



Maximum : 26°C  
Minum : 14°C  
Humidity : 59%

SUNSET  
Today 07:39 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 05:35 AM

# OBSERVER

23<sup>rd</sup> year OF PUBLICATION

KASHMIR

30 Ziqadat-ul-Haraam | 1441 Hijri | Vol: 23 | Issue: 158 | Pages: 08 | Price: ₹3

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## News Digest

### Lightning Kills 3 Nomads In Poonch

Poonch: Three nomads were killed while dozens of their cattle perished by the lightning at Gumsar village of Poonch district. Officials said that the incident took place in the intervening night of Monday- Tuesday. They said the lightning hit a seasonal dhok in Gumsar, leaving three nomads dead on the spot who belong to the Surankote area of the district. They added that many animals including goat and sheep, whose number is believed to be in several hundreds, also perished in the incident. Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Surankote, Saleem Qureshi said that teams have rushed to the spot to assess the loss.

### 2 Army Men Injured In LoC Explosion

Jammu: Two Army men were on Tuesday injured in an explosion along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district's Nowshera sector, officials said. Officials said that an explosion took place at a forward location in Nowshera sector. They said reportedly a landmine has went off, which resulted in injuries to two army men. "Two Army men were injured in the incident and have been hospitalized," officials said. Meanwhile, the officials said that Pakistan Army resorted to unprovoked firing along LoC in Nowshera and Sunderbani sectors of Rajouri district. They said that in forward LoC locations of Nowshera and Sunderbani, ceasefire violation started on Tuesday evening after Pakistani Army fired indiscriminately on this side, which was retaliated. The exchange of fire between the two armies was going on when the report was last filed

### 3 Persons Killed In Reasi Mishap

Jammu: Three persons were killed in a road mishap that took place in Mahore area of Reasi district on Tuesday afternoon, officials said. A police official said that a car was on its way from Badder towards Mahore skidded off the road near Bagga Morh, resulting in on spot death to two persons while the other was grievously injured. He identified the deceased as Mohammad Ayoub, son of Nazir Ahmed and Bashir Ahmed, son of Qamar din-both residents of Badder Mahore. He said that the other person identified as Muhammad Iqbal, son of Nazir Ahmed, a resident of Badder, who got seriously injured, was shifted to a nearby hospital in Mahore where he succumbed to his injuries

### 11th Std Approved For Sainik School

SRINAGAR, JULY 21: The Chief Secretary, B V R Subrahmanyam today chaired the 37th meeting of Executive Committee of Sainik School, Manasbal and reviewed its functioning. Principal Secretary, School Education, District Development Commissioner, Ganderbal, Principal, Sainik School, Manasbal, along-with officers of concerned departments participated in the meeting. At the outset the committee reviewed and approved the action taken on the minutes of previous meeting of the Executive Committee. To fully tap the potential of various facilities including P-02

## 11 More Die Of Covid-19, J&K Toll 266

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday reported eleven more deaths attributed to Covid-19, taking the fatality count due to the Novel Coronavirus to 266.

According to the official sources five deaths occurred at SKIMS, four at SMHS hospital while one each was reported from SKIMS Bemina and CD hospital, Drugjan.

The fatalities include 96-year-old man from Pattan Baramulla, 70-year-old woman from Lalbazar Srinagar, 50-year-old from Mirbazar Kulgam, elderly from Parraypora Srinagar, 54-year-old man from Fateh kadal Srinagar, 64-years-old woman from Dangerpora Sopore, 55-year-old woman from Budgam, 65-year-old from Sangrama, 85-year-old from Sopore, 74-year-old man from Rawalpura, 43-year-old man from Parigam and 85-year-old man from Papcha area P-02



No Photo: Akh Bhar

### 608 New Cases Take Covid-19 Tally Past 15000 Mark In J&K

Fresh Infections Include 66 Security Personnel And 134 Migrant Labourers

Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday reported 608 new Covid-19 infections including 51 CRPF, six BSF and 9 army personnel, taking the overall tally of cases to 15158 in J&K. P-02

### 26 SKIMS Employees Undergoing Treatment For Covid-19

At least 26 employees from Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences Soura are admitted in the hospital. All these employees have been tested positive for Covid-19 infection. KNT quoting hospital sources reported on Tuesday that some staff nurses, couple of doctors, a driver and some P-02

### COVID FALLOUT Amarnath Yatra Cancelled With 'Heavy Heart'

SRINAGAR- The Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) on Tuesday decided to cancel this year's pilgrimage to the cave shrine in south Kashmir Himalayas in the wake of the closure of religious places in Jammu and Kashmir due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision to cancel the annual Amarnath Yatra was taken at a meeting of the shrine board chaired by SASB chairman Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu.

"Lieutenant Governor, Girish Chandra Murmu, Chairman of the Amarnath Shrine Board, presided over 39th Board meeting of the Amarnath Shrine Board today in which the Board members participated virtually through video conference to discuss the conduct of the Yatra 2020," said a Raj Bhavan spokesman.

The meeting was attended by B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Bipul Pathak, CEO SASB; Anup Kumar Soni, Addl CEO SASB & senior officers of Shrine Board. Threadbare discussion was held on the current circumstances of COVID-19 pandemic and its likely impact on the Yatra.

The Board discussed the Supreme Court order dated 13.07.2020 in which, the decision to conduct the Yatra was left to the Administration/ Government after assessing the ground P-02

## After 'Free Run', Over 100 Non-local COVID Cases Alarm Kashmir



Auqib Javeed

SRINAGAR: AS highway remains an unrestricted zone for bussed non-locals in Kashmir, many organizations—including cleric bodies enforcing official ban on religious gatherings in the valley—have asked administration to come clean on the "rampant entry" of "migrant labourers" in the region during the peaking pandemic times.

The pitch shilled after over 100 non-locals—who entered the valley since last week—were reportedly tested positive for COVID on Tuesday.

"Such an insensitive move [unbridled influx of untested non-locals] will wreak havoc in the valley," Kashmiri netizens reacted sharply over what they called the administration's 'mindless move'.

### Dist. Adm To Conduct Covid Test Of Migrant Labourers

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole today said that all incoming migrant labourers shall undergo Covid-19 testing in respective districts from July 23, Thursday. Div Com said this while P-02

"If locals can shut their shops and strictly follow the guidelines to contain the spread of coronavirus, then who in the administration is allowing these non-locals to enter the valley without tests in these trying times?" P-02

## J&K Getting Rs 4580 Cr Loan To Clear Power Liabilities

UT Administration Owes Rs 9646 Crore To CPSUS, Other Agencies

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Government of Jammu & Kashmir will get Rs 4580 crore special long term loan from the Government of India for clearing its power purchase liabilities.

Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) have agreed to grant Rs 2290 crore each as special long term loan to J&K UT to assist it in clearing the power purchase liabilities of different central power generation companies like National Thermal Power Corporation Limited

(NTPC), National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and charges of transmission companies, a report said.

The loan is part of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package, which was unveiled by the Government of India for revival of economy after outbreak of novel coronavirus. Under the package, the Union government has allocated Rs 90,000 crore financial package to assist power distribution companies (Discoms) who have been under stress during the lockdown caused by COVID-19 pandemic. The Power Finance P-02

## India-US Navies Hold Exercises Amid Ladakh Tension

NEW DELHI: Indian navy ships held joint exercises with US aircraft carrier Nimitz in the Indian Ocean, the US navy said, in a sign of growing cooperation between the two naval forces in the region.

The USS Nimitz and the USS Ronald Reagan have been deployed to the South China Sea for the second time in two weeks as China and the United States accuse each other of stoking tensions in the region.

India's relations with China have also been strained recently after a deadly clash on their disputed land border last month, prompting calls for closer security ties with the United States and its allies including Japan to balance regional security.

Rear Admiral Jim Kirk, command-



er of the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, said in a statement that Monday's joint drills with the Indian navy helped improve interoperability of the two forces.

The drills were carried out near

India's Andaman and Nicobar islands which sits near the Malacca Straits, one of the world's busiest shipping routes for trade and fuel, an Indian source said. India has a military base on the islands. P-02

## J&K Bank Extends Credit Guarantee Scheme For Stressed MSMEs

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: As part of Atmanirbhar Bharat economic package, J&K Bank has extended the Government of India's Credit Guarantee Scheme for Subordinate Debt (CGSSD) to provide personal loan to the promoters of stressed MSMEs for infusion as equity / quasi equity in the business eligible for restructuring, as per RBI guidelines.

Pertinently, as a special dispensation, RBI has permitted banks to reckon the funds infused by the promoters in their MSME units through loans availed un-

der the scheme as equity/quasi equity from the promoters for debt-equity computation.

"The biggest challenge for stressed MSMEs is in getting capital either in the form of debt or equity. It is expected that this scheme would provide much required support to eligible MSMEs and will help in reviving the economic activity of this sector which is presently experiencing financial difficulties due to the economic fallout of Covid-19 Pandemic", the bank's Chairman and Managing Director (CMD), R K Chhibber said.

Notably, the scheme has been operationalised through P-02

### LG Launches 73 Projects In 6 Districts

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Shri Girish Chandra Murmu e-inaugurated as many as 48 developmental projects worth Rs. 151.79 crores and laid e-foundation of 21 number of projects worth Rs. 290.80 crores during his recent extensive tour to six districts in Kashmir.

During visit to district Kupwara, Lieutenant Governor inaugurated IPD Block at SDH Kupwara worth Rs. 24.80 crores, Video Conference Hall in District Administrative Complex worth Rs. 23.9 lac, and laid foundation stone for construction of parallel Bypass to Lolab road project worth Rs. 1.88 crores. On visit to Kulgam, Lieutenant Governor laid the foundation stone of 50-bedded integrated Ayush Hospital project worth 7.40 crore at Chawalgam P-02

## NCERT Adds Scrapping Of Article 370 To Class 12 Textbook Chapter

NEW DELHI- The NCERT has revised a chapter in its Class 12 political science textbook to drop a paragraph on separatist politics in Jammu and Kashmir and to add a brief mention of scrapping of its special status last year.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has revised the chapter in the textbook "Politics in India since Independence" for the academic session 2020-21.

While the topic "Separatism and Beyond" has been deleted from the chapter, the scrapping of Article 370, which gave the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir special status, has been included under the topic "Regional Aspirations".



On August 5 last year, the Centre had scrapped the state's special status and divided it into union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

"One strand of separatists who want a separate Kashmiri nation, independent of India and Pakistan. Then there are groups that want Kashmir to merge with Pakistan. Besides these, there is a third strand, which wants greater autonomy for the people P-02

### Bid to Rob Bank With Toy Gun Foiled

KUPWARA: Police on Tuesday detained two persons who made a failed attempt to rob Grameen Bank in Nutnusa area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

Police said that two persons were held for attempting to rob the bank and recovered a toy gun from their possession.

According to the police the duo hailing from Kulangam area of Handwara went inside the bank premises Tuesday afternoon with the intention to rob money from the business unit.

"Both the individuals were carrying a toy gun and tried to lock up the manager in his cabin but the timely action of police post Drugmulla foiled the robbery attempt," the official said.

The official said that P-02

### Hirra Sultan

AFTER Shifa's father was detected COVID positive last week, his serious symptoms forced the family to move him to a hospital.

They initially approached SKIMS Bemina, which is a designated COVID hospital but they were turned down. Even after showing them all reports and telling them that the patient's condition was deteriorating, nobody agreed to let them in.

After spending an hour on the streets, outside the hospital, trying to understand the issue and how to solve it, they went to SKIMS, Soura.

Someone later clarified that the hospital is taking in only referral cases. However bad a patient's condition may be, the hospital would not cater to them unless they have referral papers from another hos-

## 'Jailed For Testing Positive': Life Inside Quarantine Centres Of Kashmir

pital and the availability of a bed, ventilator and the like has already been checked.

Non-availability of beds has been a reality in Kashmiri hospitals for a while now. SKIMS Soura had earlier asked the patients and attendants in Sarai-2 to vacate so that COVID patients can be accommodated.

Yet, the in-flow of patients is so high that this move comes in too late and is too little.

In another case, a patient in need of a ventilator could only be given an oxygen point and the attendants asked to wait.

This is all very genuine, looking at the number of positive cases every day. But, if we look at the numbers divided into critical, severe, and

mild cases, then the story changes altogether.

According to the current SOPs being followed, all positive cases are either being put up in hospitals or in quarantine centers, even patients with only mild symptoms which are easily manageable at home.

The thing with these quarantine centers is that authorities have mostly acquired college campuses and empty buildings to be turned into quarantine centers which have remained closed for a good while now.

Before moving in patients, nobody has bothered to clean up these places. Hence any person getting quarantined feels ill at ease at such places.

And even if proper cleaning and all has been done before transfer-



ring anyone there, nobody visits these places for cleaning afterwards.

After all, those people are also afraid for their lives. The rooms and campuses are properly sanitized once the occupants test negative and leave.

These quarantine centers have many other issues as well. Like having multiple people in a single room.

Kashmiri homes are generally quite spacious and hence even if every family member is COVID positive, they can still stay in their

own rooms and isolate themselves, and hence contain the spread of the virus quite effectively.

On the other hand, these quarantine centers throw multiple people together in a single room, or at the very least two, and the maximum depends on the room size.

But how does that achieve the purpose of isolation?

Issues also arise when strangers of different gender are put together in a single room.

Even if there is an age gap, how is a lady supposed to relax and live in a room where two stranger men are also supposed to live?

Zubair was quarantined on July 19, at Central University, Nowgam Campus. He said, "Along with my

mother, there is an outsider (labourer) in the room who is my age and another lady. How am I supposed to even sleep with strangers in my room? It is not like we are in US and do not mind stranger men to occupy the same room as our women. At least the locals in the administration should consider this before asking people to share space. They are well aware of our beliefs and culture, or have they forsaken everything?"

This sharing of space also makes things worse if one of the people has some other communicable disease.

Being in close quarters, it becomes difficult to evade such infections and hence, instead of proving beneficial, quarantine centers add to the worries of people.

Although the doctor community is pitching for a strong immune system and recommend physical P-02