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Minum : 04°C
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News Digest

Sharma To Be Part Of Delimitation Panel

Srinagar: Jammu & Kashmir's State Election Commissioner, Kewal Kumar Sharma would replace Hirdesh Kumar as member of the delimitation commission constituted by the Central government earlier this year for Assembly and Parliamentary segments of J&K Union Territory, sources said.

They said Sharma would now be part of the three-member delimitation commission headed by former Supreme Court Judge Justice (Retd) Ranjana Prakash Desai. The Election Commissioner Sushil Kumar Chandra is other member of the panel. Constituted in March ● P-02

Govt Orders Transfer Of 8 Officers

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir ordered transfer of eight officers even as Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah (IAS) was given additional charge of Mission Director, Skill Development Mission.

As per the order issued by the government here, the 2012-batch IAS officer, who is Additional Secretary to the Government, Finance Department, holding additional charge of CEO, Mission Youth, CEO, ERA and Additional Secretary to the Government, Information Department, has been asked to hold charge of the mission director till further orders. Veer JI Hangloo, KAS, ● P-02

2 Booked For Running Fake Job Racket

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Police's Crime Branch on Monday busted a fake employment racket here and booked two persons for allegedly duping people on the pretext of getting them bank and government jobs, officials said.

The police have booked Mohd Rafiq Wani and Nazir Ahmed of Kashmir for duping people to the tune of Rs 52.60 lakh, they said. Police registered a case in the matter on a complaint from Vikram Bandyal of Jammu and others. The complainants said that the accused ● P-02

Srinagar-Leh Highway Reopens For Traffic

Srinagar: After remaining suspended due to slippery road, Srinagar-Leh road was thrown open for traffic on Monday.

The road had been closed for traffic on Sunday following a mild snowfall. An official said that the road at Zojila, Minimarg, Shaitan-Nallah and Drass had become slippery due to fresh snowfall on Sunday afternoon and with the improvement in weather, it was thrown open for traffic today. He said stranded vehicles carrying essential supplies ● P-02

Man Arrested With Heroin In Poonch

Jammu: A man was arrested with 2.5 kg of heroin in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Monday, officials said.

On the basis of information, a joint team of the army and the police intercepted a person in Mendhar, they said. During a search, three packets containing heroin and weighing around 2.5 kgs were seized, the officials said. In this regard, a case has been lodged at the Mendhar police station, they said. The possibility that the ● P-02

Police 'Crack' Militant Attack Case On BJP Leader, 3 Held

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Police on Monday claimed to have cracked October 6 attack on BJP leader from Nunar Ganderbal in which a militant and a policeman were killed.

"On October 6, (militants) carried out an attack on the District Vice President BJP Gulnam Qadir at Nunar Ganderbal in which one (militant) involved in the attack namely Shabir Ahmad Shah of Tral was neutralised on the spot in retaliatory fire," said a police official in a statement.

One constable Mohammad Altaf also killed due to a gunshot wound during the incident.

Accordingly, the police official said, that a case (FIR No 209 of 2020) under section 302 IPC, 13, 16, 18 UA (P) A and 7/27 IA Act was registered at

police station Ganderbal and investigation set into motion.

"During investigation involvement of one Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh (Hospital Security Guard) of Serch Ganderbal was unraveled. However, he upon questioning tried to dodge the investigation agency. Technical details sought through ESU revealed some startling facts and (his) sustained questioning on October 30 revealed that he was an active member of (Hizb-ul-Mujahideen) and had been instrumental in the attack."

Accordingly he was arrested and on his disclosure one pistol, a Magazine with 3 rounds of ammunition and some Pak flags were recovered, the official said.

"During sustained questioning the (militant) associate disclosed two other associates namely Hilal Ahmad Mir of Bernbugh Kangan, ● PAGE 02

Govt Clears Air On New Land Laws

Not An Inch Of Kashmir's 90% Agri Lands Will Be Given To Outsider



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Amidst an outcry over the newly introduced land laws in Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Territory administration on Monday said that the new land rules will not only afford protection to over 90% of the land from being alienated to outsiders but will also help revamp the agriculture sector, foster rapid industrialization, aid economic growth and create jobs in J&K.

Addressing a news conference here on Monday, Principal Secretary, Information and Government Spokesman, Rohit Kansal said that government has repealed 11 Land Laws that existed in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir "replacing the old, regressive, intrinsically contradictory and outdated laws with a set of modern, progressive and people friendly provisions."

Kansal made these comments while interacting with the media on a host of issues related to the

UT of Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of State Laws) Fifth Order, 2020.

Elaborating, Kansal remarked that the repealed laws were made to serve the old agrarian based economy and were required to be modified for modern economic needs.

"Besides, they were beset with ambiguities, contradictions and redundancies and in many cases, were clearly regressive. For instance, A number of Laws had contradictions leading ● PAGE 02

Reactions Like 'J&K On Sale' Uncharitable: Govt

JAMMU: The government on Monday termed reactions against new land laws that allow the buying of the land by outsiders as "uncharitable" even as it called old legislations as "outdated" and "in many cases clearly regressive and anti-people"

"A number of old laws, at least 11 have been repealed and four major laws have been modified," Principal Secretary PDD and Information, Rohit Kansal, who is also Government spokesperson, told reporters during a news confer-

ence here on Monday.

Kansal said this modification, repeal and change has led to varied reactions across the spectrum.

"And many of these reactions have been uncharitable. For example some political parties have said that J&K is now on sale. Some others have said that there is no protection with regard to land on similar lines as has been given to people in other states," he said, adding, "We think there is lot of misapprehension, misinformation and lack of clarity on ● PAGE 02

THERE WAS A NEED TO STRAIGHTEN up, clean up the system and provide a set of simpler land laws which would prevent unnecessary litigation and prevent discretionary interpretation of laws leaves opportunities for the vested interests."

New Land Laws Breaking Political Ice In Jammu

Auqib Javed

Five days before the announcement of new land laws by New Delhi for Jammu and Kashmir, over 20 political parties and social organisations held a meeting in Jammu to discuss "certain issues" related to the winter capital.

Convened by Jammu-based senior politician and former minister Harsh Dev Singh of National Panthers Party, the meeting was called a few days after People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) came into being in Kashmir, with "an aim for the restoration of the special status".

Apart from Panthers Party, the



File Photo

meeting was attended by Dogra Sadar Sabha (DSS) chairman Gulchain Singh Charak, Ikkjutt Jammu Chairman Ankur Sharma, Chairman Sainik Samaj Party Col

SS Pathania, retired Director Colleges Prof Jai Kumar Sharma, retired Inspector General (IG) Sudhir Singh, leaders of Shiv Sena, Bajrang Dal, United Democratic

Alliance (UDI), Batwal Community, and others.

The leaders present in the meeting reportedly expressed concerns over the alleged neglect of Jammu division by the Narendra Modi government and pressed for a separate statehood for the province.

It was for the first time since the abrogation of Article 370 last year that political parties in Jammu came together to press for their demands.

On the heels of the meeting, former chief minister Omar Abdullah said "resentment is growing in Jammu, where people are silent because they don't want to paint themselves ● PAGE 2

A Journalist Killed Every Four Days This Past Decade: UNESCO

Agencies

DOHA: Fifty-seven journalists and media workers were killed across the world last year, the United Nations says in a new report to mark the International Day to End of Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.

In the first nine months of this year, 39 journalists have been killed, including 3 female journalists, the report released by UNESCO on Monday said, noting that this is the lowest death toll in the last decade.

Unprecedented global attention following high-profile cases and better mechanisms to improve the safety of journalists were potential reasons for the lower death toll reported this year, the report said.

It added that journalists practising self-censorship in reaction to widespread threats could also be a factor.

In 2018, 99 journalists were killed globally, according to the report.

According to UNESCO's data, the largest number of fatal attacks in 2019 - 23 killings - occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean region, representing 40 percent of the total killings registered worldwide.

With 15 killings, Asia and the Pacific region recorded 26 percent of the fatalities - the second-highest tally globally.

The Arab region was the third-deadliest with 18 percent of the recorded fatalities, amounting to 10 killings.

UNESCO said the lowest deaths were reported from Central and Eastern Europe. ● PAGE 02

Winter Woes: KPDCL To Issue Power Cut Schedule In A Week

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) will announce within a week the new curtailment schedule for the coming winter to meet the electricity demands in the Valley, a senior official said Monday.

"We did not curtail power this year till now. However the load has increased. We are framing a power curtailment schedule which will be issued within one week," Chief Engineer KPDCL, Ajaz Ahmad said Monday.

When asked if there were any chances of improved electricity supply this year, Ahmad said the department will ensure sufficient power supply to the people.

However, he quickly put the ball in people's court saying that if electricity is used judiciously, then there will be improvement in power supply as well.

"We have to optimize things from all available resources," he said.

Expressing optimism that the this year's curtailment schedule will have a lot of respite for the Valley consumers, Chief Engineer KPDCL said that various reformatory measures have been taken by the power department in this regard.

However, the consumers in metered areas don't seem to buy the assurances from the senior power department official.

"Over the years, the department has been violating its own schedule by resorting ● PAGE 02

9 More Corona Deaths In J&K, Toll 1493

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Nine more people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, taking the number of fatalities since the outbreak of pandemic in the Union Territory to 1493.

According to the officials, Kashmir valley witnesses six more Covid-19 deaths, while three fatalities were reported from Jammu division. Among the six victims from the Valley, two were residents of Srinagar while one each was from Baramulla, Pulwama, Ganderbal and Kulgam districts.

Officials said that the Ganderbal resident was 70-year-old

man from Kangan and died at SKIMS Soura, 11 days after he was admitted to the tertiary care hospital.

The victim from Baramulla, they said, was a woman from Sopore area who died at the hospital, 12 days after she was admitted.

One among other victims from Valley was a 63-year-old man from Shaheed Gunj and died at CD Hospital, one among the exclusive facilities for the management of the covid-19 patients in the Valley.

Regarding deaths from Jammu, they said, one each victim belonged to the J&K's winter capital, Ramban and Kishtwar.

385 New Cases Include Doctor, 13 Travelers

Jammu and Kashmir reported 385 new Covid-19 cases including a doctor and a minor besides 13 travelers on Monday, taking the total number of people infected by the virus in the Union Territory to 95710. Among the fresh cases, officials said 251 were reported from Kashmir Valley while the remaining 134 ● P-02

With these deaths, the fatality count has reached 1493 in J&K - 993 in Valley ● PAGE 02

LG Allocates Portfolios Among Advisors

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has allocated charge of various departments among his advisors, Farooq Khan, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar and Baseer Ahmad Khan.

The advisors shall exercise powers of the Minister under the Transaction of Business of the Government of Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir Rules, 2019 in respect of Departments allocated to them.

For the purpose of official correspondence, Advisors Farooq Khan, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar and Baseer Ahmad Khan shall continue to be designated as Advisor (F), Advisor (B) & Advisor (BK) respectively. ● P-02

Panchayat Conference To Contest On All 280 DDC Seats

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: All Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat Conference on Monday announced to field independent candidates on all 280 seats of District Development Councils (DDCs) to keep the "jobless" mainstream politicians at bay.

Addressing a news conference here, J&K Panchayat Conference Chairman Shafiq Mir said that they have decided to field independent candidates on all 280 DDC seats for which the poll preparations are at final stage.

"By making an amendment in J&K Panchayati Raj Act, government has opened a door for the entry of politicians in this institution at third stage. But we will not allow them to enter our institution," Mir said. He added that the decision has been arrived at, after

weeklong consultations with the Panchayat leaders of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mir said that Panchayat Conference will not allow the politicians to enter in their institution because they always opposed PRI system in Jammu and Kashmir. He said after boycotting first and second tier of Panchayat elections held in 2018 and 2019, the third and final stage door has been opened for them.

"Now, when they felt they have been sidelined and left jobless they are preparing to enter in this institution but we will not allow them to succeed," he said, adding "We have decided to field candidates on all the seats as independent candidates and we will not allow politicians to enter in this institution."

Urging the educated youth to participate in these ● PAGE 02



ALLURING AUTUMN: A tourist couple sauntering in Mughal Garden on Monday in the backdrop of Aatish-e-Chinar.