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P3 CITY

## KTA CALLS 'RE-REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES' ORDER ARBITRARY

The Kashmir Trade Alliance members on Wednesday held a strong protest at Press Enclave in Srinagar against the recent order issued by the Regional Transport Officer...

P5 THINK

## LET THIS SPRING HELP YOU REFLECT, BE CURIOUS, AND FIND PURPOSE

In my private practice and with family and friends, recent conversations have been focused on loss, change, and renewal. This has been a long year, filled with sadness, fear, anxiety, uncertainty, and for many, loss. Many have lost family and friends...



P7 STATE

## PULWAMA RESIDENT MORTGAGES VILLAGERS' LAND TO AVAIL RS 86L LOAN

In a major fraud, a resident of South Kashmir's Pulwama district availed a loan of rupees 86 lakhs from a local branch of J&K Bank, 17 years ago, by mortgaging land...



**Widom Quote!**

Tell the truth, or someone will tell it for you  
—Stephnie Klein

### NEWS DIGEST

#### 2 OGWs Arrested In Budgam: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested two Lashker-e-Taiba militant associates in central Kashmir's Budgam district. Aqub Ahmad Wani and Laloo Sheshgari Hyderpora and Aadil Manzoor of Nadargund Humhama were arrested by a joint team of police, army's 53 RR and 43 Bn CRPF. **More On P2**

#### BRO Worker Killed In Zojila Avalanche

SRINAGAR: A Border Roads Organisation (BRO) worker died on Wednesday after getting trapped under an avalanche near Zojila pass on the Srinagar-Ladakh highway. Ghulam Rasool Bhat, a resident of Gagangar in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district was buried alive under the snow avalanche that hit a beacon vehicle near Zojila pass. **More On P2**

#### Minor Boy Goes Missing In Qazigund

SRINAGAR: A minor boy has gone missing in Chowgam area of Qazigund in south Kashmir's Kulgam district triggering fears that he may have been taken away by a wild animal. Four-year-old Nazakat Hussain Khan went missing on Tuesday night around 09:00 pm from his home in Chowgam village of the south Kashmir district, an official said. **More On P2**

#### Man Nabbed With Explosives In Doda: Army

JAMMU: The army on Wednesday said that it arrested a man and recovered explosives from his possession in Doda district of Jammu province. In a statement issued to media, army said that explosive material was recovered on Tuesday during an operation conducted on the basis of specific intelligence at Gundna area of Doda district. It said that the recovery includes. **More On P2**

#### Burglary Sparks Protest In Kupwara

SRINAGAR: The shopkeepers in north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Wednesday staged a protest after unknown burglars looted at least eight shops during the intervening night. The shops, as per an aggrieved shopkeeper, among others include two of footwear besides one each of textile, fast-food outlet, vegetable, stationary and hardware, belonging to Aftab Ahmad. **More On P2**

# 50 Students Of Two Schools Test Covid Positive



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

## Six Schools Ordered Shut

Agencies

Authorities on Wednesday ordered closure of six schools in central, south and north Kashmir after detection of Covid-19 positive cases from these institutions, officials said. An official said that the Noorani Public. **More On P2**

## J&K Logs 373 New Cases, 4 More Deaths

Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday recorded 373 fresh COVID-19 cases, including 70 travellers, raising the tally to 1,30,960, while four more people succumbed to the infection, bringing the death toll to 1,994. **More On P2**

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: At least 50 students of two schools in Kulgam and Anantnag districts of Jammu and Kashmir tested positive for COVID-19 on Wednesday, forcing the

authorities to close the institutions for a week, officials said. Thirty-six students of Noorani Public School in Khull area of Damhal Hanjipora in South Kashmir's Kulgam district tested positive during a random sampling drive. **More On P2**

'DURBAR MOVE'

## Offices To Open In Srinagar On May 10

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government is shifting base to summer capital Srinagar as part of the biannual 'durbar move', and the civil secretariat, other move offices and the Raj Bhavan will start functioning there from May 10, officials said on Wednesday. The practice of 'durbar move' -- under which the administration

**More On P2**

## PLEA ON ISLAMIC BANKING

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has granted three more weeks to the Union Finance Ministry as well as Reserve Bank of India besides Jammu and Kashmir government to respond to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking the introduction of Islamic Banking

in Jammu and Kashmir. A division bench of Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Sindhu Sharma granted the time on the request by the counsel appearing for the parties. The J&K bank has already informed the court it has unnecessarily been made a party as it doesn't see a role for itself in Islamic banking. Jammu and **More On P2**



## Chhibber Gets 6 More Months Extension

Jammu & Kashmir Bank on Wednesday said the RBI has extended the term of RK Chhibber as the Chairman and Managing Director for a period of six months. "Pursuant to Regulation 30 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure. **More On P2**

## Passport Denial Upsets Mehbooba

"Where Does One Go When Judiciary 'Wash Hands Off' Matters Involving Fundamental Rights?"

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday asked where does a person go when the judiciary, the only recourse left, "wash their hands off" matters involving fundamental rights "Under BJP's rule, Indian constitution is being undermined

time & again. Only option & recourse left is the judiciary. Once they too decide to wash their hands off matters which involve our fundamental rights where does one go?" Mehbooba wrote on Twitter. The PDP chief's remarks came after the Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Monday. **More On P2**

## Army Chopper Makes Emergency Landing In Ramban

Press Trust Of India

BANIHAL: An Army chopper with eight people on board made an emergency landing on Wednesday in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir after developing some technical snag, a police officer said. Senior Superintendent of Police, Ramban, P D Nitya said all the passengers are safe and the chopper later left for its destination after the fault was rectified. **More On P2**

## J&K Deporting 150 Detained Rohingyas

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The process of deporting over 150 Rohingya Muslims detained here in a special drive against illegal immigrants early this month has been initiated in Jammu and Kashmir, an official spokesman said on Wednesday. These people are presently lodged at a 'holding centre' in Kathua district, where all necessary facilities are being provided

to them, the spokesman said. He said Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Raghav Langer on Wednesday visited the centre at Hiranagar and expressed satisfaction over the facilities being provided to the inmates. On March 6, about 168 Rohingyas were shifted to the holding centre after they were found living illegally in Jammu city during a verification drive. The Rohingyas are a Bengali-dialect. **More On P2**

## Pak Militant Given 10-Years Jail Term

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: A special NIA court here has sentenced a Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant to 10 years' imprisonment for conspiring to carry out militant attacks at different places in India, including Delhi, after crossing over to Jammu and Kashmir, an official said on Wednesday. Bahadur Ali, the Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba militant, was convicted by the special judge for NIA cases in Patiala House Court on Friday. **More On P2**



spokesperson said. He said that the guards deployed for the security of protected persons accommodated in the hotels were. **More On P2**

# Anguish, Anger In Kashmir Over 'Mass Detention' Of Non-JK Number Vehicles

Auqib Javed

Among 500 vehicles, reportedly seized within last five days across Kashmir, is a car of a Kashmiri trader on a home visit.

He frothed from his mouth as he turned up along with distressed dozens in Regional Transport Officer (RTO).

"This is a sheer discrimination against us Kashmiris," said Showkat Ahmad, a Kashmiri handicraft trader in Delhi. "They just need a pretext to do these inhuman experiments on us every now and then. This mass detention of cars is yet another move to cripple Kashmir."

Ire stemmed from the surging vehicle owners—standing in the



restive queue to re-register their seized vehicles.

The residential-style RTO office became a packed house

after a circular came from its top executive recently —directing all vehicle owners with outside registration mark to apply for a



new registration.

"The owners of such vehicles have been asked to submit the relevant documents of their

vehicle to the transport office within a period of 15 days of the circular failing which action warranted shall be initiated

against them," the order reads, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer.

Almost implemented on a war-footing, many in Kashmir believe that there was a clear security directive behind the move.

A top official in the RTO office confirmed that the circular cropped up due to security issues.

"The order came from the Chief Secretary's office and it asked police and our RTO department to do the needful," the official said.

But RTO Kashmir, Ikramullah Tak, the talk of the town at the moment, denied any security angle behind the order.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Vijay Kumar, however, told reporters on

March 30 that few vehicles seized recently were used by militants to carry out attacks on security forces, including the one used for Lawaypora attack.

"That's why RTO has issued an order making it mandatory for vehicles with outside registration to register the same within 15 days," IGP Kumar said.

Once the circular came, South Kashmir's Anantnag district became one of the first districts to implement it.

"Four days ago, on my way to office, I was stopped at a checkpoint, and my Scorpio vehicle bearing New Delhi registration number was seized," said Hilal Bhat, a resident of Anantnag's Mattan area.

"The RC (Registration Certificate) was. **More On P2**