

Maximum : 3°C
Minimum : -6°C
Humidity : 71%

SUNSET
Today 06:01 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 07:29 AM



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NEWS/04

TRUMP EXPANDS TRAVEL BAN TO SIX ADDITIONAL COUNTRIES

United States President Donald Trump issued an expanded version of his travel ban on Friday, an official said. The move was slammed by immigrant advocates and critics who say the policy



CAN CORONAVIRUS SLIP INTO YOUR NEXT ORDER FROM CHINA?

The coronavirus is spreading rapidly and Chinese residents are not allowed to leave their cities anymore. However, shipments out of the country are not included in this quarantine. Considering the mass export of China.....

TI/SPORTS.....

ROBERTSON SHINES TO HELP SNOW LEOPARDS CONQUER AIZAWL

Real Kashmir defeated former Hero I-League champions 2-0 at the JLN Stadium, Aizawl today (February 1, 2020), thanks to some gutsy defensive work and all-round display from Mason Robertson.....



News Digest

Chadoora Youth Slapped With PSA

Srinagar: Authorities have booked a youth from Chadoora area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district under the controversial Public Safety Act (PSA). Sajad Ahmed Bhat son of Ghulam Hasan Bhat was arrested on charges of alleged 'anti-national' activities. He was accordingly booked under PSA and shifted to Central Jail Srinagar. Scores of youth have been booked under PSA after the annulment of special status in Jammu and Kashmir. Some of them were shifted to outside Kashmir jails. (KNT)

Kulgam Shuts After Army 'Thrashes' Traders, Locals

Srinagar: The shopkeepers in Damhal Hanjipora area of South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Saturday observed a shutdown to protest the alleged thrashing by the army soldiers without any provocation. Quoting witnesses, a local newsgathering agency KNT reported that a group of soldiers from 9 RR appeared in the market and started beating up people without any reason or rhyme. Due to the alleged beating, four shopkeepers were admitted in the hospital "They (army) accused us of pasting anti-national posters in the market but to our surprise P10

Interview Of Haj Trainers From February 4

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Haj Committee on Saturday informed the applicants who have applied for selection as Haj Trainer for Haj-2020 that their interview shall be held at Haj House, Bemina, Srinagar on 4-5 February 2020 at 10.30 am. According to an official spokesperson, the interview for applicants from Baramulla, Srinagar, Bandipora, Budgam and Shopian shall be held on Tuesday February 4, and the interview for candidates from Anantnag, Kulgam, Ganderbal, Kupwara and Pulwama shall be held on next day. "The Haj Committee also informed that the applicants who fail to deposit hard copies of their applications along with the NOC from the concerned P10

2 Boys Trying To Cross LoC Held: Police

Srinagar: Police on Saturday claimed to have arrested two boys who were trying to cross LoC in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. SSP Baramulla Abdul Qayoom Wani said the duo were trying to cross LoC when apprehended by police at Gantmulla village. The two boys, he said had spent the night at Mosque and next day they were planning to move towards the Uri. "After counseling, the boys were handed over to their families and were advised to shun the path of violence and concentrate on their studies," the officer said.

Budget 2020-21: J&K Gets Rs 30,757, Ladakh 5,958 Crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: The government has allocated Rs 30,757 crore for the newly created Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in the Budget for 2020-21 presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday.

The government has provisioned Rs 279 crore as the contribution to Union Territory Disaster Response Fund while Rs 30,478 has been allocated for meeting its resource gap, the Budget document said.

Another Union Territory, Ladakh, which was carved out of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, has been allocated Rs 5,958 crore in the Budget.

In Ladakh, the government has allocated Rs 83.38 crore for rural development, Rs 80.69 crore for public works. P10



FM's Speech Laced With Kashmiri Verse

A Kashmiri verse, quotes from Tamil poets and references to Saraswati-Sindhu civilisation dotted Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's 160-minute long marathon Budget speech on Saturday which was cut short at the end after she felt unwell. As the minister, clad in a bright yellow sari with a light green border, delivered some of her remarks, including regarding Beti Bachao Beti Padao programme, were met with protests from the Opposition benches. Her first Budget speech, in July 2019, went on for around 137 minutes. Apart from a Kashmiri verse, which she rendered in both Kashmiri and Hindi, the minister also quoted poets Thiruvalluvar and Kalidasa, among others. Many of the announcements P10

Budget Cuts Personal Income Tax, Raises Customs Duty

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday announced cuts in personal income tax, extended tax benefits for affordable housing and gave relief to companies on payment of dividend in the Union Budget for 2020-21 as the government looked to boost consumption to bring the economy out of the worst slowdown in 11 years. The minister proposed raising customs duty on a variety of products ranging from tableware and kitchenware, electrical appliances to footwear, furniture, stationery and toys to give a level playing field to domestic companies and boost Make in India. Offering an P10

Budget 2020: What's Got Costlier And Cheaper

In a bid to boost consumption to pull the economy out of the worst slowdown in 11 years, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, presenting her second Union Budget, announced cuts in personal income tax and extended tax benefits for affordable housing. Another focus of the Budget was giving a "level-playing field" to domestic manufacturers in a bid to boost Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious 'Make in India' scheme. To encourage domestic companies, Sitharaman announced that customs duty would be raised on a variety of products ranging from tableware and kitchenware to electrical P10

Respite From Cold As Minimum Temperature Up In Kashmir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR: The minimum temperature at most places in Kashmir went up on Saturday providing some relief to the residents, even as the meteorological office forecast mainly dry and cold weather over the next few days in the valley.

Srinagar recorded a minimum temperature of minus 2.5 degrees Celsius up over a degree from minus 3.9 degrees Celsius the previous night, a MeT department official said. Qazigund the gateway P10



Prof Bhat Rejects Media Reports On HC Plea

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Hurriyat Conference leader Professor Abdul Gani Bhat on Saturday rebutted media reports that claimed a petition has been filed by him in the Delhi High Court seeking that MPs from Jammu and Kashmir be stopped from entering parliament. "My father is unwell for over a month now. He has not moved any petition before any court. The media reports claiming so, are totally baseless and fabricated." P10

LG Inaugurates JKEDI Building, Silk Weaving Factory In Jammu

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: In a boost to entrepreneurship and Silk Farming in the Jammu region, Lt Governor Girish Chandra Murmu on Saturday inaugurated the newly constructed, State-of-the-art Administrative cum Faculty Block of the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), besides a Government Silk Weaving Factory and Silk Filatures facility at Bari Brahamana.



Addressing a gathering at Bari Brahamana, the LG emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship and exhorted the youth to learn from the success stories to make a P10

DySP's Case: DIG Led NIA Team Visits Anantnag

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: A 20-member NIA team arrived in Kashmir on Saturday to collect more information on disgraced J&K Deputy Superintendent of Police Davinder Singh, who was arrested while escorting two militants to Jammu last month.

The team led by a DIG-rank officer went to Anantnag and met police officials there regarding the case, sources said. Davinder Singh was arrested on January 11 by police along with two Hizbul Mujahideen militants Naveed Babu and Rafi Ahmed, and one Irfan Mir, a law school dropout, while travelling in a car to Jammu. According to sources, Babu, Ahmed and Mir had planned to travel to Pakistan. After initial police investigations, the case was handed over to the NIA. National Investigation Agency officials are currently interrogating Davinder Singh in Jammu after P10

Man Opens Fire At Delhi's Shaheen Bagh, Says "Only Hindus Will Have A Say"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Two day after a man fired a pistol at a group of anti-CAA protesters near the Jamia University, another man on Saturday fired two rounds in the air at Shaheen Bagh, the epicentre of the protest against the country's new citizenship law, and was later taken into custody.

No one was injured in the incident that came even as Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during a poll rally in Delhi's northwest Rohini area alleged that those who support militants in Kashmir are staging protest at Shaheen Bagh.

The man, who identified himself as Kapil Gujjar, chanted 'Jai Shree Ram' and said, "hamare desh me aur kisi ki nahi chalegi, sirf Hindu ki chalegi (only Hindus shall have a say in our country, no one else)," as he was taken into custody by the Delhi Police.

"The accused fired in air near police barricades. He was overpowered by police personnel and taken into custody. Further investigation is on," Chinmoy Biswal, Deputy Commissioner of Police (southeast) said.

The police said they are verifying his identity.

According to eyewitnesses, the man shouted "Hindu Rashtra Zindabad" and fired P10



Shaheen Bagh Protesters Support Kashmir Militancy: Yogi

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday alleged that those who support militants in Kashmir are staging protest at Shaheen Bagh and raising slogans of 'azadi'. Hitting out at the AAP dispensation at an election rally in northwest Delhi's Rohini, Adityanath said that the Arvind Kejriwal government "supplies biryani" to protesters at Shaheen Bagh. Hundreds of people, including women and children, have been protesting since December 15 at Shaheen Bagh against the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens. P10

Jamia Bars Student Protests, Warn Strict Action

Jamia Millia Islamia on Saturday prohibited students from holding any protest meeting or agitation inside the university campus, warning them of strict action, according to officials. The varsity administration also directed students to report to it any unauthorised entry of outsiders in campus to avoid "disruption of peace". The directive comes in wake of recent incidents around the university area. Earlier this week, a student of the varsity was injured outside the campus when a man fired a pistol at a group of anti-CAA protesters before walking away while waving the firearm over his head shouting P10

Security Grid Along J&K Highway Being Upgraded

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The security grid along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway is being upgraded, following the killing of three militants on Friday, the CRPF said on Saturday.

CRPF DG A.P. Maheshwari stated this at a press conference in Jammu.

On Friday, three Jaish-e-Mohammed militants in a truck who had infiltrated from the international border at Hira Nagar in Kathua were killed in an en-

counter with government forces on the highway at Nagrota, 20 kilometres from Jammu.

One policeman sustained injuries. Three alleged ground workers of the militants, including the driver and conductor of the truck were arrested. A large cache of arms and ammunition was also recovered.

Maheshwari said the CRPF responded very promptly during Friday's encounter. He said there is complete coordination between different security agencies in Kashmir. P10

J&K Police To Get RoVs To Defuse IEDs

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: In an effort to boost technical capabilities, the Jammu and Kashmir Police has floated global tenders to procure Remotely Operated Vehicle (RoV), a device used to detect and defuse explosives without human intervention.

The cost of robotic machinery procured for detecting Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and other explosives ranges between Rs 5 crore and Rs 20 crore.

After procurement, the J&K police will be the country's first police force to have such high-end equipment for bomb detection and disposal.

"The robotic machine will help reduce human intervention in tracing explosives," Assistant Inspector General (AIG) Provision and Transport (J&K Police), Mubashir Latifi said. "Only a few organisations in the country have such equipment. The state police is procuring the multi-core machinery for the first time."

The state police has floated online tenders from original manufacturers or their authorized dealers having proper authorization of the manufacture for the supply of Remotely Operated Vehicle (RoV). The tenders will be opened online on February 15, 2020.

"ROVs can work in P10

Mehbooba's Future Uncertain As Leaders Desert PDP

KO CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR: As the PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti continues to be detained following New Delhi's withdrawal of Article 370, her party is fast falling apart with many of its leaders leaving it to form a new political outfit which doesn't challenge withdrawal of J&K's autonomy. The party recently expelled eight of its senior leaders for hobnobbing with the government in violation of "interests of the state, official position and core beliefs of the party". This has confronted the PDP and Mehbooba herself with a

moment of reckoning. Once a vaunted political outfit which was the single largest party in the last Assembly, the PDP has now reduced to fewer members. That is, if they too don't abandon the party in near future.

An indication of this happening inevitably has come from the criticism of Mehbooba by the party's founding leader and former J&K Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Beigh. In a recent press conference at Jammu, Beigh blamed Mehbooba's "provocative statements" for forcing the centre to downgrade J&K's constitutional status. One such statement, he said,

is Mehbooba telling centre that "nobody would be there to shoulder the national flag if Article 370 was abrogated".

However, import of Beigh's statement is deeper. It shows he too is either on way out of the PDP or trying to gain control of the party in the absence of Mehbooba. Both hold a fraught prospect for the PDP and Mehbooba. This could lead to end of the PDP as a viable political entity.

But it won't be easy to replace Mehbooba. She may have been the daughter of late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, a former home minister of India and J&K Chief Minister, but she has worked



her way up through the Valley's streets. She built her political stock brick by brick and incar-

nated a leader who was relatively more credible mainstream political proponent of a P10