

Quote "No people who are ignorant can be truly free." — Thomas Jefferson

MeT Issues Severe Weather Warning For Two Days KO Photo: Abid Bhat

NEWS DIGEST

3.7 Magnitude Earthquake Hits J&K

SRINAGAR: An earthquake measuring 3.5 on the Richter scale hit Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, officials said.

The earthquake was felt at 10:58 am on Monday and it's epicentre was in north Kashmir's Bandipora district, they said. The depth of the quake was at 5 km inside the earth's crust.

The location was 34.28 north (Latitude) and 74.52 east (Longitude)," the officials said, adding no loss of life or property has been reported so far. More On P6

Man Dies Two Davs After Tral Blast

SRINAGAR: A 70-year-old man, who had suffered minor injuries on his leg following a grenade blast at bus stand Tral two days ago, died at his residence on Monday

Police say that the septuagenarian's death was natural and not as a consequence of the iniuries he suffered along with seven other civilians at the bus stand Tral on January 2.

Official sources said that Mohammad Abdullah Gujjar (70) son of Sadiq Gujjar died at his residence at Hajin Tral, reported news agency GNS.

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+ 2 KAS Officers Transferred

SRINAGAR: Two Kashmir Administrative Service (KAS) officers on Monday were transferred by the government in the interest of administration with immediate effect. As per an order issued by the

government, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar (KAS), Additional Secretary to the Government, Housing and Urban Development Department, holding additional charge of Managing Director

Snowfall Hits Power Supply, Blocks **Roads In Kashmir**

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The weather department on Monday issued a 'severe weather' warning for the next two days in Jammu and Kashmir, even as life remained crippled for the second consecutive day today due to the moderate snowfall affecting power and water supply, besides blocking roads and leaving many residential colonies inundated.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, world famous ski-resort, Gulmarg and other tourist destinations experienced fresh snowfall today, bringing the temperature further down.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Sonum Lotus said that the prevailing weather conditions would continue till January 06 across J&K and Ladakh Union Territories. He added that as predicted, most parts of the Valley received moderate snowfall early Monday morning.

He said that there is a forecast of heavy to very heavy snowfall at scattered places till Wednesday, adding that the weather conditions would start improving from January 06 afternoon

The MeT Director had already issued warning to the people living in higher reaches not to venture out during the snowfall to avoid any untoward incident and had also predicted that the fresh spell of snow would lead to the closure of Srinagar-Jammu More On P6 highway.



4500 Vehicles Stranded On Banihal Highway

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar: Kashmir was cut off from rest of the country on Monday as the arterial Jammu-Srinagar highway and Mughal road were closed due to snowfall across the valley, leaving nearly 4500 vehicles stranded.

"The Jammu-Srinagar Highway is closed due to accumulation of snow at many places, especially around Jawahar Tunnel," an official of the traffic control department said.

He said snow clearance operations were in full swing and efforts were on to restore movement of stranded vehicles along the 260 kilometre road.

The official said nearly 4500 vehicles, mostly trucks carry- improved in most places in the ing essentials to the valley, are valley due to the • More On P6

stranded along the highway at various places.

Mughal Road, which connects the valley to Jammu division through Shopian-Rajouri axis, has been closed for several days due to heavy snowfall in the region.

The officials said south Kashmir's Kulgam district received highest snowfall with two to three feet of snow accumulated at some places.

Anantnag district has also received heavy snowfall between one foot and two feet, they said. The flight operations to and

from Srinagar remained suspended for second consecutive day due to poor visibility, the officials said.

The minimum temperature

Poor Visibility Grounds Flights

SRINAGAR: Air traffic to and from Srinagar airport was affected for the second consecutive day on Monday as poor visibility hampered the operations, officials said. "The runway has been cleared of snow but flight operations are suspended due to poor visibility," an Airports Authority of India official said. More On P6

Avalanche Warning In Upper Reaches

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority on Monday issued medium and low levels warning for upper reaches of avalanche prone areas of Jammu and Kashmir. More On P6

Board, University Exams Postponed

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir University (KU), Cluster University of Srinagar (CUS) and Board of School Education (BOSE) postponed all examinations which were scheduled to be held on Monday. More On P6

133 New Corona **Cases & 5 More Deaths in J&K**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 133 fresh COVID-19 cases on Monday, bringing the infection count to 1,21,786. while five fatalities in the last 24 hours raised the death toll to 1,891, officials said.

Fifty-eight of the fresh cases were from the Jammu Division and 75 from the Kashmir Division of the union territory, they said.

The officials said Jammu district recorded a maximum of 37 new COVID-19 cases, followed by 29 in Srinagar district.

While three districts -- Doda, Kulgam and Reasi -- did not report any fresh cases, 13 other districts had fresh cases in single digit. Besides Jammu and Srinagar, Kupwara and Pooch were the only districts to report more than 10 cases in the past 24 hours.

The number of active cases dropped to 2,684 in the union territory, while 1,17,211 patients have recovered so far, the officials said. Two of the new deaths linked to COVID-19 were from the Jammu division and three from the Kashmir valley, they said.

Aasiyeh's Son Seeks UN Help for Mothers Release

ISLAMABAD: The family of a prominent separatist leader Aasiyeh Andrabi who is being held in an Indian jail for alleged anti-state activities appealed Monday to the United Nations for help in securing her release.

Aasiyeh's son Ahmad bin Qasim, was joined by Pakistan human +rights minister Shireen Mazari in issuing the appeal during a rare news conference in Pakistan's capital Islamabad. Andrabi and two other activists, Sofi Fahmeeda and Nahida Nasreen, were charged by a court in • More On P6

India To Start World's Biggest NC Leader **Arrested For** Vaccination Drive: PM Vaccine To Reach

'Assaulting'Cop

'Hopeless' Pak Brides Demand Deportation

Jammu and Kashmir Housing Board, has been transferred and posted as Managing Director, J-K Housing Board. More On P6

Chennai Tourist Dies Of Heart Attack

SRINAGAR: An elderly tourist from south India's Tamil Nadu state died on Monday after suffering a heart attack in the tourist resort of Gulmarg.

76-year-old Kashturi, wife of Rthanaelu of Chennai, who was staying with her family at the Hotel Royal Park, Gulmarg was taken to the public health centre in an unconscious state, reports said Monday. However, the doctors at the PHC referred her to Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Tangmarg where she was pronounced dead on arrival.

"The deceased had asthmatic history and due to staying in snow bound areas in frozen temperatures, she suffered a heart attack and died", a doctor told news local agency KNS.

3 Gamblers Arrested In Ganderbal: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Monday claimed to have arrested three gamblers in a raid in Lar area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

Acting on an input, a police party under the supervision of DySp Headquarters Dr. Abdul Majid Magray carried out a raid in Check Yangoora area of the district and arrested three gamblers from the spot, a police spokesperson said Monday. He said an amount of Rs 8,950 was recovered from the gamblers identified as Abdul Rashid Pandith, Manzoor Ahmed Bhat and Abdul Rashid Mir.

"They have been shifted to Police Station Lar where they remain in custody," the police spokesperson said

"Accordingly, a case FIR No. 01/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Lar and investigation has been initiated," he added.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sunday

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that the world's biggest inoculation drive against coronavirus is set to begin in the country, a day after the drugs regulator approved two vaccines for restricted emergency use. "World's biggest COVID-19

vaccination programme set to begin in India. For this, the country is proud of the contributions of its scientists and technicians," Modi said. India's drugs regulator on



COVID-19 vaccine Covishield, manufactured by the Serum Institute, and indigenously developed Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for restricted emergency use in the country, pav-

approved Oxford ing the way for a • More On P6

J&K In Next 10 **Days: Govt**

JAMMU: The much awaited coronavirus will reach Jammu and Kashmir in next ten days and will be administered in the first phase to 28 lakh people in the Union Territory, including healthcare workers. government forces, middleaged people and the persons with co-morbidities.

The details about the arrival of vaccine in J&K, were shared in a meeting chaired by LG's Advisor Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar here on Monday, an official spokesperson
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SRINAGAR: National А Conference (NC) leader on Monday was arrested for allegedly thrashing a policeman at the party's district office in south Kashmir's Pulwama district.

Ghulam Mohiuddin Mir, NC's district president for Pulwama was arrested by cops on Monday for allegedly thrashing a police Head Constable Abdul Gani, posted at party's district office in the south Kashmir district, reports said. The Head Constable is deputed as guard commander at NC's Pulwama office, and he had reportedly • More On P6

AGENCIES SRINAGAR: Stating that Kashmir is not a safer place for them, Pakistan origin Kashmiri brides Monday reiterated their demand

of deporting them to their residences in Pakistan-administered Kashmir (PaK). Addressing a news conference here, the Pakistan origin Kashmiri brides said that the Pakistan embassy has been writing to the foreign Minister almost every month, seeking permission to the women to visit their homes. "We want the government of

India to allow us to return home to meet our dear ones there. The

government has rejected us as citizens and it makes no sense for the authorities to stop us from deporting back to our native places," they said. They said that they have knocked almost all the doors but don't know why their voices go unheard.

"When a Pak origin Kashmiri bride Somiya Sadaf contested the elections recently, she was allowed to do so. But, soon when we raised our voices then the government stopped counting on the particular seat where from she was contesting. It seems the government was in deep slumber when many Pak origin women were elected as • More On P6

'Return Us Their Bodies': Slain Trio's Families Stage Protest In Srinagar



AUQIB JAVEED

SRINAGAR: Amid snow and bone chilling cold, the families of the three youth who were killed in the Lawaypora encounter on December 30 came all the way from South Kashmir's Pulwama and Shopian and staged a protest in Srinagar-demanding the bodies of their

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NC, PDP Up The Ante **Over Encounter Probe**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Monday demanded that bodies

killed in the Parimpora encounter last week be handed over to their families.

The leaders cited claims of their families that the three were innocent, though police of the three alleged militants had said they were • More On P6



IT Towers To Come Up At Srinagar, Jammu

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: In yet another intervention to bring reforms in the Information Technology sector in J&K; a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between NBCC and JK IT Infrastructure Development Company for establishing IT Towers in both the capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar, in pres-

ence of Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of J&K.

These IT towers would be established at a cost of Rs 50 crore each, an official spokesman said.

Speaking on the occasion, the LG observed that the development of IT infrastructure in and resources to give a fillip to Jammu and Kashmir would go a the

long way in creating a conducive environment for start-ups, eco-

nomic growth and creation of employment opportunities. "Growth of the Information

Technology sector is absolutely imperative for economic growth and for creation of gainful employment opportunities" he said

The LG said that improvement in the regulatory environment and business ecosystem has been a major priority of the Jammu Kashmir government. A number of reforms have been implemented to promote indus-

try and services, he added. "We have enough money Information

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Justice Mithal Takes Oath As New CJ

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Justice Pankaj Mithal was on Monday sworn-in as the new Chief Justice of the Common High Court for Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha administered the Oath of Office to Justice Pankaj Mithal at a swearing-in ceremony at Convention Centre in Jammu.

The LG congratulated Mithal for his new appointment. The Registrar General of the High Court read out the warrant of appointment. Proceedings of the Oath ceremony were conducted by Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the LG.

Chief Justice Mithal has been appointed to head the High Court for Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh in view of the retirement of Chief Justice Gita Mittal recently.

Former Chief Justice, J&K, Justice Gita Mittal; Judges of the High Court, J&K; Judges from Allahabad High Court; Members of Parliament; • More On P6