



**P4 WORLD**

### TALIBAN KILLS 13 POLICEMEN IN ATTACKS ON TWO CHECKPOINTS

At least 13 Afghan policemen were killed when Taliban militants attacked two checkpoints overnight in the north of the ....

**P7 THINK**

### THE RISK OF NOT BEING VACCINATED

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the typical gambler in America knew almost nothing of the mathematics of risk but did have a sense ...



**P10 LIFE & TIMES**

### HOPE CAN MAKE YOU HAPPIER WITH YOUR LOT, DISCOVER RESEARCHERS

Harbouring hope for the future could protect people from risky behaviours...



**Wisdom Quote!**

"If a man could have half of his wishes, he would double his troubles."  
—Benjamin Franklin

## news DIGEST

### Army Canteen Guttled In Blaze

**SRINAGAR:** A two-storeyed wooden shopping complex, designated as 'CSD', was reduced to ashes in an overnight fire incident at an Army Infantry Brigade Camp at Lawoosa area of Nowgam Sector in north-Kashmir's Kupwara district

An official said that the fire broke out around 2300 Hours last night inside Army's 17 Infantry Brigade Camp premises which later spread to adjoining area, reported news agency GNS.

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### Govt Employee Held With Pistol

**JAMMU:** Police arrested an employee of Animal Husbandry department and recovered one pistol and six bullets from his possession after an accident on Wednesday night, police said Thursday

Senior Superintendent of Police Rajouri Chandan Kohli said that on Wednesday night, an accident took place when a car (JK11B-9271) driven by Jasvinder Singh of Nonial Nowsheera skidded off the road at Chatta Siot.

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### Kashmiri Youth Arrested In Goa

**PANAJI:** A 25-year-old man from Jammu and Kashmir working in Goa has been arrested on charges of drug possession, police said on Thursday.

Police Inspector Jivba Dalvi told reporters that a raid was conducted on Wednesday night on getting information about drugs being peddled at Arambol beach village in North Goa.

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### Bear Caught In Kupwara

**SRINAGAR:** The wildlife department officials on Thursday captured a bear, who had strayed into a residential area in Kupwara district of north Kashmir.

The bear was on the prowl in the Wasia area for the last few days and had attacked several cattle, news agency GNS reported Thursday. The presence of the beast, the report said, had created panic among the villagers, who informed the authorities.

"We received several complaints from locals about the presence of a bear. The wild animal had also attacked cattle," an official of the wildlife department said. "The bear was later trapped in a cage by our officials," he added. This was the sixth such catch in Kupwara district this year.



Tourists enjoying a sledge ride on a snow covered hill in Sonamarg Valley on Thursday. —Pic: Abid Bhat

# Kashmir Valley Hit By Intense Cold Wave

**Srinagar Records Season's Coldest Night At Minus 6.4 Degree Celsius**

**SRINAGAR:** The minimum temperature across Kashmir plummeted several degrees below the freezing point on Thursday owing to a clear sky as the valley reeled under cold conditions, with Srinagar experiencing the coldest night of the season so far at minus 6.4 degrees Celsius, MeT Department officials said.

The night temperature continued to drop across the valley owing to the clear sky and the minimum temperature settled several degrees below the normal for this part of the season, the officials said.

They said Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir,

recorded a low of minus 6.4 degrees Celsius down from the previous night's minus 4.8 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperature was nearly five degrees below the normal for this part of the season.

This was the coldest night of the season so far in the city, resulting in the freezing of several stagnant water bodies, the officials added.

The mercury in Gulmarg, the famous ski-resort in north Kashmir, settled at a low of minus 11.0 degrees Celsius over six degrees below the normal for this time of the season, they said.

The resort was the coldest

recorded place in the UT.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir recorded a low of minus 8.9 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

They said Qazigund the gateway town to the valley recorded a minimum temperature of minus 4.9 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara, in the north, registered a low of minus 5.8 degrees Celsius and Kokernag, in the south, minus 4.8 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

The MeT Office said while no major snowfall is expected till the end of this month in the UT, there is a possibility of light to moderate snowfall during December 21-22 at isolated places of Kashmir.

### PANCHAYAT BY-POLLS

## 68% Voting For Panch Seats, 58% For Sarpanch In Phase-7



File Photo: Abid Bhat

**JAMMU:** The seventh phase of panch and sarpanch by-elections in Jammu and Kashmir recorded 68.43 per cent and 58.64 per cent voter turnout respectively, poll officials said on Thursday.

Udhampur district in the Jammu division had the highest poll percentage in the Union Territory at 81.38 in the sarpanch bypolls, while Bandipora district had the highest turnout at 68.82 per cent in the Kashmir division.

For panch by-elections, Jammu division's Rajouri district registered the highest voter turnout

in Jammu and Kashmir at 84.85 per cent, while Bandipora had the highest voting percentage at 75.66 in the Kashmir division.

"There was 68.43 per cent and 58.64 per cent polling recorded in the seventh phase of vacant panch and sarpanch bypolls, respectively, held the other day (Wednesday)," State Election Commissioner (SEC) K K Sharma told reporters here.

Bypolls were held for 438 vacant panch seats in the seventh phase and out of a total of 78,866 electors, including 39,727 men and 37,139 women, 52,599 ➔ More On P8

### Dr Farooq Seeks Repolling In DDC Constituency

**SRINAGAR:** NC president Farooq Abdullah on Thursday demanded repolling in Garoora District Development Council constituency in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora in view of allegations of booth capturing and other malpractices.

Polling for the sixth phase of the District Development Council (DDC) elections was held on December 13.

In a letter to state Election Commissioner K K Sharma, Abdullah expressed concern over an incident of booth capturing and subsequent bogus voting in the recently held DDC polls in Garoora Bandipora.

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## J&K Open For Business, LG Tells CII



### Calls For Unlocking UT's Potential In A Multi-Dimensional Fashion

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Thursday called for "unlocking" the potential of Jammu Kashmir in a multi-dimensional fashion, through systemic interventions at the individual and community level.

Addressing the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Partnership Summit-2020 organized through

virtual mode, Sinha said that J&K possesses great growth potential having talented young English-speaking population, coupled with established supply chains, ease of doing business, single-window clearances, competitive regulatory and policy landscapes assured part insurance covers, and rich natural resources.

He called upon the CII and its members to partner with J&K and be the change that one truly wishes to see reflected on the ground, besides shaping up a magnificent

future and to invest in a truly greenfield project.

"We're open for business. And we're set for growth, which is sustainable and builds businesses with purpose. Come and partner with us! And enrich this partnership summit with your ideas and your inputs" the LG said.

"I want to see industry, jobs, skilled workforce, modern villages, and world-class infrastructure walk hand-in-hand together in Jammu Kashmir in 2021. We will therefore do our ➔ More On P8

## SC Suggests Putting On Hold Farm Laws, Centre Opposes

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Thursday acknowledged the right of farmers to non-violent protests and mooted the idea of putting on hold the contentious farm laws to enable negotiations with agitating farmers which was opposed by the Centre saying agriculturists would then not come forward for the talks.

The apex court, which made it clear that the issue of farmers' protest and the right to move freely of others would be dealt on priority and not the validity of laws at the moment, also said it was thinking of setting up an "impartial and independent" panel of agriculture experts and farmer unions to resolve the impasse.

The top court said it was of the view that the farmers' right to protest

should not infringe the fundamental rights of others to move freely and in getting essential food and other supplies as right to protest cannot mean blockade of the entire city.

The apex court, which said it was worried with the way things are going on, was told by both the Centre and one of the farmers union that the negotiations are not happening at the moment.

It also said farmers cannot keep on protesting without talking to the government.

"You continue the protest. You have the right. But you have a purpose also and that purpose is served only if you talk, discuss and reach a conclusion," a bench headed by Chief Justice S A ➔ More On P8

## Amar Singh College Gets 2020 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Award

### OBSERVER NEWS DESK

Amar Singh College, Srinagar, has been recognized with the prestigious Award of Merit in the 2020 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

In its statement, the UNESCO said the 48 projects that were received collectively represent a significant achievement in the progress of conservation in the Asia-Pacific region.

"Project entries were diverse in scope and typology and were submitted from nine countries across the Asia-Pacific region,"



the statement reads. The jury, consisting of nine international conservation experts, was convened from 20-22 November 2020 to deliberate the project entries. This year the Jury awarded two Special Recognition for Sustainable Development, one Award of Excellence, one Award of Distinction, three Awards of Merit, and one Award for New Design in Heritage Contexts.

"The restoration of the Amar Singh College brought back one of the most prominent institutional buildings in Kashmir to its former glory," 2020 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Jury commented. ➔ More On P8

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