



Maximum : 30°C  
Minimum : 14°C  
Humidity : 42%

SUNSET  
Today 06:34 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 06:15 AM

# OBSERVER

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## News Digest

### CRPF Man Shoots Self Dead In Lethpora

Srinagar- A paramilitary CRPF personnel ended his life by shooting himself in a camp in Lethpora area in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Wednesday, official sources said. At 10 am, a constable T. Srinivas of 90 battalion, presently attached with 185 CRPF battalion, shot himself dead with his service rifle, reported news agency GNS. "The reason for him taking the extreme step is being investigated," they added.

### ACB Files Charges Against Ex-BDO

Srinagar: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday produced chargesheet against a former government official, who was caught while accepting bribe from a daily wage last year. According to an ACB official, chargesheet was produced in the Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption Baramulla against Abdul Rashid Ahanter, former BDO Sopore in a case registered against him last year. According to the ACB, the former BDO was caught red handed while accepting bribe of Rs. 2000 from a daily rated worker for release of his

### 2 Drivers Held Over Fake Covid Reports

Srinagar: Two cab drivers have been arrested from Tourist Reception Center (TRC) here for allegedly providing fake COVID-19 negative reports to people wanting to travel outside the Kashmir valley amid the pandemic, police said on Wednesday. The matter was reported to police by a man who had approached the TRC for a trip outside the valley with his family. The man asked the drivers about the travel norms and told them that he had not undergone a COVID-19 test. "The drivers asked the complainant to provide Aadhar cards of the passengers so that

### Bear Mauls Man In Handwara

Srinagar: A man was killed on Wednesday after a bear attacked him in a forest area in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. An official said that a man's body was spotted this morning in Waisa forests following which police rushed to the spot. He said that the locals identified the man as Abdul Kabir Mir son of Mohammad Anwar Mir, a resident of Mir Mohalla in Waisa village. "The body was lying around 1-KM away from his home and it seems that he got killed in a wild bear attack while grazing the cattle in the forest area," the official said. He said that after proper medico-legal formalities to ascertain the actual

### Teenager Goes Missing In Gurez

Srinagar: A teenager has gone missing from Gurez valley along the Line of Control (LoC) of Bandipora district from last two days, reports said Wednesday. 18-year-old Mohamad Sayeed Lone of Tarbal village in Gurez went missing on September 14 after he left from his home for some work but didn't return, locals said Wednesday. Lone is a 12th class student. "The family later contacted all the relatives and friends but couldn't trace him anywhere," the locals said. A senior police officer said that the family has registered a missing report yesterday and a complaint has been lodged

## LADAKH FACE-OFF

# PLA Fired 100-200 Warning Shots At LAC Before Moscow Meet

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Chinese army fired a barrage of "warning shots" in the air at the North Bank of Pangong lake in eastern Ladakh last week to "intimidate" the Indian troops ahead of the talks between foreign ministers of the two countries in Moscow, official sources said on Wednesday.

The incident took place on the ridge of Finger 4 where the Indian Army has been significantly increasing its deployment after occupying several strategic peaks on the southern bank of the lake, they said.

The sources said a sizeable number of troops from the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) aggressively approached towards an Indian position but they returned sometime later as alert Indian Army personnel held on to their

### Chinese Construction Activity Observed In Uttarakhand

Amid border tension at eastern Ladakh, Chinese construction activities were observed near the border at Uttarakhand. "Hut-like structures on the Chinese side, very close to Tinkar-Lipu pass of Nepal, were

### Military, Diplomatic Level Talks To Continue: Govt

India and China are expected to continue military and diplomatic talks to implement the agreement reached between

### Rajnath To Make Statement On LAC Stand-Off Today

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will make a statement in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday on the border row

### No Infiltration Along LAC In Last 6 Months: GOI

The government on Wednesday said there has been no infiltration along the Sino-Indian border in the last six months, while 47 infiltration bids have been reported along the Indo-Pak border during the period.

### Doval Walks Out Of SCO Meet Over New Pak Map

NEW DELHI: India's National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval walked out in protest from Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) virtual meeting where Islamabad projected its new map showing all of Kashmir as part of Pakistan.

The new contentious political map of Pakistan was seen behind Pakistan delegate Dr. Moeed Yusuf, special assistant on national security to Pakistani Premier. This infuriated Doval who objected to it at an international meet. Doval believed Pakistan was acting deliberately. The map shown by Pakistan was recently approved by the country's parliament.

Hitting out at Pakistan, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said that at the meeting of the National Security Advisers (NSAs) of member states of the SCO hosted by Russia, the chair of the SCO, the Pakistani NSA deliberately projected a fictitious map that Pakistan has recently been propagating. India issued its strong objection to the use of this map by Pakistan. Russia as the chair, sources added, tried very hard to persuade Pakistan not to do so.

Pakistan issued a new map on August 4 that laid claim to all of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on the

### 'Custodial Killing' Of Youth Sparks Protest In Sopore

Police Says Deceased OGW Escaped During Search Op, Was Found Dead



A BOY CONSOLES brother of Irfan Ahmad Dar at their house in Sopore on Wednesday. Photo courtesy, Junaid Bhat

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The alleged custodial killing of a youth set off massive protests in Sopore town of Baramulla district on Wednesday, even as police claimed that the deceased was an over-ground worker of militants, who had managed to escape during a search operation on Tuesday night.

A large number of men, women and children in Sidiq-Colony of Sopore hit the streets on Wednesday morning when the news spread that a youth Irfan Ahmad Dar, arrested by police a day earlier, has been found dead under mysterious circumstances, witnesses told Kashmir Observer. Chanting slogans, the protesters alleged that Irfan was

### Mainstream Camp, Hurriyat Condemns Killing; Demand Probe

Several mainstream parties besides Hurriyat Conference (M) on Wednesday condemned the alleged custodial killing of a youth by police in Sopore and demanded an impartial probe. National Conference Vice President

### Hurriyat Ridicules Govt's Statement On Detentions

'Why Isn't Mirwaiz Allowed To Move If He Isn't Under House Arrest?'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A day after government informed parliament that no one was under house arrest in Jammu and Kashmir; the Hurriyat Conference (M) on Wednesday hit out at the government saying why is not conglomerate's chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq being allowed to move out of his house if he isn't under house arrest.

Terming the statement of Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy in parliament that no person is under house arrest in the Union Territory as strange and surprising, the Hurriyat Conference said today that the amalgam's chairman con-



Mirwaiz Umar Farooq speaking during a press conference.

tinues to remain under house arrest since August 5, 2019. "On that day police vehicles were parked on both the gates of his house and since then he is not allowed to move out. If the Mirwaiz is not under house arrest then why he is not allowed to move out of his house," a Hurriyat spokesperson said.

"Being the Mirwaiz, he has not even been allowed to go to Jama Masjid Srinagar since

### Coronavirus Claims 19 More Lives In J&K, Toll 937

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: As many as nineteen more people died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, taking the total number of fatalities due to virus in the Union Territory to 937.

While 11 more people succumbed to the deadly infection in Jammu division, eight others lost their lives to coronavirus in Kashmir valley, officials said.

Regarding the fatalities from Jammu, officials said, seven were residents of Jammu and one each from Udhampur, Rajouri, Kathua, Samba and Ramban.

The victims from Valley include two residents of Srinagar and Kupwara besides one each from Budgam, Bandipora, Shopian and Kulgam districts.

### 1590 New Cases Include 50 Security Personnel

Jammu and Kashmir reported on Wednesday 1590 new cases of coronavirus, including 91 travelers, 19 army men, five BSF men, 26 CRPF personnel, two pregnant woman and five minors, taking the number of people infected by the virus in Union Territory to 58244.

With 832 cases reported from Jammu region and 758 from Kashmir Valley, this is for the fortnight now that Jammu

Among others, the victims from the valley includes a 70-year-old from Nowhatta Srinagar, a 57-year-old woman from Verinag Anantnag, a 40-year-old from Chadoora Budgam, a 28-year-old man from Gund Ibarhim Pattan, a man from Shopian and 70-year-old woman from Umer Colony Lal Bazar.

The victims among others from Jammu region include a 79-year-old man from Swran Vihar Ban Talab Mathi Jammu, a 45-year-old from Nanak Nagar Jammu, a 63-year-old woman from Trikuta Nagar Jammu, a 72-year-old from Nanak Nagar Jammu, a 79-year-old from ban Talab Mathi and a 46-year-old from Gorkha Nagar Jammu.

With these deaths, the fatality count in Jammu and Kashmir has reached 937. (With GNS inputs)

### HC Orders Removal Of Solid Waste From Wular Lake

Seeks Report From WUCMA On Demarcating Water Body Like Dal Lake

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court has directed Municipal Committee, Sopore, to take steps for removal of Municipal Solid Waste forthwith which has been dumped within the demarcated area of the Wular Lake.

"The Municipal Committee, Sopore, shall place on record the site plan, the location of the dumping site before us, before the next date of hearing," a bench of Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Puneet Gupta said while hearing a Public Interest Litigation.

"We shall also be informed with

regard to the notification of the Solid Waste Management Bye-Laws by the Municipal Committee and the fines collected thereunder."

The bench also directed coordinator Wular Conservation and Management Authority to inform the Court about the steps which can be taken for earmarking the boundary of the Wular Lake in the manner in which it is required to be done.

"The respondent no. 8 (the coordinator) shall examine the steps taken for marking the boundaries of the Dal Lake in Srinagar and to see whether similar steps are required to be taken and

### 71 Civilians, 74 Security Men Killed Since August 5: GoI

NEW DELHI: As many as 71 civilians and 74 forces personnel were killed in militancy-related incidents and ceasefire violations by Pakistan since the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution a year ago, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday.

Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy also said that militancy-related incidents have come down since August 5, 2019 when the Article 370 was scrapped.

A total of 45 civilians and 49 forces personnel were killed due to militancy-related incidents from August 5, 2019 to September 10, 2020 in Jammu and Kashmir and 26 civilians and 25 forces personnel were killed due to ceasefire violation by Pakistani forces along the border in the same period.

### Israel Signs 'Abraham Accords' With UAE, Bahrain

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and foreign ministers of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain for the signing of the historic Abraham Accords, which is the first Arab-Israeli peace deal in 26 years.

"We are here this afternoon to change the course of history. After decades of division and conflict, we mark the dawn of a new Middle East," Trump said, moments before the accord was signed at the South Lawns of the White House.

The UAE was represented by Foreign Minister Abdullah

### LG Makes Surprise Visit To Khonmoh Says His Vision For Development Based On Realistic Planning

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday made a surprise visit to a village on the outskirts of the city and interacted with the locals, saying that his vision for development is based on realistic planning backed by financial and technical aspects.

The LG's visit to Khonmoh during 'block diwas', which was organized as part of a 'Jan Abhyan' outreach programme, left the residents surprised as he stayed there for more than an hour and listened to their problems besides interact-



Lt Governor Manoj Sinha interacting with the field staff of various departments, officials said.

Besides Khonmoh, block diwas

was held in Panzinzara and Dhara areas. It was, among others, attended by Deputy Commissioner.

## In FOCUS Kashmir's Killjoys: Masked Marriages In Virulent Times

Hibah Bhat

OWAIS SHAWL, 28, was harbouring a typical prospective Kashmiri groom's dream filled festive marital jubilation until the lethal pandemic came as a bogeyman.

Looking forward to spend the "most memorable day" of his life with his loved ones, he was literally blushing over the idea.

"For me it was not about having an extravagant wedding," Shawl, who got married amidst the pandemic lockdown, says, "rather, an occasion to celebrate a major life

event with my family and friends and to make memories which we could cherish forever."

When Shawl left home to get his bride, there was no signature folk-singing, no crackers and no convoy of cars. He was chaperoned by his father and brother. Later that day, when he returned with his bride, there were no flowers, no lights, no camera, only a little action.

Such austere weddings became new normal in paralytic valley facing the brunt of uncertain situation.

Among many other things, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus also disrupted the idea of weddings



in Kashmir. An extravagant affair suddenly became a low-key event. The fear of being a super-spreader

by hosting larger gatherings forced many people to either postpone their plans or resort to simpler weddings.

Many, like Shawl, feel such austere measure is culturally a welcome change.

"At the end of the day," he says, "I realised my wedding turned out to be better than I had planned it."

Since there's a "spend more than you can afford" culture in Kashmir, Shawl believes, it takes a huge toll on bride's family.

"It's still easier for the groom," he continues. "Hosting bharaatis [guests from the groom's side] remains a big deal in Kashmir and for that, the bride's family has to bear the brunt."

Such marriages have already become a much-needed social inter-

vention at a time when late marriages had become a telling comment on the society. For a change, these austere weddings have made many hopeful, like Altaf.

As a father of three daughters, this trader from Srinagar believes there is too much pressure on a girl's family to keep up with the taxing marital trends.

"It's good that something positive has happened in these dark times," he says. "I believe we Kashmiris need to fix certain social habits, including wedding pomposity."

In the same city where the common refrain remains that people are

following their own madness-minded methods, the likes of Showkat—a cleric presiding over the Nikah ceremonies—often returns home disheartened these days.

"I don't understand why we people have confined religion only to mosques and righteous symbols," he says in a miffed tone. "Islam is a complete way of life and yet we tend to overlook that fact when it comes to marriages."

According to Islam, the cleric explains in his routine sermonizing tone, marriages are supposed to be simple and not vulgar display of wealth.

"But then," he rues, "Kashmir follows its own idea of weddings, in a clear violation to the spirit of Islam."

Despite Covid shedding some of those complex layers, the valley's marital mess stretches