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NEWS DIGEST

Magnitude 4.1 Earthquake Hits J&K

SRINAGAR: An earthquake of magnitude 4.1 on the Richter Scale was felt in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. The quake was reported at 10.01 pm with its epicentre at a depth of 93 km east of Katra, according to the National Centre of Seismology (NCS). The depth of the quake was 10 km. So far, no reports of any damage have surfaced.

Police Officer Dies Of Cardiac Arrest

SRINAGAR: A police officer died of cardiac arrest at the SMHS hospital here on Saturday. Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Amrez Ahmed Khoja, posted at Shergari Police Station was shifted to SMHS Hospital after he complained of chest pain, news agency KNT reported while quoting police sources. The police officer died in the hospital while the cause of his death is attributed to cardio-pulmonary arrest, the report said. Khoja was a resident of Ibkote village of Karnah along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kupwara district. His body has been handed over to his legal heirs for last rites.

Youth Injured In Jammu Shootout

JAMMU: A 25-year-old man was critically injured on Saturday when he was fired upon by two people who were later arrested along with a revolver here, police said. Happy Jamwal was shot at near the main chowk Paloura in the city and was taken to Government Medical College (GMC) hospital, a police officer said. Soon after the incident, the family members of the victim staged a demonstration outside the local police station at Janipur and demanded action against the culprits, alleging that they attacked Jamwal after he refused to pay them money. Police acted swiftly and arrested two of the accused and recovered a revolver from their possession, the officer said.

Load Carrier Rolls Into Jhelum, 2 Injured

SRINAGAR- Two persons were injured after a load carrier they were travelling in plunged into river Jhelum near Hajin in north Kashmir's Baniptora district on Saturday. Reports said that a Bandipora-bound Tata mobile (JK15A 5193) met with an accident after the driver purportedly lost control over the vehicle near Prang area of Hajin, according to news agency GNS. The injured have been identified as Showkat Ahmad Guroo (35) son of Abdul Raheem Guroo and Ghulam Nabi Guroo son of Ghulam Rasool Guroo, both residents of Shadipora village in Bandipora District. The injured were shifted to local PHC from where the duo was shifted to SKIMS Soura for specialized treatment. Meanwhile, Police have taken cognizance of the incident and further investigation has been initiated.

MHA Awards 2 Cops For Saving Civilians

JAMMU: Two policemen received 'Jeevan Raksha Padak' awards on Saturday for saving the lives of civilians during ceasefire violations by Pakistan along the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir in March 2018, an official said. Selection Grade Constable Maqsood Ahmad in Poonch district police and Follower Zakir Hussain of sixth battalion J&K Armed Police (JKAP) were awarded 'Jeevan Raksha Padak 2019' by the Union Home Ministry last year. Poonch Deputy Commissioner Rahul Yadav and Senior Superintendent of Police Ramesh Kumar Angral handed over the awards to the policemen at a function at Dak Bungalow, Poonch. More On P6

Beginning of the end

Covid Vaccination Drive Begins In Kashmir



A health worker being administered Covishield vaccine at SK institute of medical sciences (SKIMS) Srinagar on Saturday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The coronavirus vaccination drive started in Kashmir on Saturday, with nearly 2,000 healthcare workers, including prominent doctors in the Valley by the end of the day, an official said.

Forty centres -- 20 each in two divisions -- across Jammu and Kashmir started the vaccination drive after Prime

Minister Narendra Modi kick-started it across the country in the morning, the official said. A G Ahangar -- the director of the SKIMS, the premier tertiary care hospital in Srinagar -- reported the first shot at the centre, State Immunisation Officer Qazi Haroon said.

About 4,000 healthcare workers will receive the shot in the first phase and 100 people each will be given shots at these centres, Haroon said.

A lot of doctors, including heads of institutions, several heads of departments and chief medical officers of various districts, received the jabs to boost confidence in the vaccination process, according to Haroon. Jammu and Kashmir received on Wednesday 1.46 lakh doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca's vaccine, manufactured in India by the Serum Institute. While 79,000 doses were received. More On P6

A Historic Day: LG

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday cautioned people against rumour mongers spreading lies about COVID-19 vaccine even as the administration said it is fully prepared to ensure a successful inoculation drive in the union territory. The coronavirus vaccination drive started at forty centres across Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday where healthcare workers were administered jabs. The UT had received the first batch of 1,46,500 doses. More On P6

Soz Condemns Arrest Of Mainstream Leaders

SRINAGAR: Senior Congress leader Prof. Saifuddin Soz on Saturday said that incarceration of mainstream political leaders of Kashmir by the Union Territory administration has become a 'routine'. In a statement issued to media here, Soz said that notice may be taken of senior Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Naem Akhtar who had been taken into custody months ago. Of late, Akhtar had been lodged in MLA's Hostel, Srinagar, he said adding now, when his health deteriorated, he was hospitalized for treatment. Senior Congress leader said it is extremely deplorable that even when his health has deteriorated, he continues to be under detention. "Knowledgeable sources have confirmed. More On P6

Soaring Air Fares

CB Tightens Noose Around Ticketing Agents

SRINAGAR: The Crime Branch of police on Saturday carried out searches at multiple locations across the city in connection with the alleged sale of air tickets on exorbitant rates by travel agents and various airlines operating in the Valley.

The sleuths of CB conducted searches at the offices of at least nine travel agents and the residence of a sales manager of a private airliner, local news agency KNT reported Saturday. The searches, the



report said, were carried out on the basis of a complaint from different travel associations and trade bodies through Director Tourism, Kashmir regarding dry selling/offline selling of bulk

tickets by airlines staff to the ticketing agents in advance in violation of the standing norms and procedure. The complaint further alleged that travel agents in league with airline staff were creating artificial inflation of prices. "During the investigation, the Crime Branch Kashmir had summoned representatives of various airlines viz, Vistara, Go Air, Indigo, Air India, Air Asia and Spice-jet U/S 160 CrPC along with relevant records." More On P6

GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSTITUTE A TEAM to monitor this business so that a check on all travel agents selling tickets is done. It shall be mandatory for every travel agent to submit the list of tickets sold by him along with the transaction details."

Rajnath Hails Army's Role In Ladakh Standoff

Press Trust Of India

LUCKNOW: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said the Indian Army has boosted the morale of the country and also enabled the people to hold their heads high during the border standoff with China. He said this while addressing a gathering here during the 'bhoomipujan' and foundation stone laying ceremony of the new Command Hospital. "The charismatic (karishmaayi) performance by the Army during the India-China standoff has boosted the morale of the country and also enabled the citizens to hold their heads high," he said, drawing a thunderous applause from the crowd. The military face-off had erupted on May 5 following

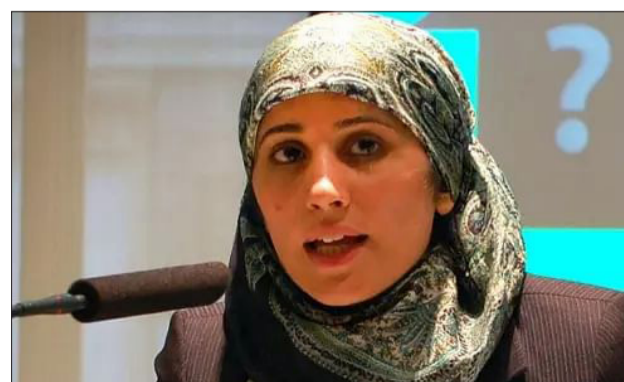


violent clashes between the Indian Army and the PLA in the Pangong lake area. "The entire world is facing COVID-19, pandemic No one had thought that with the onset of the pandemic, celebrating festivals such as Holi, Eid and Diwali will be without much fanfare (dhoomdhaam). No one had imagined that trains will come to a halt, and schools. More On P6

Proud Moment, Says Kin Of Kashmiri-Origin Woman Named In Biden Team

SRINAGAR: Kashmiri-origin Sameera Fazili's parents wanted her to be a physician, but she was not quite in agreement. Fazili's plans fructified on Friday when the Biden-Harris Transition named her as the deputy director of the National Economic Council at the White House. The council coordinates the economic policy-making process and provides advice to the US president.

Fazili is the second Kashmiri-origin American appointed to a key position in the incoming Biden administration. Her appointment has sparked off jubiliations in her extended family in Srinagar. "We are very proud. Everybody in Kashmir should be proud as it is a proud moment for the whole Kashmir,"



her uncle Rouf Fazili told PTI. "It is a great honour and respect for every one of us and a great occasion." "She was not born here and her parents left the Valley in 1970-71, but she has a strong affinity with Kashmir," Rouf

Fazili said. "The last time she visited the valley was in 2007." Rouf Fazili did not have the opportunity to speak to her niece as she was very busy with US President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration, which will take place on Wednesday.

Minor Rejig In Civil Admin, 13 Officers Shifted

Bhupinder Is New DC Baramulla, Garg To Take Charge Of Anantnag

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday reshuffled civil administration by transferring as many as 13 bureaucrats, including many IAS and KAS officers "in the interest of administration" with immediate effect. On the directions of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the general administration department (GAD) issued an order on Saturday shifting 13 IAS and KAS officers, including 7 Deputy Commissioners. According to the order Bhupinder Kumar (IAS), Mission Director, National Health

Mission, J&K, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla. Anshul Garg (IAS), Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag. Choudhary Mohammad Yasin (IAS), Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, has been transferred and posted as Mission Director, National Health Mission, J&K. Shrikant Balasaheb Suse (IAS), Additional Deputy Commissioner in the office of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Shopian. Nazim Zai Khan (KAS), Deputy Commissioner Ramban, has been transferred and posted as Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir. Dr. Ghulam Nabi Itoo (KAS), Commissioner, More On P6

Mercury Dips Further, Cold Wave Intensifies



Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The minimum temperature at most places in Kashmir dropped further on Saturday as the intense cold tightened its grip in the Valley, resulting

in the freezing of water supply lines and water bodies, including the famous Dal Lake, in several areas. A thick fog also engulfed many parts of the valley, including the city, in the morning. More On P6

THE CITY HAD RECORDED A low of minus 8.4 degrees Celsius on Thursday, which was the coldest night in Srinagar since 1991.

Bailey Bridge Makes Highway Motorable After 6 Day Closure



Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: After remaining closed for six consecutive days, the Srinagar-Jammu highway on Saturday was thrown open for traffic after the Bailey Bridge

raised by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) made the strategic road link motorable. "The Bridge was put to trail run at 2.45 PM and traffic was allowed to pass in a regulated manner. More On P6

Charges Filed Against 11 'Lashkar Members'

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu police has filed a chargesheet against 11 alleged members of a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) module that was busted last year, an official spokesperson said on Saturday. The chargesheet against the arrested accused with nine hailing from Doda district of Jammu region and one each of Baramulla and Kupwara districts of north Kashmir, was filed in the Court of 3rd Additional Sessions Judge Jammu on Friday, the spokesperson said. More On P6