



Maximum : 19°C SUNSET Today 05:28 PM
Minimum : 09°C SUNRISE Tomorrow 07:02 AM
Humidity : 38%

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News Digest

Grenade Thrown At CRPF Men In Khanyar

Srinagar: Suspected militants on Thursday lobbed a grenade towards the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel in Khanyar area of this capital city. Officials said that militants on Thursday evening hurled a grenade towards the personnel of CRPF 144 battalion near Baba Dawood Khaki bridge, which failed to explode. Soon after the incident, senior police and CRPF officers reached the spot to assess the situation. (KNO)

CASO Ends In Shopian After 40-Hours

Srinagar: A cordon and search operation (CASO) launched in Turkwangam village of south Kashmir's Shopian district in the wee hours of Wednesday ended peacefully on Thursday after 40-hours. An official told news agency KNO that on specific inputs about the presence of militants, search operation was launched by joint team of forces including 44 RR, CRPF and Shopian Police. "After conducting searches for around 40-hours, nothing was found in the area and search operation ended peacefully on Thursday evening," he said.

Locals said that this was for the first time that entire village which consists of around

3 Pulwama Youth Booked Under PSA

Srinagar: Three youth from south Kashmir's Pulwama district have been booked under the contentious Public Safety Act (PSA) for their alleged involvement in militancy. Aishah Ahmed Dar, Mushtaq Ahmed Lone and Asif Ali, all residents of Nilpora village of the district were arrested by police and slapped with PSA for recruiting and harbouring militants, news agency KNT reported Thursday. The trio, report said have been shifted to the jail outside Kashmir. Though family members

Panchayat-Level Committees Set Up

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday constituted five functional committees to strengthen panchayats in the union territory. The Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj has set up the committees for employment generation, works and infrastructure, and natural and human resource management, an official spokesperson said. A committee for natural resources management, inter alia, is tasked to conserve surface and ground water and prevent overflowing of useful

Water Scarcity Sparks Protest In Sopore

Srinagar: Scores of residents from Bagh-e-Rohmat area of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Thursday staged a protest against Jal Shakti department for 'failing' to provide adequate water supply to them. The protesters assembled at Iqbal Market and blocked Sopore Bypass road, which affected the traffic movement for several hours, news agency KNO reported Thursday. The protesters said that

...ROSHNI ACT

Admin Orders Cancellation Of Land Mutations



Observer News Service

JAMMU: The divisional administration in this winter capital on Thursday directed all the Deputy Commissioners to cancel all the mutations of the state land transferred under Roshni Act in the districts.

The directions in this regard were issued by Divisional Commissioner, Sanjeev Verma during a video conference meeting with the Deputy Commissioners of the division, an official spokesperson said. Verma, he said directed the

DCs to start the process immediately and submit details in the prescribed format regarding land transferred under Roshni Act.

"He asked them to share details i.e. number of beneficiaries in whose favour the land has been transferred, total number of land whether it is residential or agriculture, whether mutations cancelled or not, and other details," the official spokesperson said.

"The Divisional Commissioner also asked the DCs to share details of other state land encroached in their respective districts,"

THE DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER ALSO asked the DCs to share details of other state land encroached in their respective districts,"

Govt Cites Poll Threat To Extend 4G Ban

SRINAGAR: Barring districts Ganderbal and Udhampur, the authorities on Thursday extended high speed 3G and 4G internet ban across Jammu and Kashmir for another fortnight.

While high speed internet remains banned in the J&K from August 5 last year, the government has cited attempts to disrupt upcoming polls for which it said that the subversive elements "heavily rely" upon it.

The government said the recently announced elections to 280 District Development Council Constituencies and bye-elections to more than 13400 vacancies in PRIs/ULB, spread across J&K are witnessing "high level of interest" amongst the people.

"It is apprehended that the (militants) and separatist elements shall make every possible attempt to disrupt the democratic process. During the last fortnight, there have also been targeted killing of the civilians, political activists, that manifest the nefarious designs of the (militants) to dissuade general public from participating in the election process," reads an order issued by the Principal Secretary Home Shaleen Kabra.

"Such unlawful acts heavily rely upon high speed mobile internet connectivity and are required to be thwarted by taking appropriate

27 PAGD Candidates File Nomination Papers For District Polls

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an amalgam of seven political parties in Jammu and Kashmir seeking restoration of the erstwhile state's special status, on Thursday fielded 27 candidates from three parties including National Conference (NC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Peoples Conference (PC) for the forthcoming District Development Council (DDC) polls

The NC is contesting 21 of the 27 seats in the Kashmir valley, the PDP, led by Mehbooba Mufti, is contesting four, while the Sajad Lone-led Peoples Conference (PC) will field candidates in two



KO File Pic: Abid Bhat

seats for the first phase. Lone in a tweet said that all the candidates approved have filed their nomination papers.

"PAGD candidates approved for first phase have already filed their papers. List was conveyed to the parties. I am tweeting this in response to some media re-

ports of list not having been issued yet," Lone tweeted.

PAGD shared seat-sharing arrangement with the media after the candidates of the constituent parties of the alliance filed their nomination papers, the last date for which was Thursday. The PAGD, which

WE ALL HAD TO WORK AT A BREAKNECK SPEED. WE WILL update the names of the candidates later because they were busy with the filing of nominations today,"

Apni Party Welcomes PAGD's Decision

Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Thursday welcomed the decision of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) to contest the District Development Council (DDC) polls unitedly.

"Such unlawful acts heavily rely upon high speed mobile internet connectivity and are required to be thwarted by taking appropriate

Night Patrolling In Sensitive, Border Areas

Ahead of the maiden elections to the District Development Councils (DDCs) in 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir and by-polls to Panchayats, the Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh on Thursday ordered night patrolling

Class 12 Board Exams Begin In Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The annual board examinations for Class 12 in Kashmir valley commenced on Thursday amidst COVID-19-related preventive measures put in place by the authorities to check the spread of the infection among the students, officials said.

They said the examination commenced across the valley as well as in the winter zone areas of Jammu division.

The examination was conducted smoothly with almost full attendance in adherence to COVID-19 SOPs, the officials said. The candidates were briefed

about the concessions granted in the examination that they had to attempt only 60 marks out of 100 marks, they said.

This year, one supervisor for 20 students were appointed instead of 30 students, so as to follow the social distancing norms, they added.

As many as 58,514 candidates are appearing in the examination for which 626 centres have been established whereas from winter zone areas of Jammu division 15,055 candidates are appearing in 188 centres, the officials said.

The Secretary, JKBOSE Manisha Sareen alongwith Joint Secretary, Examinations visited the various examination centres at

103-Yr-Old Woman Becomes Oldest To Die From Covid-19

9 More Fatalities Take J&K Toll To 1560

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A 103-year-old woman on Thursday became the oldest coronavirus victim and was among nine persons to succumb to the deadly virus in Jammu and Kashmir in the last 24 hours.

Kashmir Valley reported six more deaths due to Covid-19, while the infection consumed three more lives in Jammu division, officials said.

The elderly woman belonged to Zazbugh Budgam and died at

SKIMS Soura last night, five days after she was admitted to the tertiary care hospital, they said.

each belonged to Srinagar, Ganderbal and Kupwara districts respectively, they said.

J&K Reports 617 New Corona Cases

Jammu and Kashmir reported 617 new covid-19 infections including 39 travelers and eight troopers in last 24 hours, taking the overall tally to 100968, officials said on Thursday. 226 of these cases were report from Jammu Division and 391 from Kashmir Valley. Giving the district wise

Besides her, the other victims from Valley included two residents of Baramulla while one

Among others the victims include a 56-year-old man from Machil Kupwara who

No Let Up In Cross-LoC Shelling

JAMMU: India and Pakistani troops continued to trade fire for the fourth consecutive day Thursday along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Officials said Thursday that Pakistan Army opened heavy fire and shelled forward areas and posts in four sectors along the LoC in Rajouri and Poonch districts of J&K, drawing strong retaliation by army.

This is fourth consecutive day that the Pakistan Army has targeted hamlets and posts with mortar bombs and heavy firing triggering fear and panic among the residents along the LoC in Poonch district.

Pakistan also opened fire along the International Border (IB) targeting hamlets

MMU Forms 'J&K Halal Certification Board'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Mutahida Majiles-e-Ulema (MMU), an amalgam of various religious organisations on Thursday announced formation of first ever 'Halal' food certification board to ensure halal, hygienic and pure food is served to the people.

The decision to form "J&K Halal certification Board" was taken during a one-day session held recently at Mirwaiz Manzil Rajouri Kadal here, an MMU spokesperson said Thursday. He said the participants unanimously emphasised the need for such certification to ensure that halal practices relating to slaughtering and food manufacture are followed and people are provided

with halal, hygienic and pure food.

"There was a consensus among all members that as mechanical slaughter house cutting and packing plants and food processing and manufacturing units are coming up across J&K, a halal certification board comprising of Islamic scholars needs to be formed," the MMU spokesperson said.

"Besides, this will greatly help the local manufacturers in export of these items to the people in other Muslims countries," he added.

He said that clerics unanimously agreed and subsequently constituted "The Jammu & Kashmir Halal certification Board" under the patronage of MMU head and Mirwaiz e Kashmir Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq,

Twitter Served Notice For Showing Leh In J&K

NEW DELHI: The government has issued a notice to Twitter for showing Leh as part of Jammu and Kashmir instead of the Union Territory of Ladakh, according to IT ministry sources.

The ministry, in its notice, has directed Twitter to explain within five working days why legal action should not be initiated against the micro-blogging platform and its representatives for disrespecting the territorial integrity of India by showing an incorrect map.

The notice was issued to Twitter by the Ministry

KEG Concerned At Denial Of Ads To 'Kashmir Reader'



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Editors Guild (KEG) has expressed concern at the continued denial of the advertisements to a Srinagar daily, Kashmir Reader, by the Jammu and Kashmir Government.

"The newspaper has never

been informed either verbally or in black and white about the reasons for a halt to the advertisements by the government", KEG said in a statement Thursday.

KEG said the issue was brought to the notice of the administration many times at different levels and it was

In FOCUS / Inside Dal Dwellers' Decaying Lives At Rakh-E-Arth

Kanika Gupta

Life for an erstwhile tourist guide Nazir Shangleo in the wilderness of flood basin turned human settlement has been a lingering nightmare. Born and brought up as an "amphibian" in the heart of the Srinagar city's famed Dal Lake—where the Imperial Englishmen's departure from the 1947 would open the recreational spaces for the westerners and influence the Dal dwellers' life-style—Nazir knew a different life. He was a Hanji for the larger Srinagar inhabitants, but always

an adventurous soul who peaked heights with his high-end tourists during his heydays.

But all this came to a grinding halt after his water-borne tribe was uprooted from the Dal Lake and left to fend for themselves at the forgotten corner of the city where flood waters quite often inundate lives.

Today, Nazir is a pale-shadow of his past. His handsome looks have now paved way to a frown face and a receding hairline.

"They threw us from our birthplace by terming us polluters," Nazir shares his tribe's torment.

"But now, they've proved friends



to none — neither to us whom they dumped into this flood-basin, nor to Dal Lake which is putrefying right under their noses despite in-

vesting crores of rupees on it."

Nazir's new home is situated on the outskirts of Srinagar, which is known for acting as a flood sponge for keeping the heritage city of Srinagar safe from brimming Jhelum.

This forgotten territory was to be the new home for Dal dwellers, a community of people who were ex-terminated from mesmerizing Dal Lake and resettled in Rakh-e-Arth.

The much-touted modern colony was supposed to have schools, hospitals, recreational facilities, playgrounds, and every means of development that justified relocation.

The reality, however, was a far cry.

Only a handful of people were aware of Rakh-e-Arth's existence and even fewer knew its address. Arriving here was an all-new challenge.

Shrouded in dust and mystery, Rakh-e-Arth was nothing that the documents claimed. Potholed roads, lopsided structures, and abandoned playgrounds are some of the sights that greet its visitors.

The resettlement colony was to be the government's answer to encroachment problem and an effort to preserve Srinagar's prized possession — the Dal Lake.

The erstwhile residents were promised a package of land, monetary

compensation, and liveable environs in exchange for giving up their lives and sources of income at the lake.

But what Lake and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA) gave them instead was a poorly-planned and unliveable expanse of marshy flood land.

From being situated in a flood channel to reeling from negligence, Rakh-e-Arth soon became its residents' worst nightmare.

The floods of September 2014 was a sordid reminder of how their fates have been sealed in what could be a lifetime of struggle just to survive.

The residents claim that their houses were damaged beyond redemption with very little help from the government to rehabilitate them. They continue