


 Maximum : 32°C  
 Minimum : 21°C  
 Humidity : 58%  
 SUNSET Today 07:14 PM  
 SUNRISE Tomorrow 05:55 AM

# OBSERVER

27 Zilhijjat-ul-Haraaml | 1441 Hijri | Vol: 23 | Issue: 178 | Pages: 08 | Price: ₹3

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## News Digest

### IED Diffused In Pulwama

Srinagar- A major tragedy was averted after Police and security forces recovered an IED in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Sunday late night. A senior police officer said that IED was planted by militants under a bridge near Tujan village in Pulwama district, reported news agency GNS. The officer said the bridge is between Tujan and Dalwan. By the timely recovery of the IED, a major tragedy was averted, the officer added.

### 5 More COVID-19 Deaths In Ladakh

Leh: Five more patients died of coronavirus in Ladakh, taking the death toll due to the disease in the union territory to 14, officials said on Monday. Kargil district recorded four new deaths, while one COVID-19 patient breathed his last in Leh, the officials said.

### Man Found Dead Near GB Pant Hospital

Srinagar: A middle-aged man was found dead near the GB Pant hospital here in this capital city on Monday. The locals spotted the body of the middle-aged man near the hospital and accordingly contacted concerned police station, a police officer said. Later a police team reached the spot and retrieved the body. The deceased has been identified as a resident of Saraibal who is known by nickname 'Tita', the official said. He said that a case under the relevant section of law has been also registered and further investigation was taken up. (GNS)

### Demolition Drive Turns Violent At NFR

Srinagar: The Enforcement Wing of Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA) on Monday demolished illegal structures in green belt areas of the city. According to an official spokesperson, the LAWDA officials demolished two illegal constructions of single storey houses, concrete Block, shuttering for Plinth and roofing at Lashkari Mohalla north foreshore road (NFR) in green belt, Shalimar and Harwan areas. ● P-02

### Teen Hangs Self To Death

Srinagar: A teenager on Monday allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself in Kawoosa area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. 17-year-old Zubair Ahmad Ganie was found hanging at his home in Kawoosa Khalisa area of the district on Monday evening, officials said. The teenager was rushed to the Sub District Hospital (SDH) Magam where the doctors declared him brought dead. ● P-02

### Drug Peddler Held In Sopore: Police

Srinagar: Police in its recent action against drug dealings in Sopore have arrested a drug peddler and recovered contraband substance from his possession. Officers at a checkpoint established at Shripora Tuijar Crossing intercepted an individual identified as Waseem Akbar Dar @Gash Dar resident of Batlipora Tuijar. During checking officers were able to recover 630 grams of Charas from his ● P-02

## 4 Security Men, 3 Militants Killed In Twin Kreeri Encounters

### Lashkar's Top Commander Among Slain Militants



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR: Two Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel, an army soldier and a J&K police man were killed on Monday in two back to back encounters in north Kashmir's Baramulla district in which three Lashkar militants, including the outfit's commander Sajad alias Haider was also killed.**

Around 9:15 am, a group of armed militants opened indis-

criminate fire upon joint team of CRPF and police when they were establishing a 'naka' in Kreeri area of the district, a police official said. In the initial exchange of fire, a special police official (SPO) identified as Muzaffar Ali Dar of Pattan was killed and two CRPF personnel of 119 battalion critically wounded.

The injured paramilitary men identified as constables Lokesh Sharma and Khurshid Khan were removed to the nearby hospital

### Haider's Killing A Big Success: DGP

Director General of Police J&K Dilbagh Singh on Monday termed the killing of Sajad alias Haider as a 'big success' for the state forces saying that the most wanted Lashkar commander was luring youth to militancy by releasing video messages. "He was like Burhan Wani and had joined militancy in the winters of 2016. Like Burhan, Sajad too would lure ● P-02

### CRPF ASI Hurt In Kulgam Attack

In a late evening attack militants made an attempt to attack a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Kulgam in South Kashmir on Monday. A sub-inspector of CRPF was injured in the attack, initial reports said. Unidentified militants on Monday evening opened indiscriminate fire towards a CRPF camp in Nehama area of the district, officials said. ● P-02

for treatment. However, they succumbed to their injuries.

The militants, he told Kashmir Observer managed to escape from the orchard after carrying out the attack.

Shortly after the shootout, additional reinforcements of police, army and CRPF rushed to the spot and laid a cordon around the orchard. The joint team came under heavy fire when they launched combing operations to flush out militants.

In the exchange of fire that continued till evening, three Lashkar

militants, including the outfit's commander were killed. Two soldiers were also injured in the exchange of fire.

One of the soldiers, according to news agency GNS succumbed to his injuries.

Official sources identified the slain as Sajad alias Haider, Inayat Ahmad Mir of Andergam Pattan and a foreign militant Usman from Pakistani.

The GNS reported further said that the state forces ●PAGE 02

**THREE MILITANTS CAME THROUGH AN APPLE ORCHARD AND FIRED** indiscriminately at CRPF and police when a naka was being laid. In the attack, two CRPF jawans and a policeman died," Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar told journalists at the encounter spot earlier in the day.

## LG Orders Hiring Of Docs, Paramedics To Strengthen Healthcare



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Monday directed authorities to fill up vacancies of doctors and paramedics to strengthen patient care system in the Union Territory.

Chairing a meeting to review the functioning of Health & Medical

Education Department here at Raj Bhavan, Sinha also took a serious note of the rise in coronavirus cases in Kashmir division and directed for aggressive contact tracing of COVID positive patients to contain the deadly virus, particularly in Srinagar, an official spokesperson said. "As we are aiming to improve the health care system of J&K to make

it best in the country, the objective of providing best possible medical care to the patients visiting the Hospitals cannot be compromised at any cost", the LG, according to the official spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said that LG stressed on strengthening of human resources in the CHCs and PHCs and asked the concerned authorities to prepare a data base and rationalise the available staff, besides filling up the vacancies of doctors, nurses and other health workers immediately so as to strengthen the patient care system. "To ensure the retention ●PAGE 02

## NCPCR Recommends Creation Of Separate Child Rights Body In J&K

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has recommended creation of a separate child rights body for Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory.

According to a report, Jammu & Kashmir government has been requested to constitute the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR).

"Secretary, Social Welfare was requested to constitute the State Commission for Protection of Child

Rights (SCPCR) as per Section 17 of Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005," reads the report based on NCPCR's visit to J&K on March 11 and 12 this year.

A high-level team of NCPCR comprising its chairperson Priyanka Kanoongo, member secretary Rupali Banerjee Singh and experts visited J&K to review the status of child rights in the UT and to conduct inter-departmental review cum consultation meeting with the administration. Ahead of its formal bifurcation into two Union Territories ●PAGE 02

### Bajwa In Saudi To Fix Strained Ties

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday reached Saudi Arabia to discuss bilateral relations, amidst the recent strain in the ties over Riyadh's reluctance to toe Islamabad's line on the Kashmir issue.

Despite repeated requests from Pakistan to hold a foreign ministers' meeting on Kashmir, the Jeddah-based Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has shown reluctance to convene such a conference, prompting an upset Islamabad to threaten that it may call a separate gathering on the issue. Diplomatic sources here said that Gen Bajwa was accompanied ● P-02

## Another Accused Held In Blasphemy Video Case

### Chenab Valley Shuts Down, Protesters Block Kashmir Highway

### Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir police has arrested the third accused in connection with a communally sensitive video which had gone viral on social media, triggering protests and shutdown in Chenab valley region on Monday, officials said.

The overall law and order situation in the entire Jammu region is under control, they said.

Religious leaders and prominent citizens from all communities on Sunday took to social media to request people to maintain communal harmony.

Rohit Sharma, a resident of Pacca Danga locality, is the third accused arrested in connection with the case related to the communally sensitive video, a police official said.

Earlier, the main accused Satpal Sharma and his associate Deepak were arrested in the city soon after the video containing derogatory

remarks against Prophet of Islam (Pbuh) went viral on Sunday.

A case has been lodged under section 153A IPC (promoting enmity between different groups) and 295A IPC (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) at Pacca Danga police station.

Taking note of the incident, Inspector General of Police, Jammu, Mukesh Singh had on Sunday warned people against sharing the video and said strict action will be taken against the guilty.

"My appeal to the people is not to circulate such videos which cause harm to brotherhood and communal harmony in the society. It is not good for all of us," he had said.

"If we find anybody deliberately sharing the video, we will take strict action against him," he had said.

In view of the incident, ●PAGE 02

**MY APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE IS NOT TO circulate such videos which cause harm to brotherhood and communal harmony in the society. It is not good for all of us,"**

### MMU Demands Exemplary Punishment For Culprits

**M**utahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU), an amalgam of clerics led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, on Monday demanded strict action against the members of a extremist Hindu group in Jammu's Reasi, which has made blasphemous remarks against Prophet of Islam (Pbuh).

Taking strong note of the blasphemous remarks made by the members of Sentinel Bharat Raksha Manch, an MMU spokesperson said today that some zealots were making a deliberate attempt to hurt the sentiments of Muslims across the world. "It is extremely unfortunate that the anti-Islam forces are being time and again encouraged to indulge in such deliberate provocative acts ● P-02



**DEVOTEES OFFER PRAYERS** inside the shrine of Dastgeer Sahib (RA) shrine on Monday, nearly five months after the religious places were shut down due to Covid-19. Pic, Abid Bhat

## Doctor, 9 More Die Of Covid-19 In Kashmir, J&K Toll 554

### Observer Monitoring Desk

**SRINAGAR:** A prominent chest specialist was among ten people who died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, raising the number of fatalities since the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in the Union Territory to 554.

Among the victims, five were Srinagar residents,

two each from Budgam and Bandipora while another from Anantnag district, officials said Monday. With these fatalities, the death toll has risen to 554 in J&K—513 in the Valley and 41 in Jammu division.

They said that the 81-year-old chest specialist from Srinagar's Gilli Kadal locality was admitted to CD hospital, one of the exclusive facilities for the management, on ●PAGE 02

### 422 New Cases Include 35 Security Men, 55 Travelers

**C**oronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday inched closed to 29000 mark as the Union Territory reported 422 fresh Covid-19 cases including 55 travelers and 35 security forces personnel. ● P-02

### Arshi Qureshi

**O**N the day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was talking about the sweeping "development" in the valley from the ramparts of Red Fort, social media was abuzz with the viral image of Srinagar's Lal Chowk, whose iconic clock tower was seen hosting tricolor.

The image took the confined natives by surprise as the photo showed public movement apart from the unfurled flag on the day when the city centre had become a ghost town.

Apart from some top BJP leaders, including Kapil Mishra and Kiron Kher, the peddlers of this distorted image were some well-known Indian newsmen.

"On the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day," a Dainik Jagran report claimed, "the tricolour was reportedly hoisted at the historic Lal

## 'False Flag' At Lal Chowk: How Plague Of Fake News Is Distorting Kashmir

Chowk in Srinagar." Lal Chowk used to see bloodshed due to hoisting of the national flag, a report by News Nation said. "Now the country's flag rises there with pride."

But soon, the fake news peddlers faced some moment of truth when a freelance journalist—whose photo-shopped photo was used for peddling the fake news—countered the newsroom claims. "Have you no shame in sharing a doctored image? I clicked the original photo without the Indian flag on June 22, 2010. #LalChowk #FakeNews #FakeImage," tweeted photojournalist Mubasshir Mushtaq.

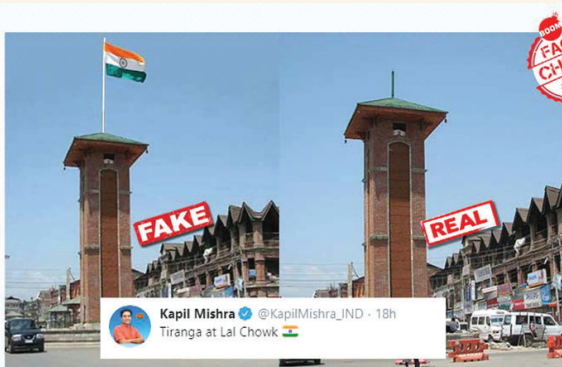
**Just Another Distortion** Although the valley has been facing the fake news blitz for decades now, the intensity has clearly

increased since 2019. As soon as Jammu and Kashmir was stripped of its special status last summer, the internet and the electronic media were flooded with fake news. Some of the news anchors of the so-called 'Godi' media allegedly turned PR gurus and disinformation peddlers.

But 24 hours after the propaganda around Article 370, and 35A was spread, some prominent fact-checkers busted the fake news factory.

Speaking about the Indian media's fake portrayal of Kashmir, the Alt News (a leading fact-checking website) founding editor, Pratik Sinha, questioned the definition of 'newsroom normalcy' for Kashmir.

"What's normalcy? Children of Kashmir are growing up in a conflict area. Is this normal? As means



of communication is normal, then how do you define normalcy for a common man in Kashmir?"

It was, in fact, Sinha's Alt News, which debunked the misinformation

spread by PM Modi when he misquoted Omar Abdullah in the Parliament. The misinformation spread on February 6, 2020 was picked up by various TV news channels.

But soon, a fact-finding revealed that PM had quoted a parody website called 'Faking News'—which had attributed a spoof quote to Abdullah Jr: "The abrogation of Article 370 would bring a massive earthquake that will divide Kashmir from India."

But before the house would only fuel the fake news crisis in contemporary India, many New Delhi-based media houses had taken a contrasting line from international media on Kashmir last summer.

In fact, when facts countered fiction, the Ministry of Home Affairs had to issue a statement on twitter, claiming that international media's reportage—claiming that 10,000 people protested against the abrogation of Article 370 in downtown south—is 'fabricated' and 'incorrect'.

Exactly three days later on August 13, 2019, the Home Ministry again tweeted out a clarification calling the protests "miscreants mingled with people returning home after prayers at a local mosque. They resorted to unprovoked stone-pelting against law enforcement forces to cause widespread unrest".

Republic TV's Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami on his prime time debate dismissed the western media's Kashmir coverage as fake news. The aggressive anchor known for his tirade of abuse went on to accuse the BBC of spreading false propaganda. "Don't run away from me now, BBC! The figures you have peddled about, what was the proof gathered from?"

Channels like Times Now, India Today weren't far behind. Soon they started holding debates on 'normalcy in Kashmir' regularly. While the primetime news anchors were boasting how people in the valley were happy, ANI, ●PAGE 02