



Maximum : 27°C  
Minimum : 17°C  
Humidity : 66%

SUNSET  
Today 07:46 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 05:21 AM



**News Digest**

**Militants, Forces Exchange Fire In Lolab**

Srinagar: A brief exchange of fire took place between militants and joint team of police, CRPF and army in forests of Lolab area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Tuesday. According to the reports, a joint team of Police, Army's 28RR and CRPF launched a cordon-and-search-operation in Lolab forests. SSP Kupwara Shri Ram Ambarkar told GNS the exchange of fire between the joint team and the militants. However, he said, it was brief one. "More reinforcements were rushed to the forest", the SSP added

**Youth 'Hangs' Self In Dooru**

Srinagar: A youth allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself inside his home at Mandipora village of Dooru in south Kashmir's Anantnag district on Tuesday. The 26-year-old youth (name withheld) strangled himself to death at his home early this morning, officials said. The deceased was a painter by profession. Officials said that it was not immediately known why the youth took the extreme step of ending his life. Meanwhile, police have initiated proceedings under section 174 CrPc in this regard. (KNO)

**23 Discharged After Covid-19 Recovery**

Srinagar: At least 23 Covid-19 patients, including 5 pregnant women were discharged on Tuesday from Srinagar's JLNH hospital on recovery from the disease. Nodal Officer for Coronavirus at JLNH Hospital, Dr Bilquees said that all these patients, hailing from Srinagar were asymptomatic and were discharged after 20-25 days. "The total discharged patients from Rainawari Hospital till now are 358 while total positive patients admitted in the hospital at present are 50 in general Isolation Wards and 5 positive pregnant patients in Gynae Isolation Ward," she said.

**Rape Accused BJP Panch Absconding**

Srinagar: A Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) Panch from south Kashmir's Shopian district facing rape and abduction allegations has gone into hiding while four of his associates have been arrested by police, reports said Tuesday. A girl lodged a written complaint at the Police Station Hirpora in Shopian alleging that BJP Panch Latif Jagal raped her repeatedly for two days after the accused abducted her with the help of four other men, news agency KNT reported. Following the complaint, police took the girl to the court and... P-02

**Hideout Busted In Poonch**

Jammu: Police on Tuesday claimed to have busted a militant hideout in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir police and recovered arms and ammunition, a senior police officer said. The hideout was unearthed during a joint search operation by troops of 16 Rashtriya Rifles and the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the police at Murrah village in the Surankote area, Senior Superintendent of Police, Poonch, RameshAngralsaid. He said a universal machine gun... P-02

...LADAKH STAND-OFF

**Army Chief Reviews Military Preparedness**

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Army Chief Gen MM Naravane on Tuesday reviewed India's military preparedness in eastern Ladakh as he began a two-day visit to the region where a border clash last week left 20 Indian soldiers dead in the midst of a tense standoff with the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

Soon after arriving in Leh, Gen Naravane visited an Army hospital where 18 soldiers injured in the clash in Galwan Valley on June 15 are undergoing treatment, Army officials said.

The Chief of the Army Staff interacted with almost all the injured soldiers and complimented them for their bravery, they added. A surveillance post set up by the Chinese Army on a narrow mountain trail in violation of an agreement was the trigger for the clash in Galwan Valley in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed.

After visiting the hospital, Gen Naravane reviewed the overall security situation in the region with the ground commanders, and is learnt to have directed them to keep a high-level of alertness to deal with any Chinese misadventure, people familiar with the issue said.

The Chief of the Army Staff is scheduled to visit a number of forward areas during his two-day visit to the region.

Last week, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria made a quiet visit to Ladakh and Srinagar air bases to review the Indian Air Force's preparedness to deal with any eventualities in the region.

Before leaving for Leh, Gen Naravane attended the final session of a two-day conference of top Army commanders. The commanders extensively... PAGE 02



Army Chief met injured soldiers after arriving in Leh on Tuesday.

**India, China Agree To 'Cool Down' Border Tension**

Top Chinese and Indian military commanders have arrived at a consensus on the "outstanding issues" and agreed to take necessary measures to "cool down" the situation at their borders, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced on Tuesday. On Monday, Lt Gen Harinder Singh, the commander of the 14 Corps, held a nearly 11-hour meeting... P-02

**Russia Rules Out Mediation**

Russia on Tuesday ruled out mediating between India and China following the violent clashes in the Galwan Valley, saying the two nations do not need any kind of assistance to resolve their disputes. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks came after a virtual conference of the foreign ministers of Russia, India and China. External... P-02

**'Fake News': China On Killing Of 40 PLA troops**

China on Tuesday broke its silence over its casualties in the June 15 clash between Indian and Chinese troops while terming as sure "fake news" reports that more than 40 Chinese soldiers were killed in the face-off in eastern Ladakh. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian, who repeatedly parried questions on the... P-02

**ITBP Scales Up LAC Presence**

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has begun deployment of 40 fresh companies across various locations along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China in view of the ongoing standoff and violent clashes between the armies of the two countries, officials said on Tuesday. The border guarding force is also... P-02

**No Meeting Between Rajnath, Chinese Counterpart**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will not have any bilateral meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wei Fenghe on the sidelines of a grand parade in Moscow, a senior official said on Tuesday. Currently, Singh is on a three-day visit to Moscow... P-02

**India Downgrades Diplomatic Ties With Pakistan**

Asks It To Reduce Embassy Staff By 50% In 7 Days

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India on Tuesday asked Pakistan to reduce its staff in its high commission here by half within the next seven days and announced a reciprocal trimming of Indian strength in Islamabad, in a significant downgrading of diplomatic ties.

The Ministry of External Affairs said the Charge d' Affaires of Pakistan High Commission was summoned and informed about the decision which was based on instances of alleged involvement of Pakistani officials in "acts of espionage" and dealings with terrorist organisations.

In a statement, the MEA also cited the recent abduction of two

Indian officials in Islamabad and the "barbaric treatment" meted out to them by Pakistani agencies as reasons for downgrading of the diplomatic ties.

"The behaviour of Pakistan and its officials is not in conformity with the Vienna Convention and bilateral agreements on the treatment of diplomatic and consular officials. On the contrary, it is an intrinsic element of a larger policy of supporting cross-border violence and terrorism," the MEA said.

Therefore, it said, India has taken the decision to reduce the staff strength in the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi by 50 per cent.

"It would reciprocally reduce its own presence in Islamabad... PAGE 02

**THE BEHAVIOUR OF PAKISTAN AND its officials is not in conformity with the Vienna Convention and bilateral agreements on the treatment of diplomatic and consular officials. On the contrary, it is an intrinsic element of a larger policy of supporting cross-border violence and terrorism."**

**Delhi HC Grants Bail To Jamia Student Safoora Zargar**

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court Tuesday granted bail to Jamia student Safoora Zargar, who is pregnant and was arrested under anti-terror law UAPA in a case related to communal violence in northeast Delhi during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, as Solicitor General Tushar Mehta did not oppose it on humanitarian grounds. At the outset of the hearing, Mehta, representing Delhi Police, submitted that Zargar can be released on regular bail on humanitarian grounds and the decision has not been taken on merits of the case and should not be made a precedent.



Justice Rajiv Shakdher, who conducted the hearing through video conferencing, released Zargar, who is 23-week pregnant, on bail on furnishing a personal bond of Rs 10,000 and surety of like amount.

The court said she shall not indulge in any activity for which she has been charged with and shall not hamper the investigation or influence the witnesses.

**2 Militants, CRPF Constable Killed In Pulwama Encounter**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Two unidentified militants and a CRPF personnel were killed in an encounter in Bandzoo area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Tuesday, police said.

State forces launched a cordon and search operation in Bandzoo area of Pulwama after receiving specific information about the presence of militants in the area, a police official said.

He said the search operation turned into an encounter after militants fired upon a search party of the forces, who retaliated.

Two militants were killed during encounter, the official said, adding that one CRPF trooper was also killed in the exchange of firing... PAGE 02



Pic: Shah Javed

**Cross-LoC Shelling In Macchil Sector**

The armies of India and Pakistan on Tuesday resorted to cross-Line of Control (LoC) shelling in Macchil sector of the frontier Kupwara district. "On June 23, in the afternoon hours, Pakistan initiated an... P-02

**Pak Trying To Push Militants Into Kashmir: DGP**

SRINAGAR: Pakistan is trying to push militants into Jammu and Kashmir under the cover of ceasefire violations by its troops along the Line of Control, police chief Dilbagh Singh said on Tuesday.

"Pakistan is making efforts to send more Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Toiba cadres into Kashmir. For that, they are trying to use the International Border sector in Jammu or the LoC in Nowshera sector (in Rajouri district)," he said.

"Efforts are also being made in Kupwara and Baramulla to push more militants into this side under the garb of ceasefire violations. The Army is foiling these efforts there," Singh told reporters on the sidelines of the wreath-laying ceremony of a CRPF jawan here... PAGE 02

**Missing PhD Scholar Has Joined Hizb: IGP Kashmir 'Won't Arrest Him If Family Brings Him Back'**

Agencies

SRINAGAR- Hilal Ahmad Dar, a PhD scholar from Bemina area of Srinagar who went missing on June 14 during trekking to Gangbal Ganderbal, has joined Hizbul-Mujahideen, Inspector General of Police Vijay Kumar said on Tuesday.

The top police officer made the statement while talking to reporters at RTC Humhama here on the sidelines of the wreath laying ceremony of a CRPF trooper who was killed along with two militants in a gunfight in Pulwama district early today.

The IGP also made an offer of not arresting Hilal Ahmad Dar, if



the family brings him back. "We won't arrested him if his family brings him back," he said. The family had been protesting from last week, seeking whereabouts of Dar. Dar had gone on a trekking expedition to... PAGE 02

**Govt Gears Up For Annual Amarnath Yatra**

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu on Tuesday reviewed the preparedness for Amarnath Yatra, even as uncertainty over the annual Hindu pilgrimage remains due to coronavirus fears.

An official spokesperson said that though the decision about the annual pilgrimage shall be taken appropriately in due course of time, LG Murmu today reviewed Yatra preparedness. In the review meeting, LG insisted to make sure all basic preparations including health, infrastructure, ration/LPG supply, power, drinking water, security arrangements, telecommunication, Disaster management etc. While briefing the LG, CEO Shrine Board, Bipul Pathak said that the

camp at cave is already established and the snow clearance work has been completed.

"The Base Camp Baltal and the Neelgrath helipad are likely to be ready within next week. SASB is making arrangements for the live telecast of the morning and evening Aarti with Doordarshan," Pathak informed the meeting.

LG's advisor Baseer Ahmad Khan gave a detailed presentation on arrangements done by various departments, the official spokesperson said.

"He informed that the 80% work on Baltal track is done. Five out of seven bridges are launched, verification of service providers by Police has been done and they are ready to be deployed. A new helipad at Lower Cave (1.2 km short of the Holy Cave) is being constructed by... PAGE 02

**2 More Covid-19 Patients Die In Kashmir, J&K Toll 87**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- An 85-year-old Covid-19 positive man from Kulgam district of south Kashmir died at SKIMS Soura here on Tuesday, taking the number of deaths due to the disease in Jammu and Kashmir to 87, officials said.

The octogenarian, hailing from Kadar area of Kulgam, died at SKIMS Soura hospital on Tuesday morning, the officials said.

They said the patient was admitted to the hospital on June 5 and was a known case of "complete heart block with hypertension. He was on temporary pacemaker.

Earlier, a 58-year-old woman from Natipora area of Srinagar, who had tested positive for Covid-19, passed away at... PAGE 02



Pic: Anand Bhat

**24 Soldiers, 8 Cops Among 148 Test Positive**

Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday recorded 148 new cases of coronavirus, including 24 soldiers and eight policemen, taking the number of infected people across the Union Territory to 6236. "148 new Covid-19 cases were detected in J&K. While 128 of them are from Kashmir, 20 are from Jammu," the officials said. Among fresh cases, 45 cases were... P-02

**Woman Delivers Baby In Open After Hospital 'Denies Admission'**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a shocking incident of alleged medical apathy, a pregnant woman on Tuesday delivered a baby in the compound of a government hospital in north Kashmir's Baniptora district prompting district authorities to order a probe after a massive public outrage.

On Tuesday morning, a pregnant woman from Anderkoot village of the district was brought to the Community Health Centre (CHC) Sumbal by her family after she complained of labour pains, eyewitnesses told Kashmir Observer. However, the doctors there allegedly refused her admission over Covid-19 test.

Around noon, witnesses said, the woman gave birth to a baby outside the hospital building after

the locals formed a human chain and spread a huge shit to help the woman deliver the baby.

"Since 8am, we pleaded before the doctors to admit her. They didn't pay any heed to our repeated requests. They remained adamant on coronavirus test," an attendant said.

She alleged that the woman delivered in open amidst stones and bricks after denied treatment by the doctors.

"The pregnant woman's mother wrapped the newborn in her cloak and went to the doctor's chamber to plead before her. Later, the mother and baby were given admission," she said. "Denying treatment to expecting mothers is grave injustice. Such incidents are shameful, to say the least," she added.

The incident triggered massive outrage and evoked sharp... PAGE 02