



Maximum : 20°C
Minimum : 04°C
Humidity : 41%

SUNSET
Today 05:41 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 06:48 AM



News Digest

2 Soldiers Injured In Mine Blast Along LoC

Poonch- Two soldiers were injured in a mine blast at a forward area along Line of Control in Balakote sector in Poonch district on Wednesday afternoon. Official sources said that at around 1230 hours, two soldiers – Sepoy Nayat Hussain (59 BSF attached with army's 14 Punjab battalion) and Sepoy Sahil Kumar of army's 14 Punjab battalion were injured in a mine blast in Manjakote area of the Balakote sector. They **● P-02**

PDP Leader Joins BJP In Jammu

Jammu: A senior PDP leader joined the BJP here on Wednesday, saying the people of Jammu and Kashmir do not support anyone who tries to defame the nation and the national flag. Ramazan Hussain, who had unsuccessfully contested the 2014 assembly elections from Bani constituency on a BSP ticket before joining the PDP, was welcomed into the party fold by J-K BJP president Ravinder Raina at the party headquarters **● P-02**

Girl Slips To Death In Gurez Forest

Srinagar: A teenage girl on Wednesday morning slipped to death in Gurez forests of north Kashmir's Bandipora district. 18-year-old Shameema Jan was collecting firewood in Tulail forest area of Gurez when she lost control and fell into a gorge leading to her death, news agency KDC reported. The report said that the body of the girl was recovered, and handed **● P-02**

Militant Hideout Unearthed In Poonch

Jammu- State forces have busted a militant hideout in a forest area in Poonch district of Jammu region, leading to recovery of a cache of arms and ammunition, a senior police officer said on Wednesday. The hideout was unearthed during an overnight joint operation by police and Rashtriya Rifles in the forest area of Kalaban in Mendhar sector, Senior Superintendent **● P-02**

Sopore Teen's Body Retrieved After 7 Days

Srinagar: The body of a teenager boy was retrieved from river Jhelum on Wednesday, seven days after he allegedly jumped in the river in Sopore area of Baramulla district to end his life. The body of Nazir Ahmed Chahal (14) of Ahad Bab Crossing Sopore was retrieved today by a joint team of Sopore Police, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Army and local boatmen after a weeklong continuous search operation, officials said. **● P-02**

7 Gamblers Arrested In Raid: Police

Srinagar: Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested seven gamblers in a raid in Rainawari area of this capital city. Acting on an input, a police team carried out a raid near Gondola in Rainawari and arrested seven gamblers from the spot, a police spokesperson said. He said besides playing cards, an amount of Rs 82,300 was recovered from the gamblers. "They have been arrested and shifted to Police Station Rainawari where **● P-02**

Agriculture Land Will Not Be Given To Non-Residents: LG

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Amid widespread criticism over the new land laws introduced by the government of India, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said that no agricultural land in Jammu and Kashmir will be alienated to non-residents but for industrial investment and employment opportunities, non-agricultural land would be optimally utilized.

Speaking on the launch of Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)-2020 for Apple here at Horticulture Complex, Raj Bagh here on Wednesday, Sinha assured that no agricultural land would be alienated to any non-residents of the Union Territory, an official spokesperson said.

However, for industrial investment and employment opportunities, LG said non-agricultural land would be optimally utilized. He said that the LG observed that Horticulture is one of the priority sectors of J&K due to its unique agro-climatic diversity, which makes it ideal for varied cultivation.

"The Horticulture sector, in particular, has an immense growth potential and the J&K Government is making all out efforts to tap the potential in order to give a fillip to the socio-economic condition of all those who are associated with the sector and contribute to the betterment of livelihood of Apple Growers," LG, J&K and therefore, the Government agreed to extend **● PAGE 02**



as per official spokesperson said. He said that the LG observed that the objective of the newly launched MIS is to facilitate the stakeholders by providing optimum prices to the growers in the region during the peculiar situation arising out of COVID-19 pandemic.

"Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is a great relief for apple growers. It will provide a comprehensive insurance cover against any obstacle thus helping in stabilizing the income of the Apple farmers". The scheme was launched for the first time in the history of J&K during September-2019 and was widely appreciated by the growers across

Now Govt Can Declare Any Area In J&K As Strategic At Army's Behest

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Ministry of Home Affairs Govt of India on Tuesday announced that any local area in Jammu and Kashmir can be declared as strategic by the government on the written request of the army.

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, the Government may on the written request of an Army officer not below the rank of Corp Commander, declare an area as Strategic Area within a local area, only for direct operational and training requirements of armed forces, which may be excluded from the operation of this Act and rules/regulations made there under in the manner and to the extent specified in the declaration and the Government may satisfy itself about the reasons cited for declaring the area as strategic area and will have such area notified accordingly with such conditions as may be required," reads the government order.

It also announced an amendment in land laws to **● PAGE 02**

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PDP, NPP Stage Protests In Jammu

A day after the government of India notified new land rules paving way for outsiders to buy land in Jammu and Kashmir, scores of people Wednesday held protests and burned effigies of BJP in the winter capital and demanded **● P-02**

Muslim Majority JK 'Eyesore' For BJP: NC

Coming down heavily on the BJP-led government over the new land laws, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference on Wednesday said that having a Muslim majority state within the union of India has always been an eyesore to the ruling **● P-02**

New Laws Will Boost JK Economy: Singh

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said the new land laws in Jammu and Kashmir, which allow all Indians to buy land there, will boost the economy and offer value addition to the higher education institutions in the union territory. **● P-02**

Pak Rejects New Land Laws In J&K

Pakistan on Wednesday "categorically rejected" the government of India's amendments in the land ownership laws in Jammu and Kashmir, saying it was a "clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions, bilateral **● P-02**

4 More Corona Deaths In J&K, Toll 1456

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Four more people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, raising the fatality count since the outbreak of the pandemic in the Union Territory to 1456.

Three more Covid-19 related deaths were reported from Jammu division, while a woman lost the battle with the deadly disease in the valley, officials said.

The 58-year-old woman from Bagh-e-Mehtaab, was admitted to a hospital here and diagnosed with bilateral community acquired pneumonia on October 18.

The deaths from Jammu included two from the **● PAGE 02**

4 Doctors Among 536 New Cases

Four doctors and thirty five travelers were among 536 new cases detected in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, taking the total number of people infected by the virus in the Union Territory to 93213. **● P-02**

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2 Militants Killed In Overnight Gunfight In Srinagar Outskirts

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Two Jaish-e-Muhammad militants were killed by state forces in an encounter that broke out on Tuesday night in Mouchwa area of Budgam district of central Kashmir, police said Wednesday.

The site of the encounter is close to the capital Srinagar. State forces launched a cordon-and-search operation at Mouchwa in Chadoora area of Budgam around 7 pm on Tuesday following information about the presence of militants there, a police spokesperson said.

He said the search operation turned into an encounter around 9 pm after militants opened fire at state forces positions.



Two militants were killed in the encounter which lasted nearly four hours, the police spokesperson said,

adding due to darkness the operation was suspended, however the whole area was put under **● PAGE 02**

China Says LAC Standoff Bilateral Issue, Slams US

Beijing: China on Wednesday said its border standoff with India in eastern Ladakh is a bilateral issue, and asked the US to "stop" its Indo-Pacific strategy, terming it as an attempt to impose American hegemony in the region.

The remarks by the Chinese Foreign Ministry came a **● P-02**

Govt Appoints 2 Media Consultants To LG

SRINAGAR: The J&K Government on Wednesday appointed Yatish Yadav as senior media consultant and Dr. Dushyant Kumar Rai as media consultant in the Information Department on nomination basis.

The senior media consultant will be paid Rs 150000 salary per month while the media consultant will draw a salary of Rs 80000 per month, according to an order issued here.

Cumulatively they will draw Rs 230000 as salary besides other perks. "Sanction is hereby accorded to the engagement of **● P-02**

'Pied Piper' Sarjan Barkati Released After Four Years

SRINAGAR: Sarjan Barkati, popularly known as 'Freedom Chacha' and the pied piper of Kashmir, was on Wednesday released by the authorities after over four years of detention.

Barkati's wife Shabroza Banoo said that her husband was released from detention and he reached home at around 7:40 pm Wednesday.

Barkati, who hails from south Kashmir's Shopian **● P-02**

In FOCUS New Job Rules Will Make Working Women More 'Vulnerable', Activists Fear

Bisma Bhat

Fear has gripped many women government employees, after the Jammu and Kashmir administration passed new amendment in the retire policy of government employees, as they suspect that the law might increase vulnerability of sexual abuse and harassment in the male-dominated offices.

The administration on October 22 introduced certain substitutes in 226(2) Article of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Service Regulations.

The Finance department issued notification stating that in exercise of powers conferred under provision

to Article 309 of Indian Constitution, Lieutenant Governor has directed that Article 226(2) of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Service Regulations may be substituted as "226 (2): (a) Notwithstanding anything contained in these Regulations, government may, if it is of the opinion that in the public interest to do so, require any government employee other than one working on a post which is included in Schedule II of these rules, to retire at any time after he/she has completed 22 years of qualifying service or on attained 48 years of age.

It stated that "the exercise of review of performance of the government servants will be initiated for each employee for the first time

after her/his completion of 22 years of service or attaining 48 years of age and any time subsequently, as may be required".

The notification further states that a register of the government employees, who are due to attain the age of 48 years or to complete 22 years of service, has to be maintained by the administrative department.

The register should be "scrutinised" at the beginning of every year by officers to be nominated by the administrative department concerned and the review be undertaken as mentioned in sub-clause (b), the notification read.

Growing Concerns
Taranum (name changed) work-



ing at one of the prominent government hospitals in Srinagar feels very insecure in the office when-

ever she had night duties. In February this year, while doing a graveyard shift at the hospital, she

approached the store-keeper for blanket. Instead he offered her a cup of tea and said, "Hot cup of tea will make you hot."

"I understood his intentions were not good," Taranum recalled. "I was really scared and dumb-stuck how to react on this. I left the place without taking the blanket and preferred to spend the night in cold. Next day I shared the incident with my female colleagues who consoled me, but I did not dare to report it and buried the incident in my heart," she said.

She believes that giving men authority to write performance report every year will give them enough chance to blackmail women for

sexual favours.

Another nurse, Maryam Wani (name changed) said that last year when the winter was approaching she wanted to avail hotel facility to avoid inconvenience prevailing in winters as she had to come from far-flung village.

"I have to travel from Mattan area of Anantnag District, so I thought to prefer hostel facility during winter months to avoid regular travelling. I approached the concerned authority to book rooms in hostel. A man accompanied me to check the rooms available. When I asked him the hostel fee, he replied 'Aapkahoota sab free kara do aapkayliye' (If you wish I will avail it **● PAGE 02**