



Maximum : 29°C  
Minum : 15°C  
Humidity : 42%

SUNSET  
Today 07:45 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 05:19 AM



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.....PANORAMA

P5

## Found Hanging: Secret Sorrows and MENTAL RESILIENCE IN KASHMIR

WHEN a girl with cold-pale face and bruised neck was rushed to Srinagar's SMHS hospital on May 20, 2020, it looked like any other trauma case before some relative cleared the air: "The 15-year-old from Srinagar's Bemina area was found hanging in her room." Six days later, as the question—what drove her to such an extreme path—was still a matter of investigation, some masked villagers in Apple Town Sopore started assembling in a neighbourhood after learning about a young man's shocking demise.....

## News Digest

### Sagar's Detention Under PSA Quashed

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has quashed the Public Safety Act against National Conference General Secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar who was detained after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions, his lawyer Shariq Reyaz and party leader Omar Abdullah said on Tuesday. "The J&K High Court has quashed the detention of my senior colleague @JKNC\_General Secretary Ali Mohd Sagar. Thankfully, he challenged his detention" ● P-02

### India, Pak Troops Trade Fire Along LoC

Srinagar: India and Pakistan troops Tuesday traded heavy gunfire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Tangdhar sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district. In the wee hours Tuesday, Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violation in Tangdhar Sector and targeted forward posts of Indian Army with mortars and other weapons, Defence spokesperson, Colonel Rajesh Kalia said. ● P-02

### 5.8 Magnitude Earthquake Jolts J&K

Jammu- An earthquake of magnitude 5.8 hit Jammu and Kashmir in the early hours of Tuesday, officials said, the third to hit J&K in three days. However, there were no reports of any damage, they said. The earthquake occurred at 7 AM and its epicenter was in Tajikistan, according to the officials. Strong tremors were felt in most parts of the Kashmir Valley, including Srinagar, Kishtwar and Doda districts. ● P-02

### Leopard Mauls Minor In Kulgam

Srinagar: In a tragic incident of man-animal conflict, a minor was mauled to death by a leopard in Damhal Hanjipora area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district, reports said Tuesday. A leopard appeared in Gujrabasti Korial village of Damhal Hanjipora Monday night and pounced upon two-year-old Muhammad Sharief Dragad, reports said. On finding the boy missing, the family and authorities of Wildlife department searched for him and on Tuesday morning found the partly-eaten body of the ● P-02

### Ladakh Records 94 New Covid-19 Cases

Leh: As many as 94 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Ladakh on Tuesday, taking the total number of virus cases in the union territory to 649, health department officials said. While 50 new coronavirus cases were reported from Kargil district, 44 samples returned positive for COVID-19 in Leh district, the officials said. Three patients recovered and were discharged from hospital in Kargil this morning, taking the total number of recoveries in the union territory to 85, they said. Ladakh had reported ● P-02

# 20 Indian Soldiers Killed In Clash With Chinese Troops In Ladakh



File Pic

#### Observer Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: In a massive escalation of border tension, at least twenty Indian soldiers, including the commanding officer of an infantry battalion, were killed during a violent confrontation with Chinese troops in Ladakh on Monday night. Indian Army has confirmed the number of casualties.

The incident took place following weeks of rising tensions and the deployment of thousands of extra troops from both sides.

At least 20 Indian soldiers were killed during a violent clash with Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh on Monday night. The casualty number could further rise, according to news agency ANI.

The 20 dead soldiers included an Indian Army officer identified as Colonel Santosh Babu, Commanding Officer of the 16 Bihar regiment, officials said.

It is believed to be first such incident along the contested ● PAGE 02

## Govt, Military Brass Go In Huddle, DM Briefs PM

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held two-back-to-back meetings with top military brass on Tuesday deliberating on the situation in eastern Ladakh after an Indian Army officer and two soldiers were killed in a violent clash with Chinese troops in Galwan Valley.

Singh also briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the killing of the three Indian Army personnel during Monday night's clash as well as on the overall situation in the region, government sources said.

The colonel and the two soldiers were killed in the violent face-off with Chinese troops in Galwan Valley where the

two sides have been on a bitter standoff for over five weeks.

The Indian Army said there have been casualties on the Chinese side as well.

The killing of the Indian Army personnel is the first such incident involving fatalities after a gap of 45 years. Four Indian soldiers were killed in an ambush at Tulung La in Arunachal Pradesh along the de-facto border between the two countries in 1975.

The first meeting Singh held was attended by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and the three service chiefs, and it carried out a comprehensive review of the ground situation in eastern Ladakh as well as deliberated on India's preparedness to deal with any ● PAGE 02

### China Trying To Unilaterally Change Status Quo: MEA

India on Tuesday said the violent face-off between the armies of India and China in eastern Ladakh was the result of an attempt by the Chinese side to unilaterally change the status quo in the region. The Ministry of External Affairs said both sides suffered casualties that could have been avoided had the agreement arrived at earlier at the higher level been scrupulously followed by the Chinese side. "Given its responsible approach to border management, India is very clear that all its activities are always within the Indian side of the LAC. We expect the same of the Chinese side," MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said. An Indian Army colonel and two soldiers were killed during a violent clash with Chinese troops in eastern ● P-02

### Beijing Lodges Protest With India

China on Tuesday lodged a protest with India over the June 15 violent face-off between the troops of two countries, which it claimed took place when the Indian personnel crossed the border line for "illegal activities and provoked and attacked Chinese personnel" leading to serious physical conflict. The protest was "mentioned" during a meeting with Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Luo Zhaohui, Indian Ambassador here Vikram Misri said. "There was a meeting at the (Chinese) foreign ministry during which what happened at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on Monday was discussed, Misri said. When asked if China has lodged the protest, Misri told PTI "yes, it was mentioned in the meeting," but clarified ● P-02

### Oppn Parties Train Guns At Modi Govt

Opposition parties on Tuesday questioned the "silence" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on the violent clash between Indian and Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh and asked them to take the nation into confidence on the matter, while the ruling BJP asserted that India's borders will remain intact under Modi's leadership. At least 20 Indian soldiers were killed during a violent clash with Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley on Monday night, in the first such incident involving fatalities after a gap of 45 years and signalling a massive escalation in the five-week border standoff in the sensitive region. The Congress termed the death of the Indian Army officer and soldiers in the LAC face-off with China as " ● P-02

## UN Chief Concerned Over Child Casualties In J&K

Press Trust Of India

UNITED NATIONS- UN chief Antonio Guterres has expressed concern over child casualties in Jammu and Kashmir and urged the government to take preventive measures to protect the children.

The Secretary-General's report on 'Children and Armed Conflict' said that the UN had verified over 25,000 grave violations against children globally from January to December 2019, stressing that the tragedy children face continued unabated throughout the year. On India, the report said

that the United Nations "verified" the killing of eight children and maiming of seven (13 boys, 2 girls), between the ages of 1 and 17, "by or during joint operations of the Central Reserve Police Force, the Indian Army (Rashtriya Rifles) and the Special Operations Group of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, unidentified armed elements, or during shelling across the Line of Control."

The UN also verified attacks on nine schools in Jammu and Kashmir by "unidentified elements", the report said.

"I remain concerned ● PAGE 02

## PCI Seeks J&K Govt's Reply On New Media Policy

Says It Affects Functioning Of Free Press

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Press Council of India (PCI) on Tuesday sought a reply from the Jammu and Kashmir government over its new media policy, observing that provisions in it affect the free functioning of the press.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration had earlier this month approved the 'Media Policy-2020' for creating a sustained narrative on the functioning of

the government in the media.

Taking note of provisions regarding "fake news" mentioned in the policy, whereby the Jammu and Kashmir government authorises officers to decide on the content of print, electronic and other forms of media for "fake news" and proceed against journalists and media organisations, the PCI has moved suo motu as the matter affects the free functioning of the press.

Comments on the matter have

also been called from the Jammu and Kashmir chief secretary and Secretary, Department of Information and Public Relations, a PCI statement said.

The policy attempts to thwart misinformation, fake news and tries to develop a mechanism that will raise alarm against any attempt to use the media to vitiate public peace, sovereignty and integrity of the country, an official spokesperson of the UT's administration had said earlier.

## 78 More Test Covid-19 Positive In J&K

SRINAGAR: 78 more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, taking the number of cases in J&K to 5,298, officials said.

"78 new COVID-19 cases were detected in J&K. While 62 are from Kashmir, 16 of them are from Jammu," the officials said.

The cases detected on Tuesday included 23 persons who had returned to Jammu and Kashmir recently.

Budgam district, in central Kashmir, had the highest number of cases at 14, followed by Srinagar and Anantnag districts at 10 cases each, the officials said.

They said five districts Jammu, Ramban, Doda, Reasi and Kishtwar had no fresh cases. The officials said that 177 more patients ● PAGE 02

## Srinagar Mayor Defeated In A Dramatic Coup D'état

Junaid Azim Mattu Is Not The Srinagar Mayor Anymore. What's The Backstory Of His Rise And Fall?

Gowhar Geelani

SRINAGAR: The latest debacle in Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) where a 'No Confidence Motion' was 'successfully' passed against the incumbent Mayor Mattu of the J&K People's Conference (JKPC). Mattu himself believes that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the J&K National Conference (JKNC) jointly engineered his downfall, a charge denied by both the parties.

But it is reliably learnt that the dramatic removal of Srinagar Mayor from the office on June 16 was made possible with active support of the BJP. And what has added to the drama is the fact that JKNC on Tuesday expelled four SMC Corporators from basic membership of the party, "fol-



File Pic

lowing their refusal to comply with the party instructions and subsequently voting in the No Confidence Motion against SMC Mayor."

According to JKNC's spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar said in a statement that the party had "asked its Corporators to abstain from participating in No Confidence Motion and not be a part of any BJP-sponsored political move. In spite of the clear directions, four out of our 11 Corporators de-

cided to be a part of the BJP-initiated No Confidence Motion against SMC Mayor. Hence taking note of their incomplicity, the party leadership expelled them from the basic membership of party." Those expelled included G N Sofi, Danish Bhat, Neelofar and Majid Shulloo. Although the JKNC had boycotted the urban body polls these four Corporators along with seven others had joined the party in May 2019.

This action by the JKNC has cemented the existing perception in the Kashmir Valley that the BJP and NC jointly engineered the coup.

#### MAYOR CONCEDES DEFEAT

In a series of tweets, Junaid Azim Mattu described his ouster as Srinagar Mayor after a second floor test in less than six months ● PAGE 02

## 'I Lived Death At The Door of Hell': Kashmir's Chilling COVID Chronicles

Jyotsna Bharti

Throughout his stay in a woeful ward, a young father from Baramulla craved to touch his toddler's warm fingers with his trembling hands. On his possible deathbed, he wanted to see his home, "one last time", before the virus could choke him to death and sent his boxed body for a hush-hush burial.

Ever since he "came out alive" from the hospital ward where he saw his fellow COVID patient dying a lonely and miserable death, Shabir Khan (not his real name) has taken to secluded gardening. His family members say their 35-year-old headman has grown quiet and thoughtful after having a near-



KO-File Pic: Abidi Bhat

death viral encounter.

Today, Khan restlessly talks about his state of numbness and hopelessness in the hospital ward.

"That feeling somewhat explains the uncertainty of life and death when this coronavirus infects you," Khan says in a low voice.

Since March this year, when the first COVID-19 positive case was detected in Kashmir, the virus has unleashed new horrors in the society: Some it killed, some it spared, many it scared.

While administration is still trying to figure out ways and means to address this novel situation, and medical professionals try to figure out how to stop it, it has already killed more than 60 persons in Jammu and Kashmir.

Despite a decent recovery rate, it equally has an alarming death rate.

"It seems like COVID is the only killer, as our hospitals have no place for cancer and other fatal diseases," Khan says. "God forbid, if anyone catches an infection or a disease, it is only your good ● PAGE 02