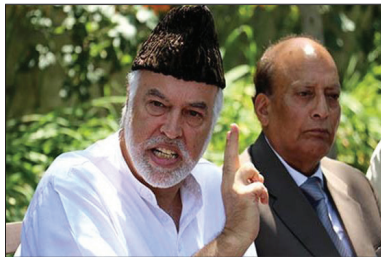




Maximum : 9.2°  
Minum : 0.2°  
Humidity : 92%

SUNSET  
Today 06:12 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 07:20 AM



## P3 NEWS

### MUZAFFAR SHAH HITS OUT AT FAROOQ ABDULLAH

Senior Vice President, Awami National Conference, Muzaffar Shah Wednesday hit out at National Conference President Farooq Abdullah over ...

## P7 WORLD

### WILL THE COVID-19 VACCINE WORK AS WELL IN PATIENTS WITH OBESITY?

When researchers began to develop what they hoped would be an effective COVID-19 vaccine, they already knew that H1N1 influenza – a novel virus...



## P11 SPORTS

### 'JOE ROOT CAN BREAK ALL OF ENGLAND'S BATTING RECORDS,' SAYS NASSER HUSSAIN

Former England captain Nasser Hussain feels incumbent Joe Root is "arguably" the country's best ever player of spin...



## Widom Quote!

We live in an age when unnecessary things are our only necessities.

— Oscar Wilde

## NEWS DIGEST

### 10 Teachers Suspended In B'pora

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Education Officer (CEO) Bandipora on Wednesday suspended ten teachers of Gurez, Hajin and Bandipora zone for failing to verify the applications of students on National Scholarship portal. The order issued by the CEO mentioned that teachers haven't taken the communications seriously. The teachers of various zones have failed to verify the applications of students on National Scholarship. **▶ More On P10**

### CASO Carried Out In Kreeeri

**SRINAGAR:** The government forces on Wednesday launched a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in Kreeeri area of Baramulla district. A joint team of army's 52 RR and police launched CASO at Bangdara village of Kreeeri after receiving information about suspicious movement of militants in the area, news agency CNS reported. The joint team, the report said, carried out door to door search operation after sealing. **▶ More On P10**

### Sopore Says Goodbye To Tongas

**SRINAGAR:** The administration in Sopore town in north Kashmir's Baramulla district has banned the movement of horse carts (Tongas) within the municipal limits of the town from Thursday saying the move is aimed at "de-congesting the area." Interestingly, several grievances were submitted to Lieutenant Governor's office by the locals stating that the town mostly remains under. **▶ More On P10**

### Panthers Party Leader Joins JKAP In Jammu

**JAMMU:** S Zorawar Singh, a former General Secretary of the National Panthers Party (NPP), Wednesday joined the Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP), led by ex-minister Altaf Bukhari, a JKAP spokesman said here. Singh and over a dozen of his colleagues were welcomed into the party fold by senior JKAP leaders including former minister Dilawar Mir, General Secretary Vijay Bakaya and provincial president Manjit Singh at the. **▶ More On P10**

### J&K Cong Protests Fuel Hike

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir Congress Wednesday staged a sit-in outside the party headquarters here against the BJP-led Centre over the "incessant hike" in the prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas. The protest was organised by Jammu district Congress committee (Urban) and was led by senior party leaders including former minister Raman Bhalla. Carrying placards denouncing the. **▶ More On P10**

# No Civilian Was Aware About August 5 Move: GOI



File Photo: Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The government on Wednesday denied that civilians, including a journalist, were privy to information related to the abrogation of Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

The Central government got the approval of Parliament on August 5, 2019 for the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories.

No sir, Union Minister of State for **▶ More On P10**

## RESTRICTIONS ON MOBILE DATA service in all the remaining Districts of Jammu and Kashmir have been revoked by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir

## J&K Logs 45 New Corona Cases

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** With 45 fresh cases, Jammu and Kashmir's COVID-19 tally climbed to 1,25,052 on Wednesday, while one more fatality pushed the death toll due to the disease to 1,945 in the Union Territory, officials said.

Six of the fresh coronavirus cases were reported from the Jammu division, while 39 were recorded in the Kashmir division, they added.

The officials said Srinagar district recorded the highest number of 23 cases, including six tourists. While eight districts did not report any fresh case of the coronavirus infection, 11 other districts recorded fresh cases in single digits.

The number of active COVID-19 cases has risen to 605 in the Union Territory, while 1,22,502 patients have recovered so far, the officials said.

One more fatality due to the viral. **▶ More On P10**

## PMAY SCHEME

### RTI Movement Alleges Bungling, Demands CBI Probe

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement on Wednesday alleged large-scale bungling in the centrally sponsored Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) housing scheme for homeless and demanded a CBI probe to identify the touts who are preventing the funds from reaching the real beneficiaries.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, Chairman RTI Movement, Dr. Raja Muzaffar said that national flagship scheme PMAY earlier known as Indira Awas Yojna (IAY) continues to be mismanaged. He said that PMAY Rural and Urban both are not implemented transparently and an urgent probe is needed to identify the beneficiaries who have been allotted the money during. **▶ More On P10**

## Ladakh Stand-Off: Chinese, Indian Troops Start 'Synchronised' Disengagement

Press Trust Of India

**BEIJING/NEW DELHI:** The front-line troops of China and India at the south and north banks of the Pangong Lake in eastern Ladakh started "synchronised and organised" disengagement from Wednesday, the Chinese defence ministry said, in what is seen as a forward movement in the overall disengagement process to defuse the over nine-month border standoff.

There was no official



comment by either the Indian defence ministry or the Indian Army on the Chinese

## HC Seeks Report On Non-Completion Of Bridges By JKPC

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday granted government two more weeks' time for "action taken report" regarding completion of bridges in Kashmir being constructed by JKPC and languishing due to the paucity of the funds.



A bench of Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur passed the orders after Additional Advocate General M A Chashoo sought more time after the court observed that "fresh action taken report" in terms of order on November 27 last year has not been filed. "As prayed, two weeks' further time is allowed for filing the report," the. **▶ More On P10**

## Ex-Govt Officer Booked For Swindling Rs 25L

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday booked a former Finance department official for being allegedly involved in misappropriating pension funds to the tune of over Rs 25 lakh, an official said.

The case against ex-head cashier of Reasi Treasury Thakur Dass was registered following a written communication from Deputy Director (Central), Accounts and

Treasuries, Finance department, Mohammad Iqbal Ganaie, a spokesperson of the Crime Branch, Jammu, said.

The complainant alleged Dass, who was entrusted with the payment of pensions to the rightful claimants and have domain over the government exchequer, deliberately and fraudulently credited Rs 24,85,340 into an account of his daughter-in-law, Madhu Rani, and also transferred Rs 31,775 into his personal account. **▶ More On P10**

## Dry Weather Conditions To Continue

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** Kashmir continued to reel under cold weather conditions with the minimum temperature dropping in most parts of the Valley, officials said on Wednesday. The meteorological department has predicted dry but slightly cold weather for the next few days, they said.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 1.6 degrees Celsius, down from the previous night's 1.2 degrees Celsius, the officials said. Qazigund recorded a minimum of minus 3.8 degrees Celsius, up from the previous night's low of minus 4.3 degrees. **▶ More On P10**

## Traffic Allowed On Highway

Fresh traffic from Jammu to Srinagar was on Wednesday allowed to ply on 270-km-long national highway, which connects Kashmir valley with the rest of the country, after clearing stranded vehicles till late last evening. However, only stranded trucks and. **▶ More On P10**

# Inside Kashmir's Cyberspace—Where Scams Are Fuelling New Combat

Zaid Bin Shabir

When a battery of counterinsurgents arrived to pursue "brigands" sitting behind screens this chilling winter, it was the departure from the usual combat where 'secret house' gets blown and nemesis retrieved dead from the smouldering rubble.

In that frigid day of January 2021, the raids were conducted at the three different places in Srinagar. The offensive came in the backdrop of multiple scams rocking the valley.

At Srinagar's Natipora area, a pack of plainclothes police first

appear knocking at the door of a new relay station. It was followed by a storm-trooping by masked cops in camouflage and bullet-proof vests.

The sudden entry silenced the buzzing ambiance inside. The policemen warned everyone to stay at their occupied places but the fear of being arrested had coerced many office workers to try to hide inside other rooms; few others tried to dump the electronic gadgets.

The masked men took hold of everyone, even the catering assistants and janitor of the office. The busted people were immediately put inside the back of police vehicles, their



devices rested with few cops who had seized them inside clean zipper storage bags.

The arrested people remained oblivious to all the troubles that were coming

their way when their own devices would turn up evidence against them.

After everyone was intricately questioned about their involvement in the growing scam menace in Kashmir, the innocents were allowed to leave without being charged of any crime but around 23 people who had an "involvement in duping victims" were immediately arrested.

Among the 23 people arrested, the main operators of the group were still missing and when the police approached them, they had already succeeded in getting an interim bail from the High Court. The

same legal approach was undertaken by the Legal team of the already arrested people from the raid. All of the accused were let out within just a week of their arrest.

The cybercrime has now submitted the data carved out from the pen drives, hard disk and mobile phones that were confiscated from the accused. "We've enough proof to assist our claim that the arrested people have a full hand involvement in scamming people," Tahir Ashraf, the cyber police chief, told Kashmir Observer.

The online scam has apparently taken a quantum jump,

with the Cyber Police Station receiving more than 300 complaints from various people since its establishment in November 2019.

The major complaints are about misuse of social media which includes creation of fake accounts that are later used for cyber bullying, duping people, child-pornography and online harassment.

One of the victims of this cybercrime was Mehran, a young graduate student from Srinagar's Bemina.

Mehran had returned to Kashmir in March 2020 when the sudden outbreak of the pandemic had. **▶ More On P2**