

Maximum : 27°C  
Minimum : 09°C  
Humidity : 34%  
SUNSET  
Today 06:04 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 06:31 AM

## OBSERVER

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## News Digest

4.2 Magnitude Quake  
Jolts Kargil

Ladakh: An earthquake measuring 4.2 on the Richter scale hit Ladakh's Kargil on Thursday, the National Centre for Seismology (NCS) informed. The tremor occurred at 9:22 am at a depth of 10 kilometres. "Earthquake of Magnitude: 4.2, Occurred on 08-10-2020, 09:22:06 IST, Lat: 35.36 and Long: 75.81, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Ladakh," the NCS tweeted. There were no reports of injuries or damage to the property as a result of the quake

Police Files Charges  
Against 6 'OGWs'

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Police has filed a charge-sheet against six alleged underground workers (OGWs) of Jaish-e-Mohammad, an official said on Thursday. The six, including a Pakistani identified as Abdul Rehman, were arrested after police busted a JeM module, he said. The Jammu Police has filed a charge-sheet at an additional sessions court here against six hardcore OGWs of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) ● P-02

Bear Mauls Elderly  
Woman In Srinagar

Srinagar: A middle-aged woman on Thursday was mauled to death by a bear in Harwan area of the city. 50-year-old Haleema was working in the kitchen garden of her home in New Theed locality of Harwan on Thursday when a bear appeared there and attacked her, official sources said. The woman sustained serious injuries in the attack as her family and neighbors chased away the beast. The ● P-02

Govt Declares  
Kishtwar 'Green Zone'

Srinagar: Kishtwar is the only district in Jammu and Kashmir to be declared a 'green zone' while Lakhanpur and Jawahar Tunnel are the only 'red zones' in the union territory in the latest categorisation done by the administration on Thursday for containing the spread of COVID-19. All the districts in the union territory, except Kishtwar, have been categorised as 'orange zones' in view ● P-02

Biker Killed In  
Srinagar mishap

Srinagar: A motorcyclist was killed on Thursday in an accident at Ganghugh area of Srinagar, officials said. A motorcyclist identified as Sitha, son of Haji Salam of Narkoora met with an accident with tipper bearing registration number JK04-5487 at Ganghugh Srinagar, resulting in his on spot death. Officials said that driver has been arrested while a case has been registered in this regard—(KNO)

Two Drug Peddlers  
Held In Udhampur

Jammu: Police have arrested two alleged narcotics smugglers and recovered heroin from their possession in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Thursday, officials said. A police party stopped a vehicle, which was on its way from Udhampur to Ramnagar, for checking at Roundmail, they said. During search, 180 grams of heroin-like substance was recovered from two persons, ● P-02

SHOPIAN 'FAKE ENCOUNTER'  
LG Meets Kin Of Slain Rajouri  
Youth, Promises Justice

Auqib Javed

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday promised to deliver justice to the families of the three Rajouri labourers, who were killed in a fake encounter in Shopian district of south Kashmir in July.

Around 6:00 pm Thursday, LG Sinha accompanied by his Advisor Farooq Khan, Divisional

Commissioner Jammu, Sanjeev Verma, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Jammu Mukesh Singh and other senior police and civil administration officials visited Tarkassi village and met the families of the three slain youth, eyewitnesses told Kashmir Observer. Sinha, they said went to the residence of Muhammad Yousuf Chouhan, where the families of two other victims were also present. Chouhan's son Ibrar Ahmad

and two other youth Mohammad Imtiyaz and Mohammad Abrar left their homes to work as labourers in Kashmir's Shopian and went out of contact with their families after July 17 late evening. A day later, the Army killed them in an encounter in Amshipura village in the higher reaches of south Kashmir's Shopian and claimed that all the three were militants. The bodies of the three youth were exhumed ● PAGE 02

THE FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE TRIO DEMANDED exemplary punishment for the culprits. The LG not only promised justice but also jobs and compensation to the families," he added.

50,000 Chinese  
Troops Mass On  
Ladakh LAC

HINDON: Despite, attempts to de-escalate the friction, including the various agreements that have been made between the countries, China continues to be on the offensive in the Ladakh region. Latest reports say that China has amassed at least 50,000 troops on the LAC.

Just before the Galwan face-off between the two nations, back in May, that led to a bloody massacre of 20 Indian soldiers, Chinese troops had been amassing heavy artillery. Whilst the status quo remains the same at the North bank of Pangong Tso, there has been a noticeable addition in the Chinese reinforcements in the Depsang area. Almost 50,000 Chinese troops have increased since May.

The Depsang area now hosts an exceeding amount of Chinese troops, rocket launchers, tanks and other forms of artillery as the tensions between the nations continue.

## Bhadauria Hails IAF

## For 'Prompt Response'

Meanwhile the Indian Air Force has clearly demonstrated its resolve, operational capability and will to effectively engage with the adversary whenever the need arises, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria said on Thursday, and commended the air warriors for their prompt response in the recent standoff on the northern frontier in view of the bitter border row with China.

In an address on the occasion of the 88th anniversary ● P-02

9 More Coronavirus  
Deaths In J&K, Toll 1293

## Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Nine more people, including a youth succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, taking the number of fatalities due to the deadly virus across the Union Territory to 1293.

Among others, the victims include a 40-year-old from Mendhar Poonch, a 50-year-old man from Galote Udhampur, a 65-year-old from R S Pora, a 90-year-old from Talab Tillo Jammu and a 30-year-old from Trikuta Nagar.

With these deaths, officials said, 1293 people have succumbed to the virus in Jammu and Kashmir so far—884 from the Valley and 409 from Jammu division.

Srinagar district with 310 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (212), Baramulla (126), Budgam (89), Pulwama (73), Kupwara (71), Anantnag (69), Kulgam (43), Bandipora (41), Rajouri (39), Doda (38), Shopian (32), Ganderbal (30), Kathua (28), Samba (24), Udhampur (22), Poonch (18), Ramban (11), Kishtwar (11) and Reasi (6). (With GNS inputs)

2 Doctors, 21 Security Men  
Among 696 New Cases

Jammu and Kashmir reported 696 fresh cases of coronavirus on Thursday, including 38 travelers, 21 security forces personnel besides two doctors, taking the number of people infected by the virus in the ● P-02

High Court Quashes FIR  
Against Senior Journalist

'Frank Reporting Cannot Be Curbed For It May Impact Some Business'

## Agencies

SRINAGAR: Observing that freedom of the press cannot be put in peril on the basis of the "grounds which are unknown to law", the J&K High Court on Thursday said that "fair and frank reporting of events by

electronic and print media cannot be curbed merely because it may have an adverse impact on business of some class of persons."

"The limitations on freedom of the press cannot extend to registration of a criminal case against a reporter, who in discharge ● PAGE 02

Centre Paves Way For Imposition  
Of Property Tax In J&K

## Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Government of India has amended two municipal laws of Jammu & Kashmir to empower administration of the Union Territory to levy and collect property tax.

According to the official documents, the Union Home Ministry on Monday notified "The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir Re-organisation (adaptation of state laws order) 2020 to amend different laws including Jammu & Kashmir Municipal Act-2000 and Jammu & Kashmir Municipal Corporation Act-2000.

According to the amendments carried out in Jammu & Kashmir

Municipal Act-2000 and Jammu & Kashmir Municipal Corporation Act-2000, property tax shall be levied on all lands and buildings or vacant lands or both situated within the municipal area

"Unless exempted under this Act or any other law for the time being in force, property tax shall be levied on all lands and buildings or vacant lands or both situated within the municipal area," reads the amendments made in the laws.

According to these amendments the property tax shall be levied at such percentage not exceeding fifteen per cent of the taxable annual value of land and building or vacant land ● PAGE 02

## Flight Cancellations Due To Covid

## DGCA Issues Refund Rules After SC Order

## Agencies

NEW DELHI: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has issued detailed guidelines for refund of fares for flights cancelled during Covid-19 lockdown after the Supreme Court recently decided on the issue. The regulator, based on SC directives, has categorised refund seekers into three categories and issued different directives for them.

## Category 1

Passenger who booked tickets during lockdown for travel during lockdown from 25 March 25, 2020, to May 24: If an airline has received payment from such a passenger for either domestic or international travel, it "shall refund



Image for representation

the full amount collected without any cancellation charges ... within three weeks from the date of cancellation," the DGCA order says.

If tickets have been booked through a travel agent, "full refund shall be given by airlines immediately to the respective travel agent (who in turn) shall immediately

pass on (the same) to passengers." Airlines, both Indian and foreign, will need to refund full fares to category 1 passengers who booked e-India tickets for international travel.

## Category 2

Passengers who booked tickets any time prior to lockdown for journey up to May 24, 2020, ● PAGE 02

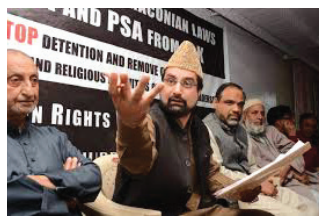
APHC Voices Concern  
Over Prisoners Plight

## Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Hurriyat Conference led by incarcerated chairman Mirwais Umar Farooq on Thursday expressed concern over the plight of prisoners in Jammu and Kashmir jails and outside and demanded their immediate release.

In a statement issued here, a Hurriyat spokesperson said that thousands of Kashmiris, including Hurriyat leaders and activists, lawyers, journalists and young boys are languishing in Tihar, Agra, Kotbawal, Jodhpur, Amphalla, Haryana and other jails on fictitious charge and they were neither being tried in courts nor any legal proceedings have been initiated.

The Hurriyat spokesperson alleged



File Photo

that the arbitrary detention of the prisoners was just being prolonged and many of them have been detained even after serving their sentences.

"The mental and physical condition of many among the prisoners is a matter of concern, while the fear of contracting the Covid 19 virus in cramped up spaces of jail is a constant fear among the prisoners and their families," the Hurriyat ● PAGE 02

SKIMS Scraps List After Six Years,  
Candidates In Fix

## Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Despite the epidemic of mental health illness that pervades Kashmir, the SKIMS Soura administration has withdrawn an advertisement notice for a post of clinical psychologist after six years, thus leaving the short-listed candidates in a fix.

In a notification dated June 19, 2020, the SKIMS administration has issued the withdrawal of various advertisement notifications.

"In terms of instructions contained in column-1 of Government order under reference,



File Photo

the posts advertised vide Advertisement Notice No's shown against each in annexure "A" to this notice hereby are withdrawn," the order reads.

"In 2015, we came across the post of a clinical psychologist on the official website of SKIMS. Every day, we would check on the website ● PAGE 02

## In FOCUS 15 Years Later, 2005 Quake Still Haunts Uri

## Swati Joshi

It was a usual day for Sheikh Mushtaq Hussain on October 8, 2005. He was on his duty; his wife was outside cutting grass to feed the cattle and their three daughters were getting ready for school.

It was 9:20 am, Hussain still remembers the time, when the whole village started shaking and his house collapsed.

It was the last time that Hussain and his wife saw their daughters. They were buried alive under the rubble.

Even after 15 years of the tragedy, the memories of that day still haunt many people of Uri and

Tangadhar which were the worst affected areas in the earthquake that shook J&K in the fall of 2005. The epicentre of the 7.6-strong quake was Muzaffarabad, Pakistan and it destroyed nearly 80 per cent of the town in Uri and Tangadhar.

According to the Earthquake Disaster Risk Index Report 2019, about 1500 deaths were reported and 4,50,000 building collapsed in Kashmir due to the 2005 earthquake. The report also mentioned that the poor performance of the masonry building caused many life losses.

Hussain who is currently the Sarpanch of Sarai Bandi village, Uri told

Kashmir Observer that before the earthquake hit the area, they had a big house with all the amenities.

"After the calamity, it took us 10 years to build a house of three rooms but it was not the same again," the Sarpanch said, adding that even after 15 years, 35 per cent of people in Sarai Bandi live inside a tin shed.

Like Hussain, Abid Ahmad of Sultan Dagi village of Uri saw his double-storey house turning into rubble. His family lived in the shed till 2013 before moving into a new house in 2014.

"The roads were blocked and we lived under a torn 10x10 plastic



File Photo

sheet," he said. At night it started raining but with their house being converted into rubble they had no

option other than to seek shelter under the torn plastic sheet. When the 2005 quake hit the gar-

ison town of Uri nestled closer to the Line of Control, Irshad Khawaja of Garkote area confused it with the usual frontier shelling.

"Living at proximity to the LoC, people had to check twice whether the shaking was because of earthquake or shelling," he said.

But when he realized that it was an earthquake, he along with his family started running to a safer place. "My house collapsed in front of my eyes," lamented Khawaja, adding, "when we stopped, we saw the big boulders falling from the mountains."

The condition was so bad that even many people were not able to find the dead bodies of their relatives, he said.

When Khawaja went towards Karmalkote, the most affected village in Uri, the condition was worse. "Hum

bata hi nahi sakte kya manzar tha (I can't even describe the scenes)."

There were corpses everywhere, he recalled. "Houses were destroyed, a huge cloud of smoke enveloped the whole village and people were searching for their families."

After their house collapsed, Khawaja lived in an open field with his traumatic family. Three days later, he said, help in the form of tents, food and treatment started pouring in.

At that time the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road was under construction and 60 people from Nambala and Bilalabad villages had gone with the Border Road Organization (BRO) team to work as labour force.

When the earthquake struck, only four were found to be alive.

The remaining 56 people were covered under the debris and died, Khawaja said. ● PAGE 02