



Maximum : 9°
Minimum : -4°
Humidity : 75%

SUNSET Today 05:28 PM
SUNRISE Tomorrow 07:35 AM

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P7 LIFE & TIMES

MASKS BLOCK 99.9% OF LARGE COVID-LINKED DROPLETS: STUDY

Face masks reduce the risk of spreading large Covidlinked droplets when speaking or coughing by up to 99.9 percent, according to a lab ...

P4 STRAIGHT STROKES

THINK DDC LESSONS FOR PAGD

The Ordinance law in the first place owes its existence to a hypothetical ...



P8 OBSERVER OUTPOST

7 US LAWMAKERS WRITE TO MIKE POMPEO ON FARMERS' PROTEST IN INDIA

India has called the remarks by foreign leaders and politicians on protests by farmers as "ill-informed" and "unwarranted", asserting that the matter ...



PAGE-1 ANCHOR

'Where Will We Go This Winter': Homelessness Haunts Shell-Shocked Uri

AUQIB JAVEED

HAIJPEER,Uri: After a nightmarish fall that saw his townspeople abandoning everything to save themselves from the raining shells, Parveez Ahmad Sheikh is now getting worried about long and chilling winter ahead. "We lost our homes to shells, and now we fear to lose our lives to this bone-chilling cold," Sheikh says, standing near the wreckage of his home in Balkote village of Uri's Hajjpeer sector. His family is living in a rented

accommodation, after government, he says, failed to reconstruct homes bombed in the November 13, 2020 LoC-Line of Control-flare up.



That day, the routine cross-LoC shelling between India and Pakistan became "unprecedented and bloody". Bullets and shells rained all around in Kamalkote, Hajjpeer and Rampore sectors of Uri, claiming at least six lives including four civilians and two forces personnel.

Around two dozen residential houses got damaged. A month later, as the harshest 40-day-long cold spell started in Kashmir, the shell-shocked Sheikh and his tribe are still living in an atmosphere of "terror". "In the name of compensation, we were given a sum of Rs 10,000," Sheikh



narrates his ordeal of homelessness. "What can be done with that meagre amount?"

Working in Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF), Sheikh says his savings for his three children's education will be now consumed by his new house.

"And even if you construct a new house, who will give you the guarantee that another shell won't blast it again," Sheikh talks about the uncertainty of life on the LoC.

Sailing in the same boat is Abdul Gani whose house was blown

Despite making rounds of the government offices for compensation, we are living a life of refugees in our own homeland. Where will we go this winter?"

Wisdom Quote!

"No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care" -Theodore Roosevelt

news DIGEST

One More Corona Death In J&K

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported one death due to coronavirus, while 284 new cases of virus, including 8 CRPF personnel were detected in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. The victim, officials said was a 60-year-old man from Baniyar in Baramulla.

Structure Collapses Kills 2 Soldiers

Jammu: Two Army men were killed while another was critically injured after portion of a structure collapsed in an army camp at Machedi area of Kathua district in Jammu on Friday. The incident took place on Friday late evening hours, news agency KNO reported.

Muslims Help KP Man's Last Rites

SRINAGAR: In another example of communal harmony and brotherhood, the Muslims neighbours in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district helped cremation of a Kashmiri Pandit man, who passed away on Friday. Pandit Nath Bhat, 92, breathed his last in his home at Wussan in the wee hours on Friday plunging the whole locality in mourning, eyewitnesses said. Soon after the news of his death spread, local Muslims made special arrangements in performing his last rites. They also ferried firewood for

Cold Wave Grips Kashmir Ahead Of Weekend Snowfall

SRINAGAR: Cold conditions intensified in Kashmir as the minimum temperature dropped at most places in the valley on Friday.

The weather office has forecast the possibility of light rain and snow over a few days from Saturday.

The night temperature dropped across Kashmir, except in Gulmarg, MET officials said.

The weather has remained dry and cold across Kashmir since the snowfall on December 12, with the night temperature staying several degrees below the freezing point, they said.

The officials said Srinagar -- the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir -- recorded a low of minus 4.3 degrees Celsius, down from the previous night's minus 3.8 degrees Celsius.

They said the mercury in Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir went down from the previous night's low of minus 5.2 degrees Celsius to settle at minus 5.9 degrees Celsius.

The resort was the coldest recorded place in the valley.

The famous ski-resort of Gulmarg, in north Kashmir, recorded a low of

minus 5.6 degrees Celsius, same as on Wednesday night, the officials said.

Qazigund -- the gateway town to the valley -- recorded a minimum of minus 3.8 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara, in the north, registered a low of minus 4.0 degrees Celsius and Kokernag, in the south, minus 3.3 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' -- the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies including the famous Dal Lake here as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

The chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum during this period and most areas, especially in the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall, the officials said.

While 'Chillai-Kalan' which began on December 21 -- will end on January 31, the cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurud' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

Govt Puts Speculations To Rest, Extends 4G Ban In J&K

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Putting all speculations over the resumption of high speed internet to rest, the Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday extended ban on 4G internet services, barring two districts of the Union Territory, citing that the high voter turnout in recently concluded district development council (DDC) and Panchayat polls has not "gone well with the elements inimical to peace".

In a fresh order issued on Friday, Principal Secretary Home Shaleen Kabra said that the successful conduct of the recently concluded Panchayat elections which witnessed participation by political parties across the spectrum and large scale turnout, has not "gone down well with elements inimical to public peace and tranquility", as apparent from the multiple incidents of hurling of grenades by the militants since the conclusion of the elections, targeting the civilians,

and government forces besides the encounters.

"Whereas, credible inputs have been received about the presence of a large number of militants 'who are try to infiltrate from across the border, as also evident from multiple instances of heavy firing shelling on the IB/ LOC to facilitate the same," the order reads.

It adds that the restrictions on high speed mobile internet connectivity have acted as an impediment to such attempts.

RACE FOR DDCs

Admin, Police Facilitating Horse-Trading: Omar

SRINAGAR: National Conference president Omar Abdullah on Friday accused the police and the administration in Jammu and Kashmir of facilitating horse-trading and defections following the announcement of DDC election results and alleged that some parties were using money, muscle and government coercion to make up the numbers.

Omar's remarks came after Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party led by former finance minister Altaf Bukhari announced that Yasmeena Jan -- the District Development Council (DDC) member from Imam Sahib-I, in south Kashmir's Shopian district -- has joined the party here earlier in the day.

Jan had contested the polls on the National Conference (NC) mandate.

This explains why our leaders in Shopian district are being put under preventive arrest by the police. J&K police & the administration are facilitating horse trading & defections. The woman shown here joining the BJP's B-team contested & won elections on an NC mandate,



Omar said on Twitter. The NC vice president said it was shameful for the administration to play partisan politics.

Shame on this administration for playing partisan politics to curry favour with the ruling party & their stooges. These parties couldn't win seats so now they are using money/muscle/threats & government coercion to make up the numbers. So much for democracy has won! He said in another tweet.

The results of the DDC elections were announced on Tuesday. (PTI)

NC Condemns 'Arrest Spree'

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference on Friday condemned the "arrest spree" of mainstream political leaders in Kashmir.

"The message from the results of DDC elections was loud and clear that it was the democracy that had triumphed, but far from doing justice with the people by respecting their decision, nasty

tactics are being employed to undermine the verdict of people by witch-hunting of political leaders," an NC spokesperson said here on Friday, while condemning the arrest of party leaders Hilal Akbar Lone and Shabir Ahmed Kullay.

He said that the arrest of Lone and Kullay was a case in point. Kullay, he said, was

2 Porters Injured In Pak Firing

OBSERVER MONITORING DESK

SRINAGAR: At least two army porters were injured, as India and Pakistan troops traded gunfire for the second consecutive day Friday along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district on Jammu and Kashmir.

Mohammad Giyas and Altaf Hussain (35), both residents of Noor Kote were injured when Pakistani troops opened fire towards Bandi Post manned by army's 5 Rajput, news agency GNS reported. Both the injured porters were removed to Army Hospital for treatment.

On Thursday, the two armies had exchanged gunfire along the LoC in Krishnagati sector of the district.

On December 1, Border Security Force Sub-Inspector Paotinsat Guite was killed in a ceasefire violation by the Pakistan army along the LoC in Poonch. Prior to that, two soldiers were killed in another ceasefire violation from across the border in Sunderbani sector of the district on November 27.

PDP Leader 'Beats' BJP Worker, Booked

JAMMU: Senior PDP leader and former legislator Surinder Choudhary has been booked for allegedly manhandling a BJP worker in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, police said on Friday.

A video of PDP workers led by Choudhary barging into a shop and beating a BJP worker, Ripu Daman, in the Nowshera area has gone viral on social media, prompting the police to take action. A case has been registered against Choudhary and investigation started, police officials said. Daman has been hospitalized following the attack, they said.

BJP leader Vibodh Gupta strongly condemned the assault on the party worker and said the PDP leadership has lost the mental balance out of frustration. Surinder Choudhary has crossed the limit and he will surely be punished as per the law of land, but at the same time his true

Two Soldiers Injured In Ongoing Shopian Encounter

OBSERVER MONITORING DESK

SRINAGAR: Two soldiers were injured in an ongoing encounter between militants and government forces in Imam Sahab area of south Kashmir's Shopian district, reports said Friday.

A senior police officer told local news agency KNO that two soldiers received injuries after militants and the joint team of forces exchanged gunfire after hours of lull in Kanigam village of Imam Sahab. Both the injured soldiers, the police officer said, have been shifted to hospital for treatment

Baramulla Encounter: House Owner Goes 'Missing'

The owner of the house in which two militants including a local young ace footballer were killed in an encounter on Thursday has gone missing, his family said on Friday. They said that the owner,

Cultural Events Enthral Tourists In Gulmarg On Christmas

Tourism Dept Kick Starts Introductory Ski Courses



SRINAGAR: The department of tourism on Friday kick-started the first batch of ski courses and held colourful cultural events to enthrall tourists at the famous hill station of Gulmarg on Christmas. The Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir kick started the first batch of ski Courses at Gulmarg on Friday, an official spokesperson

Soldiers 'Thrash' Journalists During 'Jashn-e-Baramulla' Festival

BARAMULLA: At least three journalists were allegedly beaten up by army men during the festival of Jashn-e-Baramulla on Friday in which Bollywood Actress Amisha Patel was the chief guest.

As per the eyewitnesses, the function was going well until the scribes, while performing their professional duty asked to get a byte from Bollywood actress Amisha Patel.

However, as per the journalists, the army officials allegedly started beating them without any reason. The three journalists that were

allegedly beaten include Suhail Khan, online editor Kashmir Despatch, Kashmir Crown reporter Ashiq Mir and a Mudasir Malla whose camera was also damaged in the incident.

Soon after the incident, journalists boycotted the event and staged a protest against the army.

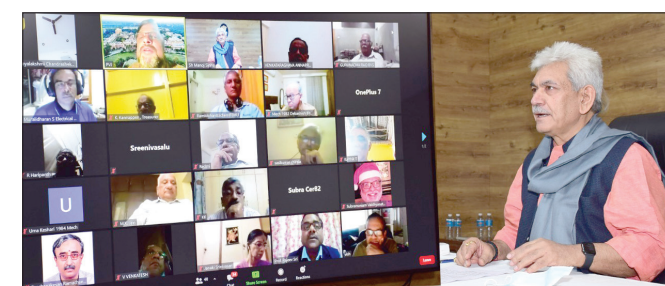
Meanwhile, a senior army official in a statement assured that action will be taken against the soldier involved in the incident. "This is an unfortunate incident which should not have happened in the first place," the statement reads.

KPC Demands Action Against Guilty

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Press Club (KPC) on Friday demanded an inquiry into the alleged thrashing of three journalists by the Army during a function in Baramulla district and asked the force to take stern action against those found guilty.

Journalists covering the function, 'Jashn-e-Baramulla', organised by the Army in the north Kashmir district -- where

J&K Farmers Granted Rs 1132 Cr Under PM-Kisan Scheme: LG



JAMMU: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday disbursed Rs 18000 Crore as next instalment under PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi, benefitting 9 crore farmer families, directly into their bank accounts at the click of a button.

"Ever since this scheme started, more than 1 lakh 10 thousand crore Rupees have reached the account of farmers", said the Prime Minister.

To mark the occasion, a programme was held simultaneously here at Kisan Kendra, Jammu where the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj

Sinha addressed the farmers, an official spokesperson said Friday.

He said that the LG observed that the farmers of Jammu and Kashmir have been provided with financial assistance worth around Rs 1132 crore under the scheme. He outlined that the welfare of the Farmers and betterment of their livelihood is the prime focus of the Union as well as UT Government.

"The UT Government has taken comprehensive measures for the development of the Agriculture and allied sectors in J&K.