



Maximum : 6° Minimum : -7° Humidity : 45% SUNSET Today 05:31 PM SUNRISE Tomorrow 07:36 AM



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Quote!

"Everything you do is triggered by an emotion of either desire or fear." - Brian Tracy

NEWS DIGEST

New Covid-19 Variant Detected In Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday confirmed its first case of the new coronavirus variant found in the UK after it identified the strain that spreads at a much faster pace in three samples taken from passengers who had returned from Britain.

Uri Cricketer Dies Of Heart Attack

SRINAGAR: A man died of a heart attack on Tuesday while playing cricket in Uri area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. 35-year old Reyaz Ahmad Awan experienced chest pain while playing cricket in his native village of Dhank Syedain Uri, news agency KNS reported.

3 Held Over Minor's Murder: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Tuesday claimed to have solved murder case of a minor in central Kashmir's Budgam district by arresting three accused. On December 1, police received a written complaint from Hilal Ahmad Najar of Chewdara that his minor son Burhan was missing from his home, a police spokesperson said Tuesday.

Woman Killed As Car Falls Into Gorge

SRINAGAR: A woman was killed while three of her family members were injured on Tuesday in a road accident in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. Zoona Begum, wife of Abdul Khaliq died on the spot while three others - Naseer Ahmad, his wife Jameela Begum and Shabeena Akther - were injured when the car (JK09B-3517) they were travelling in fell into a nallah in Potushie near JNV in the Kupwara district on Tuesday morning, news agency GNS reported.

Bandipora Man Held For Killing Wife

SRINAGAR: Police on Tuesday claimed to have solved murder case of a woman by arresting her husband from Bandipora district of north Kashmir within a week after he committed 'crime'. Acting on a written complaint of Abdul Rehman Matahanji of Laharwalpora Bandipora that her daughter has been murdered by her husband Shabir Ahmad Pahlou of S.K Payeen; police filed a case FIR No.177/2020 under relevant sections of law at the police station Sumbal on December 21 and started investigating the allegations, a police spokesperson said Tuesday.

Encounter Rages On In Srinagar Outskirts

Traffic Diverted On Srinagar-Baramulla Highway

OBSERVER MONITORING DESK

SRINAGAR: An encounter broke out between militants and government forces in the Lawaypora area of the city outskirts on Tuesday evening prompting the authorities to divert traffic on the busy Srinagar-Baramulla highway.

Police, army's 2 RR and CRPF launched a joint cordon-and-search operation in Lawaypora Hokarsar area of the city outskirts on Tuesday evening amid specific information about the presence of the militants, news agency GNS reported.

As the joint team started advances, the report said, the hiding militants fired upon them in a bid to escape from their dragnet. The joint team, reports said, returned the fire setting off an encounter.

"Essential traffic coming from Baramulla, Sopore, Gulmarg towards Srinagar is diverted via Magam- Budgam to Srinagar and vice versa in view of a security situation, inconvenience is regretted," police said in a tweet.

Injured CRPF Officer Dies

SRINAGAR: An Assistant Sub Inspector of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) died at a hospital here on Tuesday, six days after suffering grave injuries in a grenade attack in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

ASI Nitra Pal Singh succumbed to the injuries at SKIMS Soura, taking the death toll in last Wednesday's grenade attack to two, officials said Tuesday. Earlier on December 24, a constable Mritun Joy succumbed to the wounds at the tertiary care hospital here.

Besides the two slain CRPF men, four others, including a policeman and an RDD official were injured when suspected militants lobbed a grenade towards the joint team of CRPF and police in Tawheed Chowk area of Ganderbal town on Wednesday last.

Missing SPO Held With Rifle

SRINAGAR: A week after going missing in Kulgam, a Special Police Officer (SPO) was arrested along with an AK-47 rifle in south Kashmir district on Tuesday. SPO Zakir Ahmad Malik (No. 9677/K) son of Mohammad Sikinder Malik of Hangur was arrested along with the rifle, one magazine and 24 rounds, news agency GNS reported Tuesday. He had deserted along with an AK weapon, one magazine and 30 rounds from police station Frisal on 22 December. A senior police officer confirmed the arrest and said that further investigations are underway. (GNS)

Non-Local Among 4 More Die Of Covid-19

OBSERVER MONITORING DESK

SRINAGAR: Four people, including a non-local died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, even as the Union Territory reported 234 fresh cases of Covid-19, including 3 paramilitary men, six travellers and two minors during the last 24 hours.

Two people lost the battle with the deadly infection in Jammu division while two others died of virus in Kashmir Valley on Tuesday, officials said. Among the two victims to die in Valley, officials said, included a 63-year-old man from Rawalpore and a 40-year-old man from Gujarat, presently residing at Bemina here.

Biden Picks Kashmir-Born Aisha In Digital Team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON: US President-elect Joe Biden on Monday announced the members of his White House Office of Digital Strategy, where Kashmir-born Aisha Shah has bagged a senior position.

Shah has been named as Partnerships Manager at the White House Office of Digital Strategy, which would be headed by Rob Flaherty, Director of Digital Strategy, according to an announcement by the Biden transition team.

Raised in Louisiana, Shah previously served as digital partnerships manager in the Biden-Harris Campaign. She currently serves as an advancement specialist for the

Smithsonian Institution. Prior to this role, Shah worked as an assistant manager on the Corporate Fund of



the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, supporting the first-ever expansion of a presidential memorial. Shah also served as a strategic communications specialist

at Buoy, an integrated marketing firm that specialises in social impact communications, as well as spitfire strategies, where she enabled nonprofits to use pop culture as a tool for social change.

Among other members of the White House Office of Digital Strategy are Brendan Cohen (Platform Manager), Maha Ghandour (Digital Partnerships Manager), Jonathan Hebert (Video Director), Jaime Lopez (Director of Platforms), Carahna Magwood (Creative Director), Abbey Pitzer (Designer), Olivia Rainsner (Traveling Content Director), Rebecca Rinkevich (Deputy Director Of Digital Strategy), Christian Tom (Deputy Director Of Digital Strategy) and

Rs 177 Crore Bank Fraud Case

NC Leader's Son Gets Bail Nearly A Year After Arrest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Tuesday granted bail to Hilal Rather, son of a former National Conference minister, in a Rs 177 crore bank fraud case.

Hilal, son of former finance minister Abdul Rahim Rather, was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on January 17 for his alleged involvement in misappropriation of crores of rupees from the term loans sanctioned by J&K Bank for his ambitious township project known as Paradise Avenue at

Narwal Bala, Jammu in 2012. The case was later taken over by the CBI. Hilal was granted bail by Justice Iqbal Wani on surety bond of Rs five lakh with a direction to surrender his passport and not to leave Jammu and Kashmir, a court official said.

The CBI took over the probe against Hilal in March and a special court subsequently refused to grant him interim bail, rejecting his fears of contracting COVID-19 and noting that he was "more at risk outside the prison". He had moved an application using WhatsApp

18 KAS Officers To Retire In 2021

SRINAGAR: The government Tuesday issued a list of 18 officers of the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service who will retire after attaining the age of superannuation in the calendar year 2021.

"It is hereby notified that the following member of the Jammu and Kashmir Administration Service shall retire on attaining the age of superannuation, in the afternoon" of the date, as indicated below during the calendar year, 2021," an order issued by the government Tuesday read.

According to the order, the officers include Hashmat Ali Khan, Bilal Ahmad Bhat, Rohit Khajuria, Vir Ji Hangloo, M S

'Free Kashmir' Poster

Mumbai Police Files C Summary Report

MUMBAI: Police in Mumbai have submitted a C summary report before a metropolitan court here in a case filed against a woman who was accused of holding a 'Free Kashmir' poster during a protest held at the Gateway of India against the JNU violence in January this year, a senior police official said on Tuesday.

A C summary report is issued by the police in a matter when the criminal case was filed due to mistake of facts or the offence complained about is of a civil nature.

The C-summary report has been submitted in a case registered against Mehak Mirza Prabhu at Colaba police station," the official said.

An FIR had been registered against Prabhu at Colaba police station in south Mumbai under section 153 B (Imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). About 2,000 people, mostly college students, had gathered at

Ladakh Gets Separate MeT Centre

NEW DELHI: A meteorological centre was inaugurated in the Union Territory of Ladakh on Tuesday which would provide localised weather forecasts thus strengthening weather-related early warning system for the region.

At 3,500 metres, this meteorological centre is the highest such facility in India. Union Earth Sciences Minister Harsh Vardhan said at the inauguration of the facility.

He said it will provide short range (three days), medium range (12 days) and long range (one month) forecast for the two districts -- Leh and Kargil -- of the Union Territory.

The region is unique in terms of weather, climate, culture, topography with extreme temperatures, ranging from minus 40 degrees



A group of children playing on a snow covered hill in Srinagar outskirts on Tuesday, KO photo Abid Bhat

Kashmir Receives Another Snow Spell

Gulmarg Coldest At Minus 7.5 Degrees Celsius

SRINAGAR: There was moderate snowfall at most places in Kashmir on Tuesday, bringing cheer to those associated with tourism and trade as they expect business to pick up in the New Year's Eve.

Officials said snowfall started in Srinagar around 7 am, several hours after it had begun in neighbouring Budgam and Pulwama districts. Snowfall was also going in Kulgam and Anantnag districts of south Kashmir, they said.

Dense Fog Disrupts Flight Ops In Jammu

Jammu: Four flights to and from the Jammu airport were cancelled and seven more delayed as dense fog engulfed the region on Tuesday, a day after high-altitude areas, including the Vaishno Devi shrine, received the season's first heavy snowfall, officials said. Jammu Airport Director Pravat Ranjan Beuria said flight operations were yet to begin due to "poor visibility" caused by foggy conditions.

My Govt Fell After I Refused BJP Diktats: Mehbooba

Says Her Ally Wanted Rampant PSAs, Deny Militant Bodies To Families; Crackdown On Jama'at

OBSERVER MONITORING DESK

SRINAGAR: The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti claimed on Tuesday that her party's coalition government with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) collapsed in 2018 after she refused many demands of her ally, including the denial of militants' bodies to their families and crackdown on Jama'at-e-Islami.

Addressing her party workers and the newly elected DDC members at her party headquarters here, the former Chief Minister said that her father late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed had joined hands with the saffron party only to cage the 'genie in a bottle' so that Article-370 is secured. She



said despite being in coalition with the BJP, she did not compromise on her party agenda and instead got two BJP ministers dropped for rallying for the culprits of minor Kathua girl.

Maiden DDC Polls Mark Resumption Of Electoral Process In Reorganized J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR: Maiden District Development Council (DDC) elections in the flag end of 2020 marked a resumption of political activity in Jammu and Kashmir after abrogation of special status and reorganisation of the erstwhile state last year.

The year 2020 began amid uncertainty as most of the

mainstream political leaders continued to be under various forms of detention following the landmark constitutional amendments of 2019.

While some leaders were released in the first two months of the year - purportedly after signing a bond not to speak against the abrogation of Article 370 - the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic hastened the release of

The administration has now taken on the responsibility of trying to collect independent candidates for the BJP and its recently formed subsidiary

many others including Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah in March.

However, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti remained in incarceration for the longest period - 14 months - and was released only in October, just ahead of the DDC polls.

The better part of the year was spent dealing with the COVID outbreak that affected over 1.19 lakh

CCG Asks CM Yogi To Withdraw Interfaith Marriage Ordinance

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Concerned Citizens' Group (CCG) led by former Union Minister Yashwant Sinha on Tuesday asked Uttar Pradesh government led by Yogi Adityanath to withdraw the ordinance on interfaith marriage and suitably compensate the people who have suffered from its "un-constitutional enforcement".

In an open letter to CM Yogi, the CCG, comprising former civil servants have expressed anguish over the infamous Moradabad

incident, and several similar incidents that have occurred at about the same time in Uttar Pradesh.

The letter refers to the alleged harassment of 22-year-old Rashid and his 25-year-old brother, Saleem, who were arrested in Moradabad, and released two weeks later when Rashid's wife, Pinki, gave testimony that she had married him willingly, without any compulsion. The couple married in July 2020, the letter says were on their way to have their marriage registered on December 5 when they were