajya

Sabha from Jammu and Kashmir since February 2021. All four MPs from J&K had completed their six-year-term in February 2021. New Rajya Sabha members from J&K couldn't be elected in the absence of Assembly elections.

This year, no discussion could be held in the Parliament on Jammu and Kashmir budget. Copies of the budget were laid in both Houses of Parliament amid din and the budget was also passed during ruckus. Even the Finance Minister couldn't make any statement in any of the two Houses except the written one tabled in both Houses.

This was fourth straight budget of Jammu and Kashmir which was presented in Parliament in absence of Legislative Assembly here. There is no Assembly in place here after BJP withdrew support to Mehbooba Mufti-led PDP-BJP Government in June 2018.

With approval from the Parliament, the Union Finance (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

40,000 students enroll in Govt schools in Kashmir with 8,000 switching from private institutions

Suhail Bhat

SRINAGAR, Mar 27: In a significant boost to education, approximately 40,358 new students have enrolled in Government schools across Kashmir, with nearly 8,000 students making the switch from private to Government schools.

Director of School Education Kashmir (DSEK), Tasaduk Hussain, shared this information during a function in Srinagar, saying that this data is available in real-time on an online system developed by the Government.

"The online system which we have developed shows the real-time enrolment of students in Government schools, and according to the live data which

I am accessing this time, we have 40,358 new enrolments in government schools. Anyone can access this link to see the real enrolment that is happening," he said.

He further clarified that the system only includes new enrolments and does not account for previously enrolled students, nor does it include students who have changed schools.

Tasaduk addressed the issue of fee payment for students and urged schools to collect fees in easy installments according to the parents' paying capability. He also said that schools should not withhold discharge certificates, which could negatively impact the student's education. "We have given directions to the Head of the Institutions, and the students should be admitted to

any classes irrespective of whether they get discharge certificates or not," he said.

He also emphasized that strict action will be taken against any complaints of schools withholding certificates. "All CEOs and ZEOs have been directed to take action against such complaints," he added.

The Director said that strict action will be taken wherever they receive specific information about private schools charging admission fees and other fees from students in violation of Government orders. "Additionally, all CEOs and ZEOs have been directed to take action against such complaints," he said.

Regarding the distribution of (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

Suspension valid till enquiry: HC

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Mar 27: The High Court has said that the Government servant can be placed under suspension till enquiry is contemplated or investigation or trial in criminal offence is pending against him.

Setting aside the CAT judgment whereby suspension against an employee was quashed on the ground the delay caused by the employer to complete the enquiry against the delinquent official, the Division Bench of Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Puneet Gupta said a Government servant can be placed under suspension where an enquiry is contemplated or is pending or the complaint against him of any criminal offence is under investigation or trial. (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

'India prepared to deal with any contingency' Transgressions may potentially trigger escalation along LAC: Army chief

PUNE, Mar 27:

Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pandey today said transgressions remain the potential trigger for escalations along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China and asserted India has adequate reserves and was prepared to deal with any contingency.

He said China has accrued significant capacities for force mobilization, application, and sustenance of military operations and maintained the long-pending boundary issue cannot be divorced from bilateral relations between the two Asian giants.

General Pandey said Chinese attempts to carry out transgressions across the LAC in viola-

tions of past agreements/protocols remain a matter of concern for India, but the Army's preparedness remains of a high order, comments coming in the backdrop of the border standoff in eastern Ladakh that started in May 2020.

He was speaking at the 2nd Strategic Dialogue on 'Rise of China and its Implications for the World', organized by the Savitribai Phule Pune University and the New Delhi-based Centre for China Analysis and Strategy.

"I think the most important aspect of our operational environment remains our legacy challenges of the unsettled and disputed borders. Pockets of dispute and contested claims to the territory continue to exist due to differing perceptions of the alignment of the Line of Actual

Control. Transgressions remain the potential trigger for escalations," the Chief of Army Staff cautioned. Hence, Sino-Indian border management requires close monitoring as infirmities can lead to a wider conflict, General Pandey said. "As we all know we have agreements/protocols -- (signed in) 1993, 1996, 2005, and 2013 -- in the military domain to maintain peace and tranquillity on the LAC. Of concerns remain the violations of these by China -- with their attempt to carry out -- transgressions across the LAC," he said.

The decades-old boundary issue cannot be divorced from bilateral relations, General Pandey asserted and went on to quote External Affairs Minister (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

Bridge on road to SMVDU, Narayana Hospital awaits completion

Nishikant Khajuria

JAMMU, Mar 27: Even after more than five years since commencement of construction work, a span motorable bridge at Jhajjar Nallah near Katra for connectivity to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Narayana Hospital and several villages in the vicinity, is still awaiting its completion.

Foundation stone of this 160-meter double lane span bridge over Jhajjar Nallah on Panthal to Jhajjar Road via SMVD University road at take-off point at Jhajjar, was laid by then Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti in the presence of Minister for Public Works, Naem Akhter, MoS PWD(R&B), Sunil Sharma, MoS Finance Ajay Nanda and others on February 21, 2018.

Govt mulls action against erring contractor



Pillars of the span bridge, work on which has been left halfway by the contractor.

To be constructed at the cost of Rs 20 crores in two years, i.e. by February 2020, the bridge is still awaiting its completion till date as the work is lying stopped

after foundation and construction of a part of sub-structure, including pillars.

The Contractor is learnt to (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Revised NCERT books from 2024-25

NEW DELHI, Mar 27:

New NCERT textbooks revised in accordance with the new National Education Policy (NEP) are likely to be introduced in schools from 2024-25 academic session, Education Ministry officials said today.

The textbooks will be developed as per the National Curriculum Framework (NCF). "The new textbooks are likely to be introduced from 2024-25 academic session. It is a tall task but we are aiming for that. The textbooks will be revised as per the new NCF, work on which is already going on," a senior MoE official said.

"Since COVID-19 has taught us that there is an appetite for digital learning, all the new textbooks will simultaneously be made available digitally. (Contd on page 6 Col 7)

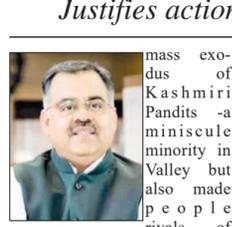
3 dynastic parties responsible for turmoil in J&K: Chugh

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, Mar 27: Hitting out hard at dynastic parties, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) general secretary and incharge J&K UT, Tarun Chugh today said that the three parties looted the resources of J&K during their 70 year long rule.

Talking to reporters at Chandigarh today, the BJP leader held these three parties including Congress, National Conference and People's Democratic Party (PDP) totally responsible for over three decades long turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir. "It was of their wrong and anti people policies that put J&K into flames", he added.

Chugh said these three parties are not only responsible for the



each other for their vested political ends.

Lambasting these parties for talking about launching Satyagrah, Chugh said that no one is above law and anybody defying rule of law and considering himself to be extra Constitutional authority has to face the action under law. "No body is supreme than law how influential he or she may be", he

added. The BJP leader said that the dynastic parties who ruled country and J&K for 70 long years still think that their dynasties are above the law but it is their big mistake. They should understand that no one is above the law and they should now learn to respect the law of the land, he added.

Taking a dig at Congress party, he said it was trying to mislead the people and the comment on a particular caste made by Congress vice president, Rahul Gandhi is a serious issue and an insult to that caste. "I think that the people of country will neither forgive him nor his party for such slanderous (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Dhangri terror attack victims threaten to migrate, return ex-gratia

Killers untraced even after nearly 3 months

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 27: Family members of the Dhangri terror attack victims in the border district of Rajouri today threatened to migrate from their village to a "safer" place and return the ex-gratia amount if the Government fails to catch the attackers and

bring them to justice. Terrorists had struck Dhangri village on January 1 and targeted villagers and fled before planting an improvised



Dhangri terror attack victims addressing a press conference in Rajouri on Monday.

injured. Attackers remained untraced even as the carnage will complete three months on April 1. Only yesterday, the Government

post-ordered Amritpal Singh as new SSP Rajouri in place of Choudhary Aslam. Saroj Bala, who lost two sons -- Prince and Deepak -- in the terror attack, said if Government cannot provide her justice, it should "shoot me dead too". "We don't need jobs. We (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

Drug, Cosmetic Mfrs asked to complete data uploading by Apr 30 PAN India Drug Licensing portal gets more features, DFCO seeks compliance

Irfan Trambo

SRINAGAR, Mar 27: While the Online National Drug Licensing System (ONOLS) now has several new features which will add to making the licensing system seamless and robust, the J&K Drugs & Food Control Organization (DFCO) has promptly directed for compliance from the concerned in this regard by the end of April this year.

As per details, in the first phase, online application submissions related to sales licensing, fresh manufacturing licensing for drugs/cosmetics and product endorsement were

released over the portal while additional online features were developed and provided over the portal from time to time in a staggered manner for use by stakeholders.

As of date, the DFCO said, that the online services features which include uploading of data by existing manufacturers of drugs/cosmetics and submission of data for review at the official end, review and approval/ rejection of submitted data of existing manufacturers at the official end, submission of retention applications, additional product endorsement and the change in technical staff are available.

Notably, J&K is the first

State/UT in the country to adopt PAN India ONOLS for disposal of various regulatory clearances while the portal has now completed one year of its operation and has attained stability.

With the addition of the new features, the DFCO has stated that it is in constant touch with National Drug Regulatory Authority and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), Noida in making the ONOLS portal robust, industry-compatible and user friendly.

Keeping in view the new additions, the details suggest that all the existing manufacturer- (Contd on page 6 Col 3)

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