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P5 STATE

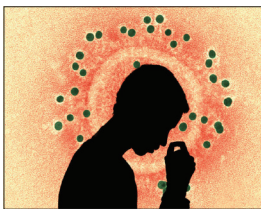
## DIR TOURISM INVITES TRAVELLERS TO VALLEY'S SCENIC LOCATIONS

Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department Thursday held a road show at Ahmedabad in Guajrat as part of its promotional campaigns across India to attract tourists...

P7 THINK

## MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESS – A SILENT PANDEMIC

Mental Illness has turned out to be a next major global health challenge, making it a matter of urgent concern considering the enormous distress and burden with subsequent after....



P11 SPORTS

## 'BEN STOKES WAS SWEARING AT ME, TOLD VIRAT BHAI TO HANDLE IT,' MOHAMMED SIRAJ ON 4TH TEST FACEOFF

India pacer Mohammad Siraj on Thursday said England all-rounder Ben Stokes swore at him on the opening....



## Quote!

Believe you can and you're halfway there.  
— Theodore Roosevelt

## NEWS DIGEST

### J&K Logs 79 New Corona Cases, 1 Death

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday recorded 79 new COVID-19 cases, taking the tally to 1,26,772, while one fresh death was reported in the past 24 hours, officials said. Out of the fresh cases, 14 were from the Jammu Division and 65 from the Kashmir Division of the union territory, they said. The officials said Srinagar district recorded the highest of 47 cases, followed by 12 in Jammu district. While 10 districts **More On P10**

### Shab-i-Meraj Holiday Postponed

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday postponed the holiday on the occasion of Shab-i-Meraj from March 11 to March 12. "In partial modification of Government Order No. 1159-JK (GAD) of 2020 dated 24-12-2020, it is hereby ordered that the holiday on account of Shab-i-Meraj shall now be observed on 12th of March, 2021 (Friday) instead of 11th March, 2021 (Thursday)," reads an **More On P10**

### LG Takes First Jab Of Covid Vaccine

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha took his first dose of Coronavirus vaccine here in this winter capital on Thursday. "I have taken the vaccine today. It was a smooth process. I urge all the eligible people to come forward and get the vaccine dose. The vaccines are safe and I congratulate all the scientists for producing the vaccine," the Lt Governor said after taking his first dose of the **More On P10**

### Soldier Hangs Himself Inside BB Cant

**SRINAGAR:** An Army man was found dead here on Thursday in a suspected case of suicide, officials said. Rifleman Anup Kumar (28), who was posted on sentry duty at the Badambagh cantonment in Jammu and Kashmir, was found hanging from the ceiling of the sentry post at the main gate at Batwara here with a light machine gun's loop. Kumar hailed from Haryana's Bhiwani, the officials **More On P10**

### Police Busts Fake Job Racket

**SRINAGAR:** Police on Thursday said that a gang of at least five persons allegedly running a job racket was busted in Sumbal area of Bandipora district. On receipt of a written complaint, an investigation was set in motion under FIR No. 23/2021 under sections 420, 120(B) at Police station Sumbal, a police official said. He said during the course of investigations, it surfaced that the gang was involved in luring gullible persons to pay money in lieu of **More On P10**

## Srinagar Least Liveable City In India: Survey

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Once known as Venice of the East, capital city of Kashmir is not liveable any more, according to the governments own 'Ease of Living Index'. Bengaluru was adjudged the most liveable among 111 cities in India followed by Pune, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Surat, Navi Mumbai, Coimbatore, Vadodra, Indore and Greater Mumbai. Of the 49 cities ranked on livability index in the 'million-plus population' category, Delhi figures at the 13th spot and Srinagar at the bottom. According to the index released



File Photo

by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Shimla topped the category of cities with 'population less than million'.

In this category, Bhubaneswar was ranked second, Silvassa came third, and they were followed by Kakinada, Salem, Vellore,

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Srinagar Listed At Bottom Of 49 Cities With A Million-Plus Population.

Gandhinagar, Gurgaon, Davangere and Tiruchirappalli. Muzaffarpur was at the bottom of the list of 62 cities that were ranked

on livability index in the 'less than million population' category. Ghaziabad and Meerut figured at the 30th and the 36th spot in the 'million-plus population' category respectively, while Allahabad is at the 32nd position and is followed by Patna (33rd). Faridabad is ranked 40th in this category. Performance of the cities have been measured on four broad parameters governance and social, physical and economic infrastructure. The government said the 'Ease of Living Index' is an assessment tool that evaluates the quality of life and the impact of various **More On P10**

## Govt Service Rules Tightened

# No Salary For New Entrants Without CID Verification

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir government on Thursday made verification from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) mandatory for new entrants into government service to withdraw salary and other allowances. "In terms of Government Order No. 1918-GAD of 1997 dated 09.12.1997, read with Government Order No. 1328-GAD of 2016 dated 07.12.2016, security clearance from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has been made mandatory for drawing salary and allowances of new entrants into government service," reads an order issued by Commissioner-Secretary, General Administration Department (GAD), Manoj Dwivedi.

"It is however, been observed that these instructions are not being adhered to in some Departments/Subordinate offices, as a



File Photo

result of which many individuals with dubious character antecedents and conduct have been paid salaries and allowances, without obtaining their mandatory CID verification," the order says. The order issued by Dwivedi directs all Administrative Secretaries/Divisional Commissioners/Deputy Commissioners/Heads of the Departments and Managing Directors of all

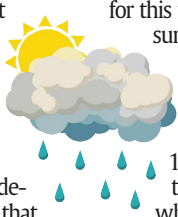
PSUs/Corporations to identify such cases and ensure in the Government Service is paid salary/allowances till verification by the CID.

"Further, with a view to expedite verification process, a simplified mechanism has been devised in consultation with the Criminal Investigation Department, which is enclosed as Annexure-A to this Circular and may be adopted," the order adds.

## MeT Predicts Wet Weekend, Issues 'Yellow Warning'

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The weatherman on Thursday forecast widespread rains on March 7 even as the minimum temperatures increased in Kashmir Valley, officials said on Thursday. A meteorological department official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 3.9 degree Celsius against 2.8



degree Celsius on the previous night. The temperature was 1.7 degree Celsius above normal for this time of the year in this summer capital, the official said. Qazigund recorded a low of 2.2 degree Celsius against 1.4 degree Celsius on the previous night while the mercury settled at 2.1 degree Celsius at the **More On P10**

## No Traffic On Highway Today

The Jammu-Srinagar highway, the only surface link connecting Kashmir with the outside world, shall remain shut on Friday owing to weekly maintenance and repair work **More On P10**

## LG Takes Note Of Delay In Tendering Power Projects Directs Officers To Fix Responsibility, Take Action For Non-Compliances

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Taking strong note of the delays in tendering and awarding of power projects, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Thursday directed officials to fix responsibility and take strict action for the non-compliances.

Chairing the third high level meeting with the team of experts from Power sector, senior administration officials and Power Development Corporation Limited to revamp the Power Supply System in J&K, here at Raj Bhavan on Thursday, the LG directed the concerned officers to increase the pace of



works undertaken to ensure mitigation of power-related issues to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, an official spokesperson said.

The LG, he said, passed strict instructions to remove all bottlenecks and hurdles that impede the timely completion of

augmentation and restoration works of various power projects. "While taking a strong note of the delays in tendering and awarding of projects, the Lt Governor asked the concerned officers to fix responsibility and take strict action for the non-compliances. **More On P10**

## LoC Truce Cheers Up Uri Residents

Press Trust Of India

**KAMALKOTE:** A week after the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan on the Line of Control, residents along the border have heaved a sigh of relief and hoped it is followed in letter and spirit without any violations.

India and Pakistan had announced on February 25 that they have agreed to strictly observe all agreements on ceasefire along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir and other sectors.

In Sarai Bandi village in Kamalkote sector in Uri area of North Kashmir's Baramulla district, about three kilometres from the LoC, the **More On P10**

# Traumatic Kashmir's 'Too Many Claimants' Denied Mental Health Insurance

Aaqid Andrabi

A tight and overly-cramped lane in Downtown Srinagar leads to a barely maintained one-storey house of Abdul Manan.

One can see his two pre-teen sisters running and frolicking around in the tiny front yard.

Until November 2019, Manan had a job with a private firm in Kashmir. He found himself left hanging high and dry when he lost his means of survival due to the layoffs that ensued from the perpetual blockade imposed on the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019.

As much as lack of employment is a problem, Manan was diagnosed with chronic depression nine years back. The loss of a job didn't help that.

Coming from a lower-middle-class family from Central Kashmir, Manan has to fend for a family of 6 and would do so at a paltry salary of Rs 9000 a month.

To manage all that, he had to borrow money from a private money-lender who comes knocking every fortnight for the repayment.

Manan's medicines and psychiatric medicinal expenses were a bit too steep for him, so he opted for an insurance policy from a private insurance provider.

He was in for a bitter surprise when he found out that the provider has placed a maturity period of a few years on the 'pre-existing' conditions and won't be covered during that period by his insurance provider. His medicines alone cost him Rs 10,000 a month plus fortnightly psychiatric consultations, costing Rs 3,000 per session.

Running helter-skelter to remedy



the same didn't prove to be of much use since his insurance provider cited the health cover conditions, denying the consumer any benefits until the

maturity period has lapsed. The distressed downtowner's trysts with his mental health and lack of support show the irrefutable need for

comprehensive insurance policies covering mental illness and disorders.

Data gathered by Kashmir Observer from various district hospitals of the Kashmir division suggests that, on average, a specific district hospital has a monthly footfall of 300 patients who come in with one or the other mental disorder or illness.

The infrastructure necessary to deal with conditions is of sub-optimal levels, to say the least.

Our investigation led us to conclude that the number of patients consulted at the district levels snowball into a much bigger quantum for the entire Kashmir division in its entirety.

The dedicated psychiatric hospital at Rainawari, Srinagar, on average, houses at least 300-400 patients every month. These numbers don't include those patients who are treated and

sent home. That amounts to a rather significant caseload when looked at in the larger context.

The data provided by the Baramulla district hospital shows a fair amount of patient footfall who come seeking psychiatric treatments.

In January 2021, 370 patients sought psychiatric help at the hospital, showing the common masses' dire state of mental affairs. Even the previous surveys and studies have painted the distressed mental state in the strife-laden valley.

In an MSF survey (Medicine Sans Frontiers/Doctors Without Borders) in 2015, 45 per cent of the adult population in Kashmir valley showed significant mental distress symptoms.

Among those surveyed, 41 per cent exhibited symptoms of probable depression, 26 per cent showed signs of potential anxiety, **More On P10**