



Maximum : 24°C
Minimum : 10°C
Humidity : 60%

SUNSET Today 06:20 PM
SUNRISE Tomorrow 06:23 AM

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News Digest

Magnitude 4.5 Quake Jolts J&K

Srinagar: A medium-intensity earthquake hit Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, but there were no reports of any damage or loss of life, officials said. The earthquake of 4.5 magnitude occurred at 12:02 pm at a depth of 120 km. There were no reports of any damage to property or injury or loss of life, they added.

Cross-LoC Shelling Rattles Rajouri

Jammu: India and Pakistan troops on Saturday exchanged gunfire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistani troops on Saturday violated ceasefire by resorting to firing and shelling on forward areas along the LoC in Rajouri district, a defence spokesman said. The shelling and firing from across the border in Nowshera sector was "unprovoked" and drew a befitting retaliation by the Indian Army, the spokesman said. "At about 11.15 am, Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars along LoC in Nowshera," the spokesman said. ● P-02

BSF Officer Dies During Patrolling

Srinagar: Border Security Force (BSF) officer collapsed and later succumbed while on duty in the high security Raj Bhawan area of Srinagar city. The incident happened on Saturday. Police sources said Hayat Singh, assistant sub-inspector belonging to 163 BSF battalion, collapsed while on patrolling duty in the Raj Bhawan area of Srinagar city. "He was shifted to the unit headquarter hospital where doctors said he was dead on arrival. "An FIR has been registered in the incident, proceedings under CrPc have been started", sources said.

Militant, OGW Arrested: Police

Srinagar: Police on Saturday claimed to have arrested a militant and an over-ground worker (OGW) in two separate operations from Anantnag and Kupwara districts of the Valley. In a joint operation in the Kapran area of Dooru in the south Kashmir district, state forces arrested a categorised active militant, Talib Bhat, a resident of Dehruana, a police official said. He said weapons and other incriminating material were seized from his possession. A case has been registered and investigation taken up, the official said. Police also said that it ● P-02

Teen Girl Ends Life In Uri

Srinagar: A teenage girl on Saturday allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself in her house in the border town of Uri in Baramulla district. The 14-year-old girl was found hanging with a ceiling fan in her home in Paranpilla village of Uri on Saturday morning, reports said. Her parents were reportedly out when she allegedly strangled herself. Station House Officer (SHO) Uri, Mohammad Ashraf said that she was suffering from mental depression and was taking medicine for the same. "Her parents were out when she took this extreme step," he said. The body of the deceased has been handed over to the family after the post-mortem, he said. Meanwhile, Police have initiated inquest proceedings under Section 174 CrPc.

Rs 250-Cr Bank Fraud: KAS Officer Among 2 Suspended

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Saturday suspended two senior officials pending an inquiry into their conduct in a case pertaining to Rs 250-crore bank fraud, officials said.

The administration suspended Kashmir Administrative Service (KAS) officer Mujib-ur-Rehman Ghassi, Special Secretary to the Government, Industries and Commerce Department, and Ashiq Hussain, Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies J-K, pending an inquiry against them, they said.

The officials said two separate suspension orders were issued on September 26 against the officials by the General Administration Department (GAD).

The officials said Ghassi will remain attached with the GAD during the period of his suspension, while Hussain shall remain attached in the office of the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir.

The names of both the officials were mentioned in a case, registered by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on August 25, related to Rs 250 crore loan to a non-existent cooperative housing society two years ago.

The ACB produced a charge-sheet



File Photo

Ex-DC Booked For Approving 'Illegal' Stone Crusher

The Crime Branch on Saturday filed a case against former Deputy Commissioner Kupwara and several officials and others for allowing illegal construction of a stone crusher and hot mix plant in the frontier district.

According to a Crime Branch spokesperson, a case FIR No (35/2020 u/s 447,468,120B RPC and Section 5(2) Prevention of Corruption Act Svt. 2006) was filed after conducting a ● P-02

against three persons, including a former chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Bank, for sanctioning a Rs 250 crore loan to a non-existent cooperative housing society. The ACB filed the charge-sheet against Mohammad Shafi Dar, the then chairman of J-K State Cooperative Bank Limited (JKSTCB), Hilal Ahmad Mir, chairman of non-existent River Jhelum Cooperative House Building Society, Srinagar, and Abdul Hamid Hajam, secretary of the non-existent River Jhelum Cooperative House Building Society, Srinagar, according ● PAGE 02

THE NAMES OF BOTH THE OFFICIALS WERE MENTIONED IN A case, registered by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on August 25, related to Rs 250 crore loan to a non-existent cooperative housing society two years ago.

People's Conference Expels Junaid Mattu

SRINAGAR: Peoples Conference led by Sajad Ghani Lone Saturday announced expulsion of its senior leader Junaid Mattu from the party. "J-K Peoples Conference would like to confirm that Mr. Junaid Mattu is no longer associated with the party. The party's association with Mr. Mattu ended weeks back," PC said in a tweet.

Mattu was the party chief spokesperson prior to his disassociation. A source in the PC revealed that Mattu had developed differences with the party leader on the Gupkar Declaration - a resolution issued after an all-party meeting on August ● P-02

LG Meets Rajnath Singh In New Delhi

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Saturday met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi. Office of the Raksha Mantri tweeted a picture of the meeting earlier today.

"The Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha meeting Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh in New Delhi," Office of the Raksha Mantri tweeted.

Sinha on Saturday announced a relief package of Rs 1350 crore for Jammu and Kashmir in a bid to boost the business and the other ailing sectors that have suffered huge losses for several years in the newly formed Union Territory (UT).

Gulmarg Receives First Snowfall Of Season

SRINAGAR: The popular ski destination of Gulmarg in north Kashmir on Saturday received the first snowfall of the season.

The light snowfall has given a new look to Gulmarg which remains deserted following August 5 last year due to lockdown following abrogation of Kashmir's semi-autonomous status.

Meanwhile rains lashed Srinagar and parts of Kashmir valley bringing temperatures further down.

Gondola Service To Resume Today

The Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday announced resumption of the first phase of ● P-02

According to the Director Department of Meteorology, Sonum Lotus weather is likely to change further towards the first week of October.

Time To Make India Part of UNSC: PM 'How Long Must We Wait?'



NEW DELHI (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday questioned for how long will India, the world's largest democracy and home to 1.3 billion people, be kept out of the decision-making structures of the United Nations, asserting that reform in the responses, processes and in the very character of the global body is the "need of the hour."

In his pre-recorded video statement to the landmark General Debate of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, Modi said the stability in the ● P-02

Imran Wants UN Force Sent To Kashmir

UNITED NATIONS: During his speech in the high-level session of the United Nations General Assembly that was met by an Indian walkout, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday requested the Security Council to intervene with a UN force in Kashmir.

In a subtly worded sentence slipped into his speech ● P-02

J&K Reports 17 More Covid-19 Deaths, Toll 1128

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported seventeen more deaths due to coronavirus on Saturday, taking the number of fatalities since the outbreak of pandemic in the Union Territory to 1128.

While twelve more people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu division on Saturday, the remaining five deaths from Kashmir were confirmed by the officials here.

Among those who succumbed in Jammu include five from winter capital of the J&K, two each from Udhampur and Poonch districts besides one each from Kathua, Doda and Kishtwar, officials said.

Regarding five deaths from Valley, they said, two of them

were from Bandipora and one each from Srinagar, Ganderbal and Budgam districts.

Among other who succumbed in Jammu include a 23-year-old woman from Ploura Dhok Jammu, a 65-year-old man from Kamsar Poonch who also died in the GMC Jammu, a 58-year-old Jagati Jammu, a 73-year-old woman from Talab Tillo and a 72-year-old man from Poonch who died on way to the GMC Jammu where he was referred to from the District Hospital Poonch.

Also, they said a 75-year-old man from Ramnagar ● PAGE 02

ALSO, A 68-YEAR-OLD MAN FROM Kishtwar town died in the District Hospital due to acute respiratory distress and bilateral Community Acquired Pneumonia.

Newborn Among 1217 More Test Positive

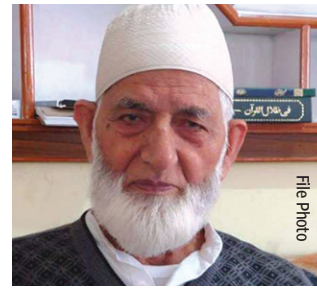
Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday reported 1217 new cases of coronavirus, including a 20-day-old baby and 16 soldiers, taking the total number of people infected by the virus in the Union Territory to 71049. While Jammu division reported 720 fresh cases of Covid-19, the remaining 497 were confirmed by ● P-02

Geelani Cautions Pak Against Changing Status Quo Of Gilgit-Baltistan

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Days after Pakistan announced dates for assembly elections in Gilgit-Baltistan, part of erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, the former Hurriyat Conference Chairman and ailing separatist leader Syed Ali Geelani on Saturday said that any changes in the status quo of the Pakistan-controlled region will have "disastrous consequences" on long pending Kashmir issue.

In a statement issued by Geelani's representative Saiyyed Abdullah Gilani said that the entire territory of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, including Kashmir, Jammu, Ladakh,



File Photo

Pakistan-controlled Kashmir and Gilgit and Baltistan is a "disputed region" and its permanent status can be determined only through a free and fair plebiscite under the aegis of the United Nations.

"This is the position the United Nations has taken and maintained through its several resolutions and all the parties to the dispute, that is, Pakistan, India and Kashmiri people have also agreed to it," he said.

Geelani's representative alleged that over these years, India backedtracked from its commitment and continued to keep Kashmir under its "illegal occupation through oppression and repression", while Pakistan and Kashmiri people have firmly stuck to their position and remained on the same page in respect to the resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

"Pakistan's policy to abstain from consolidating any part of ● PAGE 02

LAHDC Polls: Ladakh Leaders Meet HM, Deadlock Likely To End

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: An influential organisation from Ladakh, which had threatened to boycott the upcoming elections to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Leh, is likely to participate in the poll process after its meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah here on Saturday, sources said.

A formal announcement to this effect is likely to be made by the People's Movement for Sixth Schedule for Ladakh and representatives of the Union govern-



Image for representation

ment on Sunday, they said.

After the delegation's meeting, the Home Minister's Office tweeted, "Home Minister @AmitShah met with former MP Thupstan Chhewang, former MP Thiksay Rinpoche, former minister ● PAGE 02

CAG Flags Deficiencies In JKPDD

In FOCUS J&K's Power Purchase Deficit At Rs 14,871 Cr In 2012-17

JAMMU: The CAG's performance audit of power purchase agreements and electric revenue collection for 2012-13 to 2016-17 have brought out deficiencies in Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD).

The CAG in its report has flagged short comings in power purchase planning, signing and operationalisation of power purchase agreements, and collection of revenue. Besides, it also pointed out financial mismanagement and weakness in internal control.

J&K suffered a power purchase deficit of Rs 14,871 crore during 2012-17. As against an expenditure of Rs 24,299 crore incurred on power

purchase during 2012-17, revenue realisation from sale of power was only Rs 9,428 crore, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) said in its report on 'Social, General, Economic (Non-PSUs) Sectors' for the year ended 31 March 2017.

"The department (PDD) failed to meet its power requirement and the gap between unrestricted demand and self-generation available to the state ranged between 77 per cent and 84 per cent.

"Around 73 per cent to 76 per cent of the power requirement of the state was met through purchase from Central Generating Stations," the report, tabled in the Parliament this week, said.



Image for representation

It said JKPDD incurred an extra expenditure of Rs 840 crore on power purchased during 2012-17 due to deficiencies in planning and non-optimisation of power purchase cost.

"The JKPDD made an avoidable payment of Rs 1,420.26 crore towards late payment surcharge and lost the opportunity to avail rebate of Rs 297.92 crore due to deficient

financial management. It also had to shell out Rs 33.67 crore towards fixed charges without availing power due to imposition of regulation for delayed payments," the report said.

Due to non-completion of transmission infrastructure for evacuation of power, the report said, the department made an avoidable payment of Rs 543.47 crore towards idle capacity charges and energy charges on deemed generation to two power projects.

"Poor collection efficiency resulted in recoverable revenue of Rs 2,508.23 crore ending March 2017," it said.

JKPDD failed to recover its power purchase cost due to operational inefficiencies like increasing gap

between average cost of supply and average billing rate, high aggregate technical and commercial losses, which were at 62.56 per cent in 2015-16 and increased to 67.63 per cent in 2016-17, which resulted in foregone revenue of Rs 10,176 crore.

The report said the department failed to implement revised tariff order approved by the Jammu and Kashmir State Electricity Regulatory Commission, resulting in loss of Rs 10.06 crore to the state exchequer.

"The department had not devised any mechanism for filing objections on petitions filed by the generators," it said.

Meanwhile, the consolidated position of water usage ● PAGE 02

JKPCC Pulled Up For Poor Performance

The Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) Limited came up for sharp criticism from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) for its poor performance and failure to finalise its accounts amid sharp decline in the value of works from Rs 364.19 crore in 2012-13 to Rs 250.65 crore during 2016-17. The public sector undertaking (PSU) firm was dependent on the state government departments or agencies for works on nomination basis and had failed to secure any ● P-02