

# KASHMIR OBSERVER

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P3 CITY

## COMM SMC REVIEWS DEWATERING EXERCISE IN CITY

Commissioner SMC Athar Amir Khan Wednesday took an extensive review on dewatering progress after extensive field visits at different working stations and areas under...

THINK

## THE CAREER CULT: MOVE BEYOND THE SCIENCES

One can not imagine how rapidly humans have progressed in recent times. There is rarely any field where one can get stuck. Be it in medical sciences or transportation or modern machinery, there is rarely any...



P5 STATE

## CS SETS OUT 40-POINT DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR DCS

The Chief Secretary, B V R Subrahmanyam, Wednesday chaired a meeting to apprise the Deputy Commissioners and District Superintendents who have taken charge...



**Widom Quote!**  
Every generation needs a new revolution.  
—Thomas Jefferson

### NEWS DIGEST

#### Driver Held With Ammunition: Police

**SRINAGAR:** The government forces arrested a man in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district on Wednesday after recovering a grenade and some ammunition from his possession, police said. During patrolling at a checkpoint in Kokernag area, security forces searched a vehicle driven by Was-eem Ahmad, a **More On P10**

#### Police Officer Charged In Trap Case

**SRINAGAR:** The anti-corruption bureau (ACB) on Wednesday filed a charge sheet against a police officer for demanding bribe from a complainant in Mendhar area of Rajouri district. Charge sheet was filed against Naseer Ahmed Khan, the then Sub Inspector, posted in police station Mendhar before the court of special judge anti-corruption Rajouri in a case **More On P10**

#### Pfizer Begins Testing Covid-19 Pill

**NEW YORK:** US pharmaceutical company Pfizer has begun Phase 1 clinical trial of a novel oral antiviral drug for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. The oral antiviral clinical candidate "PF-07321332", a SARS-CoV2-3CL protease inhibitor, has demonstrated potent in vitro anti-viral activity against SARS-CoV-2, as well as activity against other coronaviruses. **More On P10**

#### 2 Injured In Budgam Fire Incident

**SRINAGAR:** At least two people on Wednesday were injured while trying to put off a fire raging from a house in central Kashmir's Budgam district. Around 3:30 am Wednesday, fire broke out from the house of Fayaz Ahmed Butt in Narbal Suzith village causing extensive damage to the structure besides damaging property worth lakhs, reports said. Two unidentified men, reports said received burns injured while trying to douse the **More On P10**

#### Bear Kills 10 Sheep, Injures 22 Others

**SRINAGAR:** A bear killed ten sheep and injured at least 22 others on Wednesday in Bandi Monabal area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district. Reports said that the bear entered the cowsheds of one Mohammad Ismail Barah and killed six sheep on spot and injured 12 others. The bear also entered inside the cowshed of Bayia Mohammad Baherwal and killed his at-least four sheep and injured 10 others. **More On P10**

## NIA Tightens Noose Around Mehbooba Mufti

### Says PDP President Once Spoke To Hizb Militant Naveed Babu

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Former J&K Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Mehbooba Mufti knew arrested Hizbul Mujahideen militant Naveed Babu and had also spoken to him once, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) claimed in a charge sheet filed in connection with the case related to arrested former J&K DSP Davinder Singh.

This is for the first time that name of Mufti has come up in any of the cases being probed by the NIA in Jammu and Kashmir.

An NIA official related to the probe, according to news agency IANS said, "The name of the former Chief Minister has emerged in the case related to arrested DSP Davinder Singh and HM militant Naveed Babu."

The NIA has filed a supplementary charge sheet against three persons, including arrested Peoples Democratic



Party (PDP) youth wing chief Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra, who allegedly worked as a financier for Hizbul Mujahideen in connection with the case.

The official said that Mufti knew Hizb militant Naveed Babu and had even spoken to him once. However, the official refused to share more details.

The NIA in its supplementary charge sheet has claimed that Parra was **More On P10**

#### Mehbooba Likely To Appear Before ED Today

**P**DP president Mehbooba Mufti will appear before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here on Thursday in connection with a money laundering case, sources in the party said. The sources said Mufti will appear before the ED at its Srinagar office on Thursday **More On P10**

#### 195 More Test Positive in J&K As Cases Spike

Observer Monitoring Desk

**SRINAGAR:** Coronavirus continues to show an upwards trend in Jammu and Kashmir as 195 more people, including 31 travellers on Wednesday tested positive for Covid-19 in the Union Territory, taking the overall tally to 129031.

Of the fresh cases detected on Wednesday, officials said, 146 were reported from Kashmir valley and the remaining 49 from Jammu division.

Giving district-wise details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 77, Baramulla 29, Budgam 16, Pulwama 2, Kupwara 15, Anantnag 3, Bandipora 1, Ganderbal 2, Kulgam 1, Jammu 35, Rajouri 2, Doda 1, Kathua 2, Samba 2, Kishtwar 1, Poonch 3, Ramban 2, and Reasi 1 new case of coronavirus.

Moreover, they said, 92 more patients have recovered and were **More On P10**

#### Tulip Garden To Open For Visitors Today

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** Asia's largest tulip garden, overlooking the famous Dal Lake here, will be thrown open to the public on Thursday, marking the beginning of new tourism season in Kashmir.

Formerly known as Siraj Bagh, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden was opened in 2008 by the then chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad.

The idea of the garden, spread over 30 hectares in the foothills of snow-clad Zabarwan Range, was conceived to advance the tourism season in the Valley by two months.

"The garden will be thrown open for public on Thursday," Tulip Garden incharge Inam Rehman Sofi said.

Sofi said the department planted nearly 15 lakh bulbs of different varieties this year. "The garden has so far achieved a bloom of about 25 per cent," he added.

#### PM Recommends Visit, Praises Warm Hospitality

**P**rim Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday asked everyone to visit tulip garden, located at the foothills of Zabarwan range in Jammu and Kashmir, and enjoy the warm hospitality of the people of the Union territory. Tweeting about the gardens, the prime minister said, "Whenever you get the opportunity, do visit Jammu and Kashmir and witness the scenic **More On P10**



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

The official said the garden houses 62 varieties of tulips this year. The average lifespan of tulip flowers is three-four weeks, but heavy rain or too much heat can destroy them.

The Floriculture Department plants tulip bulbs in a phased manner so that the flowers remain in the garden for a month or more.

The Tourism Department has

planned a cultural programme at the garden in the first week of next month as part of the beginning of the new tourism season in the Valley.

The aim of setting up the largest tulip garden in Asia was to give another choice to tourists and to advance the tourism season, which used to begin in May every year. The garden **More On P10**

## Missing Soldier's Case Creating Grave Hunt In Kashmir

Auqib Javed

**RESHIPORA, Shopian** – Surrounded by sighing and solidarity-spirited simpletons, Manzoor Wagay, 54, is dragging hookah in a manic manner.

The grief, it seems, has only become a festering wound for a distraught father whose summer search for his son has already passed through the harsh winter, before getting renewed by the spring statement of Jammu and Kashmir's Police Chief, Dilbagh Singh.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the inauguration of U-19 cricket tournament at SK Stadium Srinagar on March 20, 2021, DGP Singh said that there is no clue of the missing Territorial Army soldier from Shopian, who went missing last August.



"Police have not closed the case and investigations are on," Singh said. "It's not clear where he was buried by the



But back home, Wagay is spearheading his own teaming search campaign. Since last summer when his visiting

son vanished into thin air, the father has been digging orchards and paddy fields with shovels. He even rented a bulldozer and dug deep into the soft earth near a bridge in Landoora village in search of his son's body. He even stormed the shelters of suspects, and exhausted his savings to travel to places in identifying the unknown bodies.

"Marnie' ky'ss damastaa'mt chandaei' bei' pan'nis nich'aeivs'y'einzlaa'sh (I'll search the body of my son till me last breath)," Wagay said, as all eyes in the room stared him through the smokescreen created by his manic hookah-dragging.

"I know he has been buried closer to home. I know that. I will find him one day. Sooner or later."

Villagers of Reshipora are equally

throwing their weight behind Wagay's search campaign. They call the missing soldier as "one of their own".

"For over the first 40 days of his disappearance, more than 400 people from this village joined me to locate the body but till date I didn't find any clue," Wagay, a farmer, rued.

As the distraught father completed two rounds of smoking pot within 20 minutes, the room full of villagers started lauding his courage. These home audiences have now become esprit de corps for the family of the missing village boy – whose soldier shift couldn't eclipse his Samaritan nature in the raging reality of the southern apple bowl.

"In Wagay's shoes," said local villager, Abdul Rashid. **More On P10**



KO lensman Abid Bhat captures a view of inundated Amar Singh College on Wednesday following heavy overnight rains.

## Weather To Remain Dry In Kashmir Till March 31: MeT

Observer Monitoring Desk

**SRINAGAR:** The meteorological department on Wednesday predicted significant improvement in wet weather conditions from Thursday, even as the upper reaches of Kashmir received more snow while heavy rains lashed plains dipping the day temperature sharply.

A meteorological department official said Wednesday that the weather will significantly improve from Thursday across the Union Territory after witnessing

four days of snowfall and incessant rains.

"Even as scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rain, thundershowers and snow has been forecast over Jammu and Kashmir in next 24 hours, the weather is going to be mainly dry from Thursday till March 31," the official said.

"There is no forecast of any major rainfall activity till ending March," the official added.

Meanwhile, more snow got accumulated in higher reaches of the valley including famous skiing resort of Gulmarg while the rains **More On P10**

#### Banihal Highway Shut For Second Day

**T**raffic on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway was suspended for the second consecutive day on Wednesday as landslides triggered by incessant rains blocked the arterial road at over a dozen places in Ramban district, officials said. Road clearance agencies have pressed their men and **More On P10**

#### BOSE Revises Class 10<sup>th</sup> Marks Assessment Scheme

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) on Wednesday revised the marks assessment scheme of 10th class with 20 percent marks for internal assessment and 80 percent for theoretical part only.

BOSE said that the twenty percent of marks were reserved for internal assessment in order to assess students in a diverse manner, at different times and also to observe and examine a broad

range of curriculum objectives.

"It is notified for the information of all the stakeholders in general and students of Secondary School Examination (Class 10) in particular that from the Academic Session 2020-21 (in case of Kashmir Division, Winter Zone areas of Jammu Division and UT of Ladakh) and ensuing Academic Session 2021-22 (in case of Summer Zone areas of Jammu Division), the scheme of assessment and examination **More On P10**

#### LG Launches 14 E-Services Of Municipalities

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Laying special focus on making public service delivery system more robust, citizen-friendly and hassle-free, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday launched 14 e-services of municipalities across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Lt governor said the launch of eight government-to-citizens and six government-to-businesses e-services for urban dwellers and business owners to provide hassle-free online services is yet another milestone in the direction of providing effective public service delivery at doorsteps. "J-K government **More On P10**