



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

SUNSET  
Today 07:22 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 05:49 AM

# OBSERVER

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## News Digest

### Pak Troops Fired At Border Posts: Army

Jammu: Pakistani troops opened fire on forward posts along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday in violation of a ceasefire agreement, a defence spokesman said. The unprovoked firing from across the border started in the Balakote sector around 10.15 am and was given a befitting response by Indian Army personnel guarding the LoC, the spokesman said. He said the cross-border firing between the two sides was going on when last reports were received. However, there was no report of any casualty, the spokesman said. Officials said Pakistan Army ● P-02

### 2 OGWs Held In Sopore: Police

Srinagar: Police on Monday claimed to have arrested two militant sympathizers from Sopore town of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Ishfaq Ahmad Mir of Gund Brath and Mohammad Shafi Bhat of Boma were arrested by a joint team of 22RR, SOG, CRPF 179, 92 BN and Sopore police at a checkpoint at Darpura Boma, news agency KNS reported. According to the report one hand grenade and 20 AK-47 rounds were recovered from their possession. A case FIR No. 63 / 2020 U/S 7/25 IA Act, 18, 23, 38, 39 ULA (P) Act has been registered in PS Boma in this regard.

### Carpenter Falls From Roof, Dies

Srinagar: A carpenter on Monday died after he fell from a two-storey building in Khansahib area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. 24-year-old carpenter Nazir Ahmad Bhat of Shamusabad was working on the roof of a double storey house in Yegbugh, Khansahab when he lost control and fell on the ground, an official told news agency KDC. The carpenter died on the spot due to the fall, the official added.

### 12 Injured In Ganderbal Mishap

Srinagar: At least 12 persons on Monday were injured after the vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. A mini bus carrying passengers to Ganderbal skidded off the road and turned turtle near Baderkund, causing injuries to at least 12 persons, an official said. He said that the injured were shifted to district hospital Ganderbal for treatment. He said that of 12 injured persons 6 were shifted to SKIMS Soura for specialized treatment. He identified them as Abdul Razaq Magary, resident of Wayial, Mohammad Shafi Gujar, resident of Yarmuqum, Abdul Gani Rather, resident of CherwanKangan, ● P-02

### Water Scarcity Sparks Protest In Sopore

Srinagar: Scores of people in north Kashmir's Sopore town on Monday staged a protest against the Jal Shakti department for their alleged failure in providing adequate drinking water. According to the reports, the residents of Check Roday Khan area of Sopore today held a protest demonstration against the Jal Shakti department and claimed that have been facing scarcity of drinking water for the last five years. The residents said that they were being forced ● P-02

## Missing Rajouri Men Killed In 'Fake Encounter', Allege Families

Auqib Javeed

SRINAGAR: Three missing youth from Rajouri district of Jammu region have allegedly been killed by army in a 'staged encounter' in south Kashmir's Shopian district last month, the families said on Monday.

Abrar Ahmed Khan and Abrar Yousuf Chouhan, both residents of Dhar Sakri village of Qotranka in Rajouri, left for valley on July 16 to earn their livelihood after their relative Imtiyaz Hussain assured them work as labourers in south Kashmir's Shopian district, where he had been working for over a month, Chouhan's father Mohammad Yousuf told Kashmir Observer.

A day later, Yousuf said the two boys called up their families and informed them they have reached Shopian safely and have also hired a room for accommodation.

"That was the last time we heard from them. For next 22 days, their mobile phones were switched off," Yousuf said.

The families, he said suspected that the authorities might have taken the boys for quarantine, as per the standard operating procedure (SOPs).

However, as the mobile phones remained continuously switched off and the boys remain ►PAGE 02



PICTURES of three Rajouri boys. Courtesy Twitter

### Army Says Investigating Matter

Army on Monday said it is "investigating the matter" as it "noted social media inputs linked to July 18 encounter at Shopian." "We have noted social media inputs linked to the operation at Shopian on 18 July 2020. The three Terrorists killed during the operation have not been identified and ● P-02

### Missing Report Filed With Police In Rajouri

Families members of three "labourers" from Rajouri district who are missing from last three weeks have filed a written report with police. The trio, aged 18, 21, 26 years respectively, had last called their families on July 17 informing them they ● P-02

### PDP, CPI (M), JKAP Seek Probe

Several mainstream parties on Monday demanded a probe impartial and time bound probe to unearth the mystery behind the disappearance of three poor labourers of Rajouri district and their alleged killing in a fake encounter in south Kashmir's Shopian last month. Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) termed the reports of three missing labourers killed in a ● P-02

## Covid-19 Claims 9 More Lives, J&K Toll 483

SRINAGAR: Coronavirus consumed nine more lives in Kashmir valley on Monday, raising the number of fatalities to 482 since the pandemic outbreak in the across the Union Territory.

A 70-year-old man from Palpora Kulgam, an elderly woman from Buchoo Tral Pulwama, a 65-year-old man from Chidibugh Tral Pulwama, a 71-year-old man from Yaripora Kulgam, a 45-year-old man from Palpora Srinagar, a sexagenarian man from Arampora Ganderbal, a 47-year-old man from Rainawari Srinagar and a

107 Travellers Among 470 New Cases  
Jammu and Kashmir on Monday reported 470 new covid-19 cases including 107 travelers, taking the total tally to 25367. Among them, 102 were reported from Jammu and 368 from Kashmir Valley. Giving district-wise breakup, official sources ● P-02

65-year-old woman from Budgam were among the victims, official sources said Monday. Regarding the septuagenarian ►PAGE 02

## Quarantine Period Of Doctors To Be Treated As 'On Duty': Govt

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The health ministry has asked all the states to treat the quarantine period of doctors and health workers as "on duty" amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a letter to the chief secretaries of the states and Union territories, directors of all the AIIMS and directors and medical superintendents of Central government hospitals dated August 6, joint secretary in the health ministry Lav Agarwal said the quarantine period of doctors and health workers for their duties related to COVID-19 shall be treated as "on duty".

The matter was under consideration since it was pointed out in the Supreme Court that in some cases, doctors and health workers, who are quarantined, are being treated as on leave, Agarwal said.

"The matter has since been considered by this ministry in consultation with the department of personnel and training and it has been decided that the quarantine period of doctors and health workers needs to be treated as on duty," he said.

Those with a high-risk exposure to the virus while performing COVID-related duties are required to undergo quarantine for a week initially. Thereafter, a ►PAGE 02

## BJP Worker Injured In Militant Attack Dies

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: A BJP worker, who was shot at by suspected militants in Budgam district of central Kashmir, succumbed to injuries at a hospital here on Monday, police said.

Abdul Hamid Najar, a resident of Mohiendpora Ompora area of Budgam, was shot at and critically injured by militants in his native village on Sunday, the official said.

He succumbed to injuries early Monday.

Najar is the fourth BJP worker or office bearer targeted by militants in the last one month.

BJP's district president for Bandipora, Waseem Bari, ►PAGE 02

### Grenade Attack On BJP Panch's House

Militants on Monday night hurled a grenade towards the residence of a BJP panchayat member in Pulwama in Kashmir, the latest in a string of attacks targeting workers and leaders of the party in the Valley.

There were no casualties in the explosion, police said. ● P-02

### Militant Attacks Trigger Resignation Spree

Nearly a dozen BJP workers in Kashmir have resigned from the party following recent attacks on village-level leaders by militants, which ● P-02

### Congress Seeks Review Of Security To Politicians

Jammu and Kashmir unit of Congress on Monday termed as highly condemnable the continued militant attacks on political leaders in the ● P-02

### LG Sinha Calls On Prez, VP

SRINAGAR: J&K's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday called on President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu in New Delhi.

Sinha, who is in New Delhi since Sunday, called on President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan this morning.

"Shri, Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir called on President Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan," President's secretariat tweeted. Later, he met Vice President Venkaiah Naidu at Upa -Rashtrapati Nivas.

Sinha also met Union Minister Jitendra Singh and discussed with him future plans and public outreach programmes ● P-02

### UNGA President-Elect Offers Help To Resolve Kashmir Issue

ISLAMABAD: UN General Assembly president-elect Volkan Bozkir on Monday said that he is ready to help Pakistan and India within his mandate to resolve their differences on Kashmir issue if requested by both the parties.

Addressing a news conference along with Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Bozkir said that the resolution of the Kashmir issue was vital for sustainable peace in South Asia, and offered that he can help as per his mandate.

"If my assistance is requested by the parties, I will be ready to provide contributions ● P-02

...DU ONLINE EXAMS

## Slow Pace Of 2G Internet A Hurdle For Students In Kashmir

NEW DELHI: From going to friends' homes to keeping their fingers crossed that 2G internet connectivity does not deceive them, Delhi University's Kashmiri students have an additional set of worries regarding their online open book exams.

The Delhi University commenced its online open book examinations from Monday, amid opposition from students and teachers who had been demanding that exams be scrapped and evaluation be done over past performance.

Abha Dev Habib, a professor at Miranda House said, Kashmiri students from our college said they

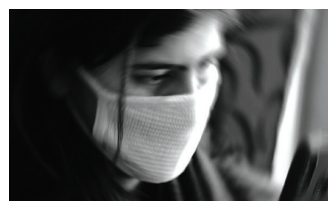


Image for representation

Kashmir Observer

Students have also said they ►PAGE 02

## The Demon Of Depression Has Returned To Haunt Kashmiri Women In Lockdown

Rabia Noor

A fidgety mental state reached a crescendo for Rabia Amin with the arrival of the virulent spring in Kashmir this year. Suddenly, the 27-year-old felt haunted by a sense of worthlessness, despair, and suicidal thoughts.

Confined to her home since last summer when Jammu and Kashmir lost its semiautonomous status, the soon-to-be bride had a tough time dealing with a year-long troubling routine of grim moments, family mood swings, distressing dispatches, uncertain income, and frequent fights in the family.

The trouble only grew after Kashmir entered into the pandemic lockdown in March 2020.

"Throughout this disconcerting period, there was this question constantly haunting you: What's the way out of this situation," Rabia, holding a master's degree in Social Works, recounts her ordeal.

"At times," she continues, what sounds like a disturbing monologue, "there was this feeling of getting wasted inside those four-walls of home. You wanted to read or watch movies to kill your time, but for how long? You felt like a captive for carrying that cursed identity of a Kashmiri. And this can be a very troubled feeling in times like these."

It took four fortnights of rigorous clinical treatment to restore some sanity in Rabia's fast derailing mindset. But sadly, she isn't alone in the woeful vale to suffer the silent mental assault.

### 'Therapist' at Task

Her ability to attend, document and fix some women-related worries makes Nighat Shafi Pandit a therapist for many stressed souls of Kashmir.

Pandit has been dealing with Rabia-like cases since 2000 when she started Help Foundation — a non-governmental organisation dealing with women in distress.

"When we started to catering these cases, nobody was willing to accept that women suffer from depression or other psychological illness," Pandit, Chairperson Help Foundation, says. "But I'm happy to see some change now."

Even though Pandit might not be the go-to-person under the present circumstances, she has been dealing with women of Kashmir, including several young girls, suffering from depression and anxiety.



Image for representation

Kashmir Observer

"They frequent our NGO for mental health counselling," she says. "And our counsellors make sure to deal with them with a sense of empathy."

Once a college principal in Nawa Kadal area of old Srinagar requested Pandit to counsel their students, who would get palpitations every time an untoward situation took

place in the vicinity.

"We sent our counsellors there and witnessed such incidents on numerous instances," she recalls.

What otherwise is being dismissed in Kashmir as a regular restlessness—"Dil Chu Raawaan" type of feeling—can be a stark sign of depression, warn counsellors.

"Whenever we visit villages to conduct general health check-ups, the women often complaint of pain in abdomen, but the issue remains psychological," Nighat informs.

"Some women in Pattan area in north Kashmir had resorted to substance abuse as a result of acute depression."

### Poverty Paths

Much of the depression in Kashmir today stems from the 'fast disintegration' of its social institu-

tions, experts opine.

Several girls of marriageable age in the valley aren't able to get married due to the prevailing situation.

"Thing is," Pandit continues, "girls getting married late often suffer from depression and anxiety. They also face certain behavioural issues, like irritability and shattered self-confidence, which sometimes results in frustration." The lockdown has only deepened this marital mess.

Besides, there're numerous women in Kashmir, who live in abject poverty with no source of income.

"All such situations lead to severe depression," says Pandit, adding that it would not be wrong to say that the state of mental health in Kashmir is alarming as far as women are concerned.

Situational Stress ►PAGE 02