



Maximum : 32°C
Minum : 20°C
Humidity : 61%

SUNSET
Today 07:25 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:47 AM



News Digest

Soldier Falls Into Gorge, Dies

Srinagar: A soldier was killed after he slipped into a gorge in Macchil sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district, army said Friday. 27-year-old Rifleman Amir Hussain Wani of south Kashmir's Anantnag district was on patrol duty along the Line of Control in Macchil sector, when he slipped and fell into a gorge, an army spokesperson said. The soldier, he said was rescued by his team, provided immediate first aid and evacuated to nearest army medical facility for treatment. "However he succumbed to his injuries," the army spokesperson said. He added that Wani had joined the Army in 2012 and is **● P-02**

'Abducted' Soldier's Clothes Found

Srinagar: Government forces on Friday intensified operation in Shopian to rescue an 'abducted' soldier after his clothes were recovered from an orchard in the south Kashmir district. The clothes of Rifleman Shakhir Manzoor were recovered by state forces this morning in an orchard in Landora village of Shopian, official sources said. The recovery, they said prompted the government forces to intensify the operation to rescue the soldier. On Monday, suspected militants intercepted Manzoor's car **● P-02**

Arms Recovered From Militant Hideout

Jammu: Security forces on Friday busted a militant hideout during an operation in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district and seized two AK-47 rifles and four magazines, officials said. Poonch Senior Superintendent of Police Ramesh Angral said the hideout was busted during a joint Cordon and Search Operation by the Army and the Special Operations Group of Police in upper Kalsia forest area of Mangnar top. Two AK-47 rifles and 4 magazines were recovered, he said. **● P-02**

SMC To Resume Dog Sterilisation Program

Srinagar: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), the city's civic body is soon resuming the animal birth control and anti-rabies programme to keep a check on canine population. The sterilization programme will be shortly resumed by SMC in collaboration with veterinary faculty of SK University of agricultural sciences at its Animal Birth Control AR facility at Shuhama. "The programme which was temporarily on hold due to the restrictions in place because of COVID 19 Pandemic **● P-02**

3 Drug Peddlers Held With 60 Kg Poppy

Jammu: Three men alleged to be drug peddlers were arrested and 60 kilograms of poppy recovered in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Friday, police officials said. During a routine checking, a police team stopped a Punjab-bound truck on the national highway at Jakhani, they said. During the vehicle search, 60 kg of poppy was seized from its driver identified as Sukhpreet Singh along with Jagdev Singh and Jagroop Singh, they added. The accused persons were arrested and the contraband was also seized, they said. A case was registered at Udhampur police station and further investigation is underway.

Dialogue Soon, Says Manoj Sinha After Taking Oath As J&K LG

'August 5 Is A Very Important Day In The History Of Jammu & Kashmir'



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration will soon initiate direct dialogue with the people to end the situation of uncertainty and militancy, the union territory's new lieutenant governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday soon after being sworn in.

The 61-year-old, who was administered the oath of office by Jammu and Kashmir High Court Chief Justice Gita Mittal at a simple function in the Raj Bhavan, also said he wants to accelerate development in the union territory,

Cong Leader Questions Murmu's Resignation

Leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Friday sought to know why G C Murmu resigned as the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, and alleged the former IAS officer paid the price for "venting his views". The Election Commission had on July 28 taken exception to Murmu's reported remarks on the timing **● P-02**

carved out of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir last year. "August 5 is a very important day in the history of Jammu and Kashmir. After years of isolation, Jammu and Kashmir joined the national mainstream. I have been told that many works which

could not be completed in years have been completed in the past one year." Sinha told reporters after taking oath.

"I want to accelerate that development," he added.

On August 5, 2019, Jammu and Kashmir's special **● PAGE 02**

J&K, Ladakh May See Temperature Rise Of 7 Degrees: Study

SRINAGAR: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh may witness a temperature increase of up to 6.9 degrees Celsius by the end of the century due to climate change, according to a study which warns that the glaciers in this Himalayan region could shrink by 85 per cent if the projections come true.

The study, published in the journal Climatic Change on July 29, predicted the impact of future climate change in the Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Himalaya, by the end of the twenty-first century using an ensemble of 11 models under three greenhouse gas emission scenarios.

It also highlights the changes in the distribution of the **● PAGE 02**

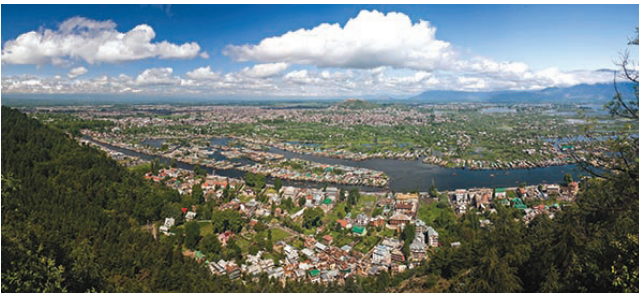
Centre Mulls New Law To Protect Land Rights Of J&K Locals

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: In a bid to allay the fears of locals, the Centre is likely to bring a new law which will protect the land rights of the people belonging to Jammu and Kashmir, an official said on Friday.

A senior government official privy to the development said the new law will be passed in parliament as election to the newly created Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is yet to be held.

"Land rights for the locals in Jammu and Kashmir is coming up. Work is on for enacting a new law that will allay all fears of the



people of Jammu and Kashmir," the official said.

Once the legislation is passed by parliament, the fear of losing rights over land will be over in Jammu and Kashmir, the official said.

The fears of Jammu and Kashmir domicile people arose after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 5, 2019, which ended the exclusive rights of the locals over lands or immovable property and jobs. **● PAGE 02**

SC TO J&K: Come Up With Final Stand On 4G Internet By 11 August

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Jammu and Kashmir administration to explore the possibility of restoring 4G services in certain areas.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration sought time to take instructions on the restoration of high speed internet service, saying a new Lt Governor has been appointed in the Union Territory.

Manoj Sinha has been appointed the new LG of Jammu and Kashmir after G C Murmu resigned from the post.

High speed Internet service in



J&K has been suspended since August last year when the Centre had announced revocation of its special status and bifurcation of the state.

The top court told the administration that with the change of LG, nothing changes as the special committee is there to look into the issue.

A bench of Justices N V Ramana, R Subhash Reddy and B R Gavai adjourned the hearing for August 11, on the contempt plea filed by an NGO seeking restoration of 4G internet service in the UT. **● PAGE 02**

NC Leader's Son Bought Assets Abroad With JK Bank Loan: ED

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday claimed that Hilal Rather, the son of former Jammu and Kashmir minister Abdul Rahim Rather, "siphoned off" money loaned to his company to splurge on foreign tours and acquiring personal assets in India, Dubai and the US.

The central agency conducted raids at 17 locations in Srinagar, Jammu, Delhi and Ludhiana on Thursday in connection with a money laundering probe against the junior Rather linked to an alleged Rs 177 crore loan fraud involving Jammu and Kashmir Bank.

"Several incriminating documents and digital evidence **● PAGE 02**

LoC Flare Up: 2 Civilians Killed, 5 Injured In J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two civilians were killed while five others, including a woman were injured on Friday as India and Pakistan troops traded heavy gunfire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir.

In Kashmir Valley, the cross-LoC shelling started in Nowgam sector of the border district Kupwara in the early hours of Friday, witnesses told Kashmir Observer. After Nowgam, the armies of the two nuclear countries traded fire in Karnah, Keran and Macchil sectors in the frontier district.

"The cross-border shelling was so

frightening that the villagers did not dare to step out of the house. The deafening sounds of explosions created fear and anxiety among the villagers," said Shabir Ahmad of Karnah.

He said the intense shelling between the two sides continued for several hours due to which several shells landed in the villages of Bagh-bela, Shamspora. Ahmad said three people were injured in the cross-LoC shelling when the trio were working at a under construction house.

He identified the trio as Syed Rafiqat Hussain, Mohammad Yaqoob Mir and Anif Ahmad Chichi of Shamspora. Chichi succumbed to his injuries at the district hospital Kupwara. **● PAGE 02**



File Pic Abid Bhat

7 More Covid-19 Deaths In Kashmir, J&K Toll 450

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Seven more people succumbed to coronavirus infection in Kashmir valley on Friday, taking the number of fatalities since the outbreak of pandemic in the Union territory to 450.

While Srinagar reported three new deaths, two each were reported from Anantnag and Baramulla districts, official sources said. A middle-aged pharmacist from Pulwama was also among the new deaths reported today.

Among the latest Covid-19 victims in Srinagar include a 60-year-old man from HMT who was admitted to hospital on August 3 and a 65-year-old woman from Dal-

55 Security Men Among 473 New Cases

Jammu and Kashmir on Friday reported 473 new cases of coronavirus, including 55 security personnel and 52 travelers thus taking the total number of people infected in the Union Territory to 23927. **● P-02**

gate, admitted on August 5 with "bilateral pneumonia, diabetes".

The three deaths reported from SKIMS Soura include a 65-year-old woman from Sarnal and a 55-year-old man, a pharmacist by profession, from Chersoo area of Awantipora **● PAGE 02**

People Not Bothered About Art-370, J&K CS Tells Visiting Journalists

'Not A Single Soul Cried When Leaders Were Detained Last Year'

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: People in Jammu and Kashmir have to keep patience to enjoy a whole lot of benefits of the Centre's move to nullify Article 370 as many positive initiatives have not been rolled out fully yet, Chief Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam has said.

Jammu and Kashmir was a "broken state" and there was "no system" in place due to years of misgovernance, corruption and "unbelievable levels of fraud" committed by leaders of mainstream parties and separatist organisations, he said.

Therefore, not a "single soul had

'Panchayat Bypolls After Covid Situation Improves'

By-elections to all vacant posts of Panch and Sarpanch in Jammu and Kashmir will be held as soon as the coronavirus situation improves, Chief Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam has said. About 12,600 posts of panch and sarpanchs, out of **● P-02**

cried" over the detention of political and separatist leaders in August last year, when the Centre **● PAGE 02**

Lockdown Letters: When Obsolete Practice Saved The Situation In Kashmir

Rakshanda Afrin

AHAD DAR, 28, wept like a child when he received the 'most-awaited' news of his life amid lockdown last year. His cries echoed in his city home where he got stuck when New Delhi scrapped Jammu and Kashmir's semiautonomous status on August 5, 2019, and subsequently forced the communication clampdown in the region.

Before the trader would cry his heart out, he had an unexpected visitor from his hometown Shopian.

The homeboy practicing medicine in a city hospital had arrived with a letter that Dar's younger brother had sent through him.

"A baby daughter was born on August 28," the letter, Dar received

on September 4 that year, read. "Both your wife and newborn are safe and healthy. We hope you can come back soon!"

Dar had last talked to his family on August 4 when clampdown rendered cellphones inoperable in the valley. The concern for his family living in one of the turbulent belts of Kashmir throughout made him restless. "But with that letter," Dar recalls his captive feelings a year later, "I felt life back in my veins."

Till he managed to return to his family that year, Dar would read the contents of that letter every night just to stay hopeful.

But when all this was happening, Kashmir had become a poet's lament. 'The Country without Post Office'

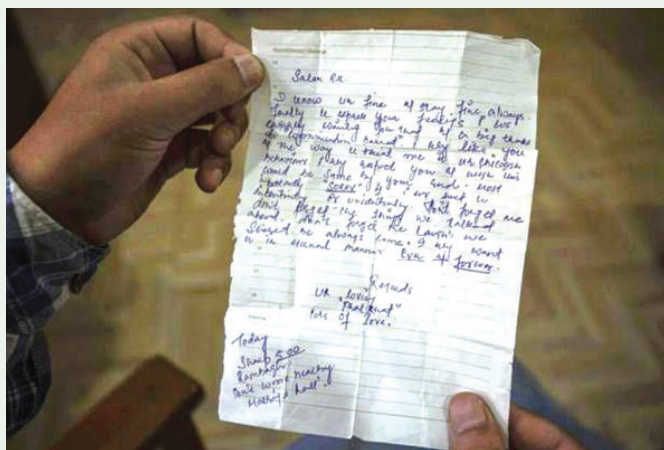
As desperate times were calling for desperate measures, the junked

routine—the art of letter writing—once again took roots in the valley. "The idea [of writing letters] was haunting as well as heartening," says Saba Rizvi, a scholar who wrote a pile of letters to her friends in lockdown last year.

In one of her letters, invoking a 'beloved' bard, she writes: "Now what to do in 'The Country without Post Office', where mountains of letters pile up but no mailman to deliver them to their destination."

Each post office is boarded up. Who will deliver parchment cut in paisleys, my news to prisons?

Only silence can now trace my letters to him. Or in a dead office the dark panes. "It wasn't just writing letters, but also delivering them to their addresses," Rizvi says.



"Since pigeons or mailmen weren't around anymore, so the natives themselves became the messenger of their letters."

Letters of Longing

In the times of curfew and uncertainties, those letters slowly became sources of assurances, happi-

ness and hope in the valley.

Adeeb and his friend, both university students, had no means to talk amid blockade. The letters between the young lovers were being delivered for months by their trusted aid and a mutual friend.

"I felt like a John Keats in the age of Internet," laughs Adeeb. "Meetings were not a possibility either. Sitting at our homes, left with no options, we started exchanging letters to talk every once in a week."

'Redemption' Moment

The iconic line—"Brooks was here"—from the movie The Shawshank Redemption is enough to invoke emotions in any cinephile.

Akin to an old captive carving the line on his hotel room wall, an anxious banker Amjad had written a similar note and pasted it on his

office wall last year.

It was his idea of letting his colleagues know that he had walked to the office and was doing well, but worried about others.

A week later, when he went back, his colleagues had pasted a stark note: "We were, we are, and we will be here..."

With no working networks or connectivity, this note exchange became handy for the band of bankers amid lockdown.

"There's many profound and moving stories of how the valley found refuge in these handwritten letters as they were clouted with uncertainties and troubled times," Amjad says.

"It was a resilience to reconnect with each other when every one of us was pushed to the wall."