



Maximum : 27°C
Minimum : 16°C
Humidity : 77%

SUNSET
Today 07:02 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 06:02 AM



News Digest

Siblings Held During CASO In Qamarwari

Srinagar- Two brothers from Bar-thana area of Qamarwari Srinagar were arrested during search operation and a pistol magazine along with 12 rounds of Ak47 was recovered from their possession, police said. A police officer said that a cordon-and-search-operation was launched in the Barthana area during which house of one Tariq Ahmad Hajam who is land broker by profession was raided, reported news agency GNS. During the searches, the police officer claimed that a pistol magazine and 12 rounds of Ak47 were recovered from the house. Besides Tariq police also arrested his brother Reyaz Ahmad Hajam, the police officer added. "Further investigations are underway," the officer added.

Cross-LoC Shelling Continues In Poonch

Jammu: India and Pakistani troops exchanged gunfire for the second consecutive day Thursday along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district. Pakistani troops violated the ceasefire by resorting to intense shelling in forward areas along the LoC in Poonch district on Thursday night, a defence spokesperson said. The Indian Army is retaliating strongly, he said. "Around 10 pm, Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing" P-02

Ex-Army Officer Shoots Wife

Srinagar: A retired Army captain allegedly shot at and critically wounded his wife in north Kashmir's Bandipora district, reports said Thursday. Ghulam Hassan Khan, a former army captain shot at and injured his wife identified as Fatima Begum following an altercation at their home in Sumlar village of the district on Wednesday late night, reports said. The woman received serious head injury was taken to the nearby hospital for treatment. However, the doctors there referred her to SKIMS Srinagar for advanced treatment. Meanwhile, officials said that a case has been registered and investigations have been started in this regard.

Minor Dies Of Drowning In Kulgam

Srinagar: A minor boy died of drowning in a Nallah in Damhal Hanjipora area of South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Thursday. Nine-year-old Nisar Ahmad Dar son of Gulzar Ahmad Dar drowned in Bushi Nallah in DK Marg area of the district, news agency KNO reported. The locals instantly started a rescue operation to save the boy. However, after hours of hectic efforts, the locals found lifeless body of the minor around 7:00 pm. Meanwhile, a police officer said the body of minor was handed over to his family for the last rites.

Govt Jobs Given To Kin Of Shelling Victims

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday gave government jobs to the next of kin of three civilians who died in Pakistani shelling along the Line of Control (LoC), an official spokesman said. Deputy Commissioner, Poonch, Rahul Yadav handed over the appointment orders. The government jobs for the next of kin were cleared last month, the spokesman said. "These cases were approved by the district-level screening cum co-ordination committee at a meeting held on July 24 after which all the" P-02

CPJ, RSF Urge GOI To Uphold Press Freedom In Kashmir

Seek Immediate Release of Kashmiri Journalist Aasif Sultan

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) along with nearly 400 journalists and civil society members have written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking him to uphold the country's commitment to press freedom and release imprisoned Kashmiri journalist Aasif Sultan booked on alleged links to militancy.

In the letter, which has also been sent to Home Minister Amit Shah and Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the ICJ and as many as 397 writers, journalists, aca-

demics, press freedom advocates, and civil society members have sought Sultan's release, who completed two years in prison on Thursday.

The signatories write that Sultan has been unjustly detained since August 27, 2018, under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, for his alleged complicity in "harboring known terrorists."

"But interviewing alleged militants or having sources who are critical of the government is within the scope of a journalist's job and does not implicate them in any crime. Events in Kashmir are of public interest, and covering them is a public" P-02

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Crisis In Kashmir Construction: A Case Of 'Rs 1000 Crore' Bill

Sanika Athavale

MID 2018, an oddly familiar phrase was being reiterated in media and public discourses in Kashmir. A memory from four years ago – the devastating 2014 floods which had uprooted many lives and forced several others to rebuild theirs, had made the sinister term 'flood alert' intimate and recognizable to many Kashmiris.

During the monsoon-month of June that year, intermittent heavy rains had jolted authorities into taking 'safety measures' such as closing the Srinagar-Jammu highway and issuing a sincere warning to the communities living on the

banks of Jhelum river. Reportedly, 'small-scale evacuation' was also carried out to leave no stone unturned in ensuring safety to all citizens of the valley. Since three people had already lost their lives due to flash floods and landslides in Jammu, life – as controlled – was brought to a halt in Kashmir.

The well-remembered and feared instance of the 2014 floods had already transformed 'rainfall', from being a natural occurrence, into a bad spirit which haunted Kashmir and had to be combated with duas calling for the dispersion of grey clouds. Thus, anxious prayers and panic was brought alive in the minds of commoners watching the rash downpour, two years ago.



File Photo Of 2014 Floods

As a part of the 'safety measures', the 2018 administrative setup asked local contractors to rise to the occasion and help authorities in mitigating the damage

to life and property. This business community was asked to do "their bit for the public" by dedicating their services and resources to the construction of embankments

along Jhelum river.

They rose. They built. But now they wait in limbo.

The 'Rs 1000 Crore' Bill

"Since 2014", after the infamous floods wreaked havoc in Kashmir, Zeeshan Rehman informed that "a lot of 'rehabilitation work' amounting to Rs 1000 crore including macadamisation and school reconstruction was executed by civil contractors." Rehman is the Acting Chairperson of the Senior Contractors Coordination Committee (J&K).

According to him, 'rehabilitation work' had begun soon after the calamity and was completed over a period of one and a half years. "Post that, there have been many times when everyone here (Kash-

mir) has anticipated a flood because of unseasonal rain. Almost every time such fears rose, local contractors have been approached to take care of it," he added.

Owing to a similar condition in 2018, after the Jhelum rose above its 'danger mark', a syndicate of technocrats, representative of the then-Srinagar administration, had reached out to a group of civil contractors for building embankments along the river to prevent flooding and a '2014-like crisis'.

"There was no flood but the warning was given by the officials anyway. The chief engineers, superintendents engineers, etc. from departments such as Public Health Engineering (PHE)," P-02

Heavy Rains Give Respite From Heat, Raise Fear Of Floods



KO Photo Abid Bhat

THE WEATHER WILL IMPROVE AND WILL BE SUNNY FROM Friday Afternoon And Is Likely To Stay Dry Over The Next Few Days" —MeT Office

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Incessant rain pounded Kashmir valley for the second straight day on Thursday sparking fears of floods even as landslides and flash floods disrupted traffic on major highways.

According to the Meteorological Department's weather forecast, there will be no immediate relief. The Met office on Wednesday had

Rains Batter Jammu, No Threat Of Floods

Incessant rains continued in most parts of Jammu and Kashmir for the third consecutive day on Thursday, leading to increase in the water level in major rivers and streams but there was no immediate threat of floods, officials said. The 270-km Jammu-Srinagar national highway, the only P-02

predicted "intense rainfall activity" for the next four days.

Srinagar recorded 14.7 mm of rainfall till 8:30 am this morning

since Wednesday and 19.6 mm during the Tuesday/Wednesday night, the officials said. Qazigund recorded 21.2 mm P-02

KP Delegation Meets Farooq, Support Gupkar Declaration

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: A delegation of Kashmiri Pandit entrepreneurs on Thursday called on National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah here and extended its support to Gupkar Declaration, a party spokesperson said.

Abdullah, who is also a Member of Parliament, assured his party's full support to the Kashmiri Pandit community.

A delegation of Kashmiri Pandit entrepreneurs called on the party president at his residence. Among other issues, the delegation extended its support to Gupkar Declaration, the spokesperson said.

The Gupkar Declaration is a

PDP Leaders Detained During Protest March

Several PDP leaders and supporters were detained on Thursday after they tried to take out a protest march here against the detention of Kashmiris, including politicians, officials said. The PDP leaders P-02

resolution issued after an all-party meeting on August 4, 2019 at the Gupkar residence of the NC president, a day before the Centre announced its decision to revoke J&K's special status P-02

Govt Warns Against Azadi Slogans During Muharram Processions

Restrictions On All Religious Processions In Kashmir To Continue: Div Com

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday warned strict action against people who raise pro-freedom and anti-India slogans during Muharram processions in Kashmir.

Chairing a meeting here to take stock of Muharram arrangements, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Pandurang K Pole also said that restrictions shall continue on all religious processions and gatherings in all districts, an official spokesperson said.



File Photo

"The Div Com said that in the last few instances some anti-national elements tried to give different directions to a purely religious matter, which has been viewed seriously and all such elements shall be dealt" P-02

Ex-MLC, 10 More Die Of Covid-19 In J&K, Toll 675

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: At least eleven people, including a former MLC succumbed to Covid-19 infection in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, taking the number of fatalities in the Union Territory since the outbreak of pandemic to 675.

Former MLC and Congress leader, who tested positive for the coronavirus disease on August 24, breathed his last at the Government Medical College (GMC) hospital in Kathua in the early hours of Thursday, officials said.

The 87-year-old leader was suffering from various ailments and was admitted to the hospital last week, the officials said.

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha expressed grief over the demise of the MLC and veteran political leader of Kathua.

Besides the former MLC, two more Covid-19 deaths were reported from Jammu division, officials said.

They said that a 63-year-old man, hailing from Rajouri district, died at the GMC hospital here on Wednesday evening after battling for life for the last five days. He also had comorbidities, the officials said.

A 70-year-old woman, who had tested COVID-19 positive, in Jammu district died at the GMC hospital here, they said.

Eight people from Kashmir Valley died due to the virus since overnight, taking the overall fatality count in J&K to 675.

They said a 95-year-old man from Jawahar Nagar Srinagar died at 9:30 hours last night at CD hospital. "He was a" P-02

4 Doctors Among 655 More Test Positive

Jammu and Kashmir recorded on Thursday 655 fresh cases of coronavirus, including four doctors and seventy-one travelers, taking the total number of people infected by the virus in the Union Territory to 35135. While Kashmir Valley reported 497 new cases, including seven CRPF men, five minors and as many P-02

Madhav In Srinagar To Assess Situation

SRINAGAR: BJP general secretary Ram Madhav on Thursday arrived in the summer capital, Srinagar to assess the political situation in view of mainstream parties pressing for restoration of Article 370 and statehood in J&K.

This visit of Madhav, who is the point man for the saffron party in J&K, holds significance as it comes at a time when activities by other political parties, including National Conference (NC) and Congress, have started for the first time after August 5, 2019.

The visit also comes at a time when several BJP leaders have been targeted by militants.

Sources said that the BJP general secretary arrived here on Thursday afternoon. "From the airport, Mr Madhav went to circuit" P-02

1500 Structures In Prohibited Zones In Pahalgam: Govt

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The J&K High Court on Thursday said "financial incapacity" cited by the government for undertaking the relocation or rehabilitation of the built-up areas, hamlets existing within wildlife and forest zones in Pahalgam "cannot be compromised under any circumstances."

Hearing a Public Interest Litigation, a division bench of Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Puneet Gupta it was the sole responsibility of the Government whose imperative duty lies in such conservation.

The observations by the court followed perusal of a status report filed by Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani, Chief

Executive Officer, Pahalgam Development Authority, stating that identification of the various zones including the non-construction areas within wildlife zones has been effected.

He stated that 1500 structures have been identified in the prohibited zones in the ground survey conducted by the Revenue Department.

Simnani has stated that the 1500 structures which presently exist in the no construction zones were constructed prior to the Master Plan 2005-25 when there was no such demarcation of zones.

In the report, he said that it has been decided and consequently incorporated in the revised Master Plan vide Chapter VII- 7.2 P-02

...LADAKH STAND-OFF

Troops Disengagement Only Achievable Through Reciprocal Means: MEA

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI/BEIJING: India on Thursday said a complete disengagement of troops in eastern Ladakh can be achieved only through mutually agreed reciprocal actions and also highlighted resolution of border incidents with China in the past through diplomacy.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said complete disengagement requires re-deployment of troops by each side towards their regular posts on their respective



File Photo

sides of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and this can be done only through mutually agreed actions.

At an online media briefing, Srivastava also talked about External

Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's reference, in a recent interview, to resolution of various border incidents in the past through diplomacy. "I would also refer you" P-02