



Maximum: 12°C
Minimum: 3°C
Humidity: 51%

SUNSET
Today 06:35 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 06:48 AM

OBSERVER

23rd year OF PUBLICATION KASHMIR

14 Rajab-UL-Murajjab | 1441 Hijri | Vol:23 | Issue:59 | Pages:12 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net • twitter.com / kashmirobserver • facebook.com/kashmirobserver • Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016

Contact: -0194-2502327
FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS &
YOUR COPY OF



.....LIFE & TIMES/ 08

HUMAN EVOLUTION MAY HOLD THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING BACK PAIN: STUD
The evolutionary history of humans may explain why some people are more susceptible to a particular stress fracture known as spondylolysis that often affects athletes, according to study.....



COVID-19 COUNT REACHES 43 IN INDIA
With three new cases confirmed on Monday in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala the number of coronavirus cases have risen up to 43 in India. Four new cases of COVID-19 have been reported since Sunday. This includes one from Ernakulam in Kerala, one from Delhi.....

11/SPORTS.....

I-LEAGUE EAST BENGAL SCRAPE PAST REAL KASHMIR IN ILL-TEMPERED CLASH

East Bengal scraped past Real Kashmir 1-0 in an ill-tempered I-League clash in which two home team players and one from the visiting side were sent.....

News Digest

India, Pak Troops Trade Fire Along LoC

Srinagar: India and Pakistan troops on Monday traded fire along the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Defence spokesman told news agency UNI that this afternoon at about 1215 hrs, Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by small arms firing and shelling with mortars along LoC in Shahpur sector of Poonch. "Indian Army is retaliating befittingly," he said and added that no injury has been reported so far. Earlier on March 8, 7 and 3 also, Pakistan violated the ceasefire by firing unprovoked along the Line of Control in Poonch district.

Cylinder Blast Injures 3 In Kokernag

Srinagar: Two female cooks and a sweeper were injured in a LPG cylinder blast in Kokernag area of south Kashmir's Anantnag district, officials said Monday. The blast occurred when two female cooks were preparing mid-day meal for students at a government middle school in Kokernag this afternoon. All the injured were removed to the nearby medical facility for treatment. The injured Contingent Paid Workers (CPW) have been identified as Mumtaza Banoo and Hasena Banoo while the sweeper has been identified as Sajad Ahmad Bhat, all residents of Larnoo. Later one seriously injured cook was shifted to DH Anantnag.

5 Gamblers Arrested In City: Police

Srinagar: Police on Monday claimed to have arrested five gamblers in series of raids across the city. A team raided a gambling site in Bemina and arrested two people identified as Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat of Sabdan and Gulzar Ahmad Sheikh of Dal Colony, Bemina, a police spokesperson said. He said that Rs 8200 were recovered from the duo. Both of the accused were shifted to police station Parimpora. Meanwhile in a similar action, police arrested three alleged gamblers from Chanpora area of the city. Police identified them as Muzamil Ahmad Bhat, Bashir Ahmad Matta both residents of Tengpora and Bilal Ahmad Wani of Chanpora. An amount of Rs 5963 were recovered from the trio, police said.

Trucker Electrocuted In Sopore

Srinagar: A truck driver was killed on Monday after a high tension wire fell upon his vehicle in Sopore town of north Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said. 35-year-old driver Waheed Ahmad of Zaloor Sopore was electrocuted to death while his helper identified as Gulzar Ahmad suffered injuries when a HT line snapped from the pole and fell on their vehicle in Sopore today. Ahmad, officials said was removed to the hospital for treatment.

FM Jaishankar Makes Surprise Visit To Kashmir

Assures Kin Of Iran Stranded Kashmiris Of Quick Evacuation

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday made a surprise visit to Kashmir and met parents of students stranded in coronavirus-hit Iran as well as tourism industry representatives, assuring both groups that the government was seized of their problems and all would be well.

Jaishankar, whose visit was kept under a veil of secrecy, drove straight from the airport to the Kashmir International Convention complex, where around 100 parents of students stranded in Iran had gathered.

Those gathered at the complex said they were unaware about who they were supposed to meet. They said they received calls from the office of



the divisional commissioner of Kashmir asking them to come for a meeting.

"Met in #Srinagar the families of Indian students in #Iran. Assured them that our Embassy @India_in_Iran is monitoring their welfare. We are committed to facilitating their early return to India," Jaishankar tweeted.

An estimated 300 people from Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are currently stranded in Iran. These include students, pilgrims and other residents.

The parents asked the minister that if students from China could be brought back why there was a delay in case of Iran, officials attending »PAGE 10

ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIALS, THE MINISTER INFORMED THE PARENTS that elderly and pilgrims would be brought back first, followed by students. Besides, he made it clear that anyone airlifted from Iran would be sent to a quarantine centre for 14 days of isolation.

2 Militants Killed In Shopian Gunfight

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militants were killed on Monday in a fierce gun-battle with government forces in Shopian district of south Kashmir.

A joint team of army, special operations group (SOG) of police and CRPF 178 Battalion laid a siege around Khojpora village in Reban, Shopian after receiving input about the presence of militants in the village, a police spokesperson said today. The militants hiding in the village tried to break the cordon by opening fire upon the search team.

"The troops immediately took cover and retaliated. During retaliation by the forces, »PAGE 10

Blast Inside Army's Ammunition Depot Kills Two

Two labourers were killed while two others injured in an explosion at an ammunition depot of the Army in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, police said.

The explosion took place at Khundru in the south Kashmir district on Monday afternoon, a police official said. He said two labourers were killed on the spot due to the explosion, while two others were injured. »PAGE 10

Pak Intruder Arrested In Poonch

A Pakistani intruder was arrested by the Army along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Monday.

Faryad Ali (20), a resident of Kotli in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, sneaked into this side from across the LoC and was intercepted by the Army in a forward area in Balakote sector late on Sunday night, the officials said.

Ali is being interrogated. The arrested person looked mentally challenged and might have intruded into »PAGE 10

Opposition Demands Detained J&K Leaders' Immediate Release



NEW DELHI - The Opposition on Monday demanded immediate release of all political detainees in Jammu and Kashmir, especially three former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti.

"There are growing assaults on democratic norms, fundamental rights and civic liberties of citizens," a joint statement by Opposition leaders said. "As a result, dissent is not only being stifled, but the avenues of raising critical voices are also being systematically muted."

Nothing exemplifies this more starkly than the continuing detention on "flimsiest of grounds" of three former Jammu and Kashmir chief ministers for over seven months.

"There is nothing in the past records of these three leaders to lend credence to the »PAGE 10

LG Promises Land, Job Protection For Locals 'Kashmir Witnessing Paradigm Shift After Article 370 Abrogation'



Press Trust Of India

AHMEDABAD: The Jammu and Kashmir administration will ensure that jobs, lands and assets are protected for the people of the Union Territory as it invites investments after abrogation of the special status, its Lieutenant Governor GC Murmu said here on Monday.

The LG was addressing businessmen at a roadshow organised for the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Global Investors' Summit.

"Let me tell you, a lot of apprehension is there, and local people also have apprehension that if we open up Jammu and Kashmir, there will be a host of people coming from outside, and what about us?"

"At this forum, I would like to say that although we have opened up everything, we will see to it that job, land and assets are protected for the (local) people, as it happens in Gujarat," Murmu said.

Murmu said J-K youths are proactive and competent, and there was no lack of skilled

manpower, and industry setting up units there will create ample opportunities for them.

He said the J-K government is working to remove barriers and facilitate a single-window system in order to attract investment, and claimed that Jammu and Kashmir was witnessing a "paradigm shift" after the abrogation of Article 370 and 35 (A).

The Central government on August 5, 2019 revoked Article 370 to take away Jammu and Kashmir's special status, and announced bifurcation of the state into two union territories, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

"We have implemented three-tier Panchayati Raj system. We are empowering urban local bodies. We are implementing other things, and also decentralising. Everything will be in place. We will be facilitating single window system and are also replicating Indexbt kind of thing. So you will see more ease of doing business," he said.

Indexbt is an investment promotion organisation of Gujarat government »PAGE 10

AT THIS FORUM, I WOULD LIKE to say that although we have opened up everything, we will see to it that job, land and assets are protected for the (local) people, as it happens in Gujarat," Murmu said.

Police Crack Jammu Lawyer's Murder Case, 2 Arrested

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir police on Monday claimed to have solved the sensational murder case of a senior city-based lawyer with the arrest of two persons including his domestic help and recovery of various stolen items.

Deepak Chouhan (26) alias "Deepu" and Sunil Kohli (30) alias Lambu, both residents of Madhya Pradesh, were arrested by a special team of J&K police investigating the murder of 65-year-old lawyer, Reyaz Ahmad Buchh, in »PAGE 10

Family Of Detained Kashmiri Couple Rubbish Police Claims

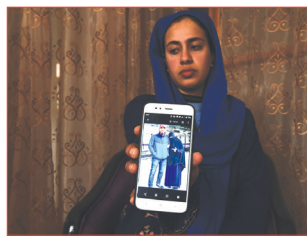
Auqib Javeed

SRINAGAR: The family members of a Kashmiri couple arrested in Indian capital over alleged ISIS links, on Monday rubbished the claims of Delhi Police saying that the couple was being made "scapegoat" because of their identity.

Jahanjeb Sami and his wife Hina Bashir Beg were rounded by the sleuths of special cell of Delhi Police on Sunday from their rented accommodation in Jamia Nagar locality of south-east Delhi. The couple, according to PTI were arrested on

charges of links with Khorasan module of the IS and fuelling anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) protests.

A resident of Shivpora, Sami was working as project manager with a UK based IT »PAGE 10



No History Of Militancy, Says Police

The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday said that the man arrested in Delhi for allegedly having links with the ISIS outfit has no past history of militancy.

Jahanjeb Sami and his wife Hina Bashir Beg were arrested by the special cell of Delhi police on Sunday on charges of having links with ISIS outfit and fuelling anti-CAA protests, a charge strongly denied by the family.

An official from the Ram Munshi Bagh police station »PAGE 10

Woman Tests Positive To Coronavirus, 669 Under Lens

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory administration said Monday that a woman has tested positive to the coronavirus infection, even as 669 people have been put under surveillance.

"One woman who returned from Iran has tested positive," Dr Shafaqat Khan, Nodal Officer, coronavirus control Jammu and Kashmir, told news agency GNS.

J&K's Chief Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam said that the woman has contacted 19 persons who have now been put under surveillance and are being quarantined.

An official handout issued here this evening said that till now, 669 people in contact with suspected cases have been put under surveillance. 460 of them have been in Home Quarantine (including 20 at Yatri Bhawan, Jammu), 08 in Hospital Quarantine, 55 in home surveillance, 146 completed their 28 days surveillance period. 55 samples have been sent for testing, 26 negative, 1 tested positive, 28 reports awaited.

Government has also said that elaborate arrangements have been made in Srinagar as part of measures to prevent spread of coronavirus

"Beefed up screening at airport and elsewhere, tens »PAGE 10

41 Budgam Residents Return From Iran, China

23 People Quarantined, 18 More to Undergo: CMO

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: As many as 41 residents of Budgam have returned from coronavirus hit Iran and China and most of them have been quarantined by the district authorities, officials said Monday.

"23 people have been quarantined after their return from Iran and China last month and all of them have tested negative. The remaining 18 people will be quarantined though they have not shown any symptoms of the deadly infection," CMO Budgam Dr Nazir Ahmad told Kashmir Observer today.

Meanwhile, District Development Commissioner (DDC), Budgam, Tariq Hussain Ganai today chaired a meeting to review preparedness for Coronavirus threat.

The meeting was informed that 5 groups comprising of 160 pilgrims from Budgam are expected to reach Budgam from various countries will also be quarantined besides students who are returning from Iran and China will also be taken to isolation wards for proper check-up.

He instructed CMO to establish a control room with a land-line phone facility at CMO Office immediately and »PAGE 10

Banihal Alignment Road To Be Thrown Open Next Week: BRO

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The old Banihal alignment bypassing the Jawahar Tunnel on Jammu-Srinagar will be made motorable and thrown open as an alternate route within a week after being cleared of snow and making necessary repairs, a Border Road Organisation official said Monday.

The work is on in full swing to clear the old Banihal alignment of snow to make it motorable by next week, said Ajay Singh, the officer-in-charge of BRO's Project Beacon 99, tasked with the

responsibility of keeping roads open in the Valley and parts of Jammu region. "The condition of the old Banihal alignment is good and satisfactory. It will be thrown

open as an alternate route once the snow clearance operation gets over and necessary repairs are done in the next seven days," Singh told PTI. »PAGE 10

Stranded Vehicles Allowed On Kashmir Highway

No fresh traffic was allowed on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway for the second day on Monday to facilitate clearance of stranded vehicles including trucks carrying essential commodities to Kashmir Valley, officials said.

The highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, has witnessed frequent disruptions over the past week due to multiple landslides and shooting stones triggered by incessant rains between Ramban and Banihal.

"Amid improvement in weather, the road was cleared »PAGE 10