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Intelligence alone is not nearly enough when it comes to acting wisely.

— Fyodor Dostoyevsky

NEWS DIGEST

Man Held Over Social Media Post

JAMMU: A man was arrested by police for allegedly posting objectionable content on social media hurting the sentiments of a community in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district on Thursday, officials said.

ATM Guard Killed In Jammu

JAMMU: A security guard at an ATM of Jammu and Kashmir Bank was killed on Thursday in Nanak Nagar area of this winter capital.

Petrol Pump Sealed For Overcharging

SRINAGAR: A petrol pump was sealed in Uri of Baramulla district on Thursday by the Legal Metrology department over the allegations of overcharging.

ACB Books Nine People In Graft Case

JAMMU: Nine people, including four government officials, have been booked on Thursday by the anti-corruption bureau (ACB) for alleged fraudulent withdrawal of nearly Rs 27 lakh of bills for non-existent works in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district.

Kashmir Braces For Another Snow Spell

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The intense cold wave conditions continued unabated in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday as the minimum temperature stayed several degrees below the freezing point in the Valley, where the weather department has predicted another snow spell from Friday night.

Highway To Remain Closed Today

The 270 kilometre-long Jammu-Srinagar National highway will remain closed for traffic on Friday for maintenance.

THE MET DEPARTMENT has forecast that a Western Disturbance will affect the Union Territory for a few days from January 22.

Pak Firing Kills Indian Soldier On LoC

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: An Army man was killed when Pakistan violated the ceasefire and resorted to firing on forward positions along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Thursday, officials said.

The Pakistan Army resorted to unprovoked firing along the LoC in the Krishna Ghati sector of Poonch, the officials said. The Indian Army responded to the enemy fire in a befitting manner, they added.

Singh was a brave, highly-motivated and sincere soldier, a defence spokesperson said, adding that the nation will always remain indebted to him for his supreme sacrifice and devotion to duty.

Singh's killing comes a day after four soldiers were injured in Pakistani firing along the LoC in Akhnoor sector on Wednesday. All the four soldiers had suffered splinter injuries and were shifted to the military hospital in Udhampur for treatment.

Jammu and Kashmir recorded 5,100 instances of ceasefire • More On P10



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

All-Round Development Of J&K Centre's Major Goal: House Panel

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The all-round development of Jammu and Kashmir is a major goal of the Centre, a parliamentary delegation, which is on a three-day visit to the Valley, said on Thursday as it began consultations with stakeholders on how to resolve problems being faced by the residents of the UT.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture delegation -- led by chairman T G Venkatesh -- also held

meetings on the promotion of transport, tourism and culture in the union territory, an official spokesman said.

He said Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Jitendra Singh and Member of Parliament from Srinagar Farooq Abdullah also attended the meetings.

The visit is a first of its kind after the COVID-19 outbreak, the spokesman said.

Speaking on the occasion, Venkatesh, who is the member of the Rajya Sabha, said the all-round • More On P10

'We're In Kashmir To Build Confidence'

Agencies

Chairman of the 31-member Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC), T G Venkatesh Thursday said they are in Kashmir to build and create confidence among people of Valley so that more domestic and foreign tourists • More On P10

SUBSTANDARD WORKS

Contractor's Arrest Ordered

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has ordered the arrest of a private contractor working on Machail road in Kishtwar district for his poor performance in executing development works.

District Development Commissioner, Ashok Sharma, passed orders for the arrest of the contractor, an official spokesman said on Thursday. This is probably for the first time that such a strong administrative action has been taken in connection with substandard works in the construction of roads and buildings.

Responding to the complaint of locals • More On P10

J&K to Have Export Promotion Board Headed by LG

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir government has formed a 33-member Export Promotion Board in J&K. With Lieutenant Governor to be its chairman, the Board also comprises nine co-opted members.

Among the 33 official members includes Chief Secretary of J&K, three advisors of lieutenant governor besides administrative secretaries of finance, agriculture production and farmers welfare, industries

AMONG OTHERS, THE BOARD HAS BEEN TASKED to select and manage the areas to be declared as Export Promotion Hubs in the J&K. It is to finalize the Export Policy/Strategy formulated by the Apex level Export Promotion Committee constituted by the Government on 25 June 2020.



Director General Foreign Trade, Divisional Commissioner Jammu/Kashmir, • More On P10

LG Chairs Maiden Unified Command Meeting

Agencies

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha reviewed the overall security scenario across the Union Territory in his maiden Unified Command meeting on Thursday, reports said. Sinha chaired security review meeting here at Convention Centre in which border security, law and order situation, hinterland security and other concerns were discussed, news agency UNI reported while quoting sources. The report said that top brass of security from the Home Department, J&K Police, Army Intelligence Agencies, CRPF, BSF and others attended the meeting. According to the report, the officers apprised • More On P10

2 POs From J&K Shifted To Ladakh Courts

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Home Department has on Thursday ordered for placement of services of its two Prosecuting officers from Prosecution Service for disposal of the administration of Union Territory of Ladakh.

The order citing the 'terms of Section 89 of the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganization' Act and 'as a provisional measure' reads that Wasiq Umer currently Assistant Public Prosecutor Court(s) of Munsiff Charari-Shareef/Chadoora and Ravi Kant Sanyal Assistant Public Prosecutor in the Court of Munsiff, Banihal be deemed to have been • More On P10

No Covid-19 Death In Valley

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: A middle-aged woman died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday even as the Union Territory reported 117 fresh cases of Covid-19, including a paramilitary personnel and ten travellers during the last 24 hours.

The 55-year-old woman hailed from Nanak Nagar area of Jammu city and her death took the number of people succumbing to the virus to 1924- 1207 in the Valley and 717 in Jammu region, officials said Thursday.

Srinagar district with 453 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (368), Baramulla (173), Budgam (115), Kupwara

(94), Pulwama (88), Anantnag (84), Doda (64), Bandipora (61), Udhampur (57), Kulgam (54), Rajouri (55), Kathua (51), Ganderbal (46), Shopian (39), Samba (39), Poonch (24), Ramban (21), Kishtwar(22), and Reasi (15).

Meanwhile, ten travellers and a BSF personnel were among 117 fresh cases of virus detected across J&K during the last 24 hours, officials said. While 42 cases were reported from Jammu division, 75 others were confirmed by officials in Kashmir Valley.

Giving district wise break-up, officials said, Srinagar reported 46, Baramulla 2, Budgam 4, Pulwama 8, Kupwara 4, Anantnag 3, • More On P10

IED Attacks A Major Threat: CRPF DG Says 215 Militants Killed In J&K By State Forces In 2020

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Calling IED attacks a "major threat", the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) chief on Thursday said even the best technology available currently is "not perfect" and the force is scouting for better solutions to stop troop casualties caused by these crude bombs.

"Yes, it is a major threat. There are tools to detect IEDs (improvised explosive devices) but none of them is perfect. This is a field in which internationally all organisations are trying," CRPF director general A P Maheshwari said during a press conference.



He was asked if they have found a technology that effectively checks this menace that has claimed the lives of hundreds of CRPF troops and maimed many others in the last decade. IED attacks are majorly carried

out in the Maoist violence-affected states and the CRPF said it has detected 460 such devices from all across the country, including Jammu and Kashmir and northeastern states.

As many as 418 recoveries of these crude explosives, hidden beneath black top roads and jungle tracks to target security forces, have been recovered from the Naxal violence-hit areas in 2020.

The DG said IED attacks are a "challenge" for the security forces and the menace gets magnified in the core Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas as one "cannot even walk an inch without being careful". The core areas • More On P10

West Pak Refugees Protest 'Denial' Of Govt Jobs

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: West Pakistan refugees on Thursday held protests across the city against the Jammu and Kashmir administration alleging that they are being denied government jobs despite abrogation of Article 370 and the community being granted citizenship rights.

They claimed that a few days back police officials turned them away despite some youth of their community passing all the required mandatory tests for selection in the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

However, no immediate response to their allegations was

available from the police. Led by West Pakistan refugees action committee president Laba Ram Gandhi, over 300 West Pakistan refugees held protests and raised slogans demanding justice by providing government jobs to their wards and benefits of the central government schemes to their families as is applicable to the citizens of the union territory.

"We are holding protests today in support of our demand for government jobs as per the due process of being citizens of Jammu and Kashmir," Gandhi told reporters here.

He said that a few days back, there was a • More On P10



KASHMIR In Capital: A 'Piece Of Persia' In Delhi

Romaan Arora

Some thirty years ago, in the winter of Kashmir's discontent, Abdul Majeed Chaku came to Delhi by his own car. Fleeing the searing strife in his homeland, he soon setup a small Kashmir in a new place.

"The motive was to keep the craft active across India," Majeed, now in his early 70s, says. "The raging conflict back home had crippled the craft as well as the craftsmen. Somebody had to think out of the box and rise to the occasion."

Years before his crafty move,

Majeed was aspiring to become a doctor. Despite securing a medical seat, he ended up becoming the heir-apparent of his craftsman clan.

"I don't regret that sacrifice," Chaku, the owner of Heritage Woodcrafts, continues.

"This (woodwork) is our family business, and as I was the eldest son, I was bound to support and sustain it."

Soon as started shouldering his family legacy, he realized how the craft had made Kashmiris empowered during some treacherous times.

"This spirit of empowerment belongs to Amir-i-Kabir

Shah-e-Hamdan who introduced this craft in Kashmir," he says. "I'm only trying my best to continue the Persian saint's legacy."

Experience speaks for itself, and Chaku is a living example of it.

More than 54 years of the craft enterprise has taught him the quintessential differences between working in Srinagar and Delhi.

"Delhi gets affluent craftsmen from everywhere," the craftsman continues.

"As a result, people here want an exclusive product for themselves. I've entertained high-end craft customers

with unique products."

For many of them, Chaku had to make wooden wall-frames for Kashmiri pashmina, copper utensils and carpets.

"The same goes for Paper Mache crafts," he says. "This fashion sense of using Kashmiri handicrafts in interior designing isn't common in the valley. But in Delhi, it has helped me to promote my skills and Kashmiri handicrafts."

To meet this craft demand, he had to resort to smart work.

"Effective and efficient management is also crucial," he says.

"I've such a fine • More On P10