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J&K rolls out...

& Sessions Judges at district headquarters- one each in Distriet Samba, Bandipora, Ganderbal and Poonch.

It gave nod to creation of 40 new posts of different categories (10 each) at the new court complexes in the 4 selected districts having a financial implication of Rs. 258.245 lacs (salary) and Rs 21.657 lacs (NPS) per financial year.

The gradual increase in the population of Jammu and Kashmir has substantially enhanced the judicial work load which has necessitated the opening of new court complexes to cater to the increased public demand.

The Administrative Council extended relief under SRO 43 to the next of kin of victims who were non-residents of Jammu and Kashmir having died in the recent violence in the Kashmir valley, as per the eligibility criteria of the SRO.

This would enable the Government to provide cash compensation to this category of militancy affected people.

The AC approved the transfer of land measuring 39 Kanal 10 Marla at village Kutlehar, Tehsil & District Kathua to the Jal Shakti Department for construction of the main Ravi canal from Shahpur Kandi Dam to Basantpur.

Recently, the Government of J&K and Government of Punjab signed a fresh bilateral agreement on Shahpur Kandi Project which aims to provide water to the Union territory to enhance agricultural protection in the Kandi belt of Kathua and Samba districts.

In yet another decision, the AC approved the transfer of land measuring 60 Kanal at Village Haqanibad Punzwa, Tehsil Villigam, District Kupwara to the Youth Service & Sports Department for construction of a sports stadium.

The upcoming stadium will cater to the needs of local population as well of the youth from the 20 neighbouring villages by purposefully engaging 20,000 youth with sporting activities across a number of disciplines.

During this financial year, an amount of Rs. 100.00 lakh has also been earmarked for the development of the infrastructure, of which Rs. 50.00 lakhs stands allocated to the Department to kick-start the works at an earliest.

70 fresh COVID...

The number of active cases in the Union Territory stands at 838, while the recovery count has reached 3,26,596, the officials said.

The mucormycosis (black fungus) infection tally also remained unchanged in the UT at 49 as no fresh case was reported, they said.

Meanwhile, Ladakh recorded nine fresh Covid cases, taking the infection tally to 20,917, while no new fatality was recorded in the last 24 hours, officials said.

Currently, there are 41 active cases in the Union Territory, they said.

Ladakh has registered 208 Covid-related deaths -- 150 in Leh and 58 in Kargil -- since the outbreak of the disease last year.

Five Covid patients were discharged from hospitals in the last 24 hours, pushing the total recoveries to 20,668.

All the nine fresh cases were reported from Leh, the officials said, adding that a total of 288 sample reports in Ladakh tested negative for Covid.

The total number of COVID-19 active cases in Ladakh has gone up to 41, including 39 in Leh and two in Kargil district.

NIA raids in...

and Ladakh in August 2019.

The NIA said a case was registered on February 5 in pursuance of an order from the Ministry of Home Affairs relating to separatist and secessionist activities of the JeI, an unlawful association under the UAPA, even after its proscription on February 28, 2019.

The members of the organisation have been collecting funds domestically and abroad through donations particularly in the form of 'Zakat, Mowda and Bait-ul-Mal' purportedly to further charity and other welfare activities. But these funds are instead being used for violent and secessionist activities, the NIA said.

"The funds raised by the JeI are also being channelised to proscribed terrorist organisations such as Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and others through well organised networks of JeI cadres," an NIA spokesperson had said

"JeI has also been motivating impressionable youth of Kashmir and recruiting new members (Rukuns) in J&K to participate in disruptive secessionist activities," the spokesperson had said. The NIA said the investigation in the case continues.

Two more detained...

more persons have been detained on Wednesday. More persons are likely to be detained." A video purportedly showing objectionable slogans being raised by a group of persons following a T20 World Cup match between India and Pakistan on Sunday surfaced.

This triggered widespread protests by various social organisations in Samba district. Videos purportedly showing medical students at female and male hostels in Srinagar raising pro-Pakistan slogans have also surfaced.

Govt initiates process...

entrepreneurs to effectively clear the statutory liabilities of the company.

In a bid to improve the quality of infrastructure in road sector and fix responsibility for proper maintenance of assets, the Administrative Council approved the rollout of the 3rd party inspection guidelines in Jammu and Kashmir.

The new guidelines have been framed on the lines of established regulations in respect of road network created under the PMGSY scheme. Accordingly, structured control mechanism is being established in PW(R&B) Department to carry out scientific and periodic independent inspections for all district roads and state highways by undertaking monitoring via in-house departmental engineers and empanelled consultant of National stature.

The quality control mechanism also defines procedures and timelines to properly govern preparation of realistic detailed project reports (DPRs); preparation of bid documents and effective selection process for procurement of works; quality control on material and workmanship through enforcement of technical standard; and quality control requirement by regular testing, close supervision and inspection.

The mechanism has provisions for ensuring preparation of realistic detailed project report (DPR) on the basis of detailed drawings and design, with adequate attention to investigations and pre-construction activities which are essential for proper design and estimation of the project as per standard IS, IRC codes of practice and as per JKPWD Engineering Manual 2021 and other guidelines issued by the department for time to time; preparation of bid documents and effective selection process for procurement of works, based on proven capacity and ability of the contractors in accordance with the relevant guidelines; constant monitoring of projects by undertaking on-site supervision, Quality Control measures including materials and workmanship, primarily through testing.

The new guidelines make it mandatory to conduct independent quality tests in accordance with the standard codal requirements and verify that the quality management system is achieving its intended objectives. They also prescribe non-

release of payments to the contractors until works are inspected and graded satisfactory by the quality monitor.

Further, the Directorate of Design, Inspection & Quality Control which has the mandate for designing and quality control, shall be the Nodal Agency for implementation of Quality Control Mechanism independently under overall supervision of PW(R&B) Department as Quality Control Unit.

With the rollout of 3rd party inspection system, the quality of works executed under various programmes/schemes in road sector will be brought under scrutiny and responsibilities will be fixed for non/under performance of various agencies.

Villagers lost in...

When Budhal Police station in Rajouri district got the information, it rushed a police party to the upper reaches of snow-bound mountains for a search and rescue operation, the officer said.

The army also joined the search party along with a team from Jammu's Reasi district. The men were located at Mony Mahal area of south Kashmir's Shopian district, the officer said. Senior Superintendent of Police, Rajouri, Sheema Nabi Qasba, meanwhile, appealed to the people not to venture in snow-bound areas and only use tracks which are safe in winter season.

Proud of Army...

airport. The gallant actions of the Indian Army alongside the people of J&K turned the tide in favour of the Nation, he added.

"I salute the courage of the immortal heroes and saviours of Jammu Kashmir - Brigadier Rajinder Singh, Major Somnath Sharma, Lt Col Rai, Maqbool Sherwani, and all those great personalities who sacrificed their lives to save J&K from Pakistan Army's invasion", said the Lt Governor.

The new generation must be told about the barbaric atrocities perpetrated by Pakistan, killing of thousands of innocents. They must know the brutality executed by the neighboring country, also the biggest terror sponsor, the Lt Governor added.

Recalling the darkest hours of J&K's history, the Lt Governor said that the Pakistan Army disguised as Pashtun Tribals on reaching Baramulla created havoc and rampaged the entire town, killed, raped and looted the innocents, burnt houses, hospitals and churches. People of all religions, whoever had survived, left their homes and took refuge in the mountains.

The 1947 generation of Srinagar heaved a sigh of relief when on the intervening night of 4th and 5th November, the Pakistani army, marching towards the city, was gunned down by our brave soldiers near Trikulbal before reaching Srinagar.

Major Somnath Sharma, with a handful of soldiers fought bravely and attained martyrdom in defending Srinagar airport from being captured by the enemies. The bravery, patriotism with which our soldiers sacrificed their lives for the defense of Jammu and Kashmir is exemplary and inspirational for all, said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor also paid his humble tributes to the Maha Vir Chakra recipient Brigadier Rajinder Singh on his death anniversary. He sacrificed his life valiantly defending Jammu & Kashmir while fighting Pakistani invaders. His gallantry, indomitable spirit and significant contribution to uphold the unity and integrity of the motherland will continue to inspire generations to come, said the Lt Governor.

The nation is celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. It is our responsibility to pass on the legacy of valour and sacrifice of our brave-hearts who thwarted the nefarious designs of the enemies and protected the honour and integrity of our great nation, the Lt Governor observed.

Lieutenant General DP Pandey, GoC 15 Corps, in his address, threw light on the series of events that took place on this historic day. He paid homage to all the brave soldiers who were martyred in the October 1947 terror attack by Pakistan army.

Daredevil paratroopers of the Indian Army demonstrated a skydiving display to mark the occasion. A video clip and a drama performance depicting the events of Pakistan invasion, resilience of Kashmiri people, role of Maqbool Sherwani and Kashmiri women militia in defence of Kashmir was also showcased on the occasion.

Demonstration of insertion and extrication by Special Forces and maneuvers by Army Helicopters and Jets relived the memories of October 27, 1947.

Air Marshal Amit Dev, AOC-in-C Western Air Command; Dilbag Singh, DGP; Pandurang K. Pole; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Vijay Kumar, IGP Kashmir; Shahbaz Ahmad Mirza, DC Budgam; senior officials of Army, Air Force, Police and Civil Administration were present on the occasion.

Nazir Ahmad Khan, DDC Chairperson, Budgam; Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, Member, Central Waqf Council, and Chairperson, Waqf Development Committee of Union Ministry of Minority Affairs; Vikramaditya Singh, former Legislator and PRI members also attended the commemoration event.

1,500 smart meters...

along with random simulations, IT interventions including unification of billing softwares, energy accounting and 100 % metering and increasing billing and collection efficiencies through innovative solutions.

During the discussions, he stressed on system strengthening, financial stability of Corporations, resolving issues hampering the pace of projects, systematic improvements and augmentation of projects etc.

The Principal Secretary was apprised that the Smart Metering project in J&K has taken off well and nearly 15,000 meters are now being installed per month. The Principal Secretary directed that the pace of installation be accelerated so that the target of installation of 2 lakh smart meters by 2022 and 8 lakh meters by 2023 could be met well in time. He also asked the executing agencies to aim at achieving feeder-wise saturation while installing smart meters. He also directed that the DISCOMS should install 100% DT meters also so that energy accounting could be accurately carried out as a first step towards eliminating losses.

The Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) was also discussed in detail at the meeting. The Principal Secretary thanked the Ministry of Power for the generously funded scheme where 90% of the funds for strengthening the distribution system would be available as a grant to J&K. He urged the DISCOMS to take advantage of this grant and carry out detailed studies to identify bottlenecks in the system. 'We have to address key issues which are at the root of seasonal power woes in Jammu and Kashmir regions', he said and pressed on the need for survey of existing as well as new schemes to decide on the areas and sectors which need to be addressed at once. He advised RECPDCL to do a feeder wise energy accounting on behalf of the distribution companies. He also asked them to do a detailed system study and suggest the need for new additions as well as improvement and maintenance of existing networks. He also called for suggesting measures to reduce high HT/LT ratio.

The Principal Secretary maintained that all the measures being taken by the government are aimed at eliminating power losses and removing bottlenecks to uninterrupted and efficient power distribution in the region. Rohit Kansal called for unification of various automatic metering and billing systems in use and their

unification for seamless transition to more efficient billing methodology.

Ladakh standoff: Rajnath...

Army said the "constructive suggestions" made by it at the negotiations were neither agreeable to the Chinese side nor Beijing could provide any "forward-looking" proposals.

Referring to the situation along the border with Pakistan, Singh complimented the Indian Army's response to cross border terrorism.

"I compliment the excellent synergy between the CAPE/ police forces and the Army in tackling the menace of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The synergised operations in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is getting the region to a stable and peaceful environment conducive for overall growth and development," he said.

In his remarks, Singh reaffirmed the faith of the billion-plus citizens on the Indian Army as one of the most trusted and inspiring organisations in the country.

"I have full confidence in the senior Military leadership. The nation is proud of its Army and the government is committed to facilitate the Army in their forward movement, on road to reforms and capability developments," he said.

The four-day-long conference of the top commanders of the Indian Army began on Monday and it has carried out a comprehensive review of India's security challenges including in eastern Ladakh, other areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Jammu and Kashmir.

The defence minister complimented the forces for the high standard of operational preparedness and capabilities, saying he personally experienced it during visits to various forward areas.

Singh also paid tributes to all the "bravehearts" who made supreme sacrifices in the line of duty.

"The government is focused on enhancing combat capability and ensuring the welfare of soldiers," he said, adding the policy of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) in the defence sector is a major step to meet the future requirements of the armed forces.

He applauded the Indian Army for working towards this goal and remarked that 74 per cent of its contracts by the Army were awarded to Indian vendors in 2020-2021 in keeping with the 'self-reliant India' initiative.

"There are no budgetary constraints for capability development and meeting other requirements of the Army," he said.

Singh said that the decision to grant permanent commission to women officers in the Army is another significant decision that will ensure equal opportunities for professional growth to all officers irrespective of their gender.

He also complimented the significant contributions made by the Army in military diplomacy to further our national security interests by creating sustainable cooperative relationships with foreign Armies.

In his address, Singh also commended the efforts of the Border Roads Organisation saying it is working under difficult conditions to connect far-flung areas so that citizens living in those locations are connected.

He also applauded the armed forces for aptly incorporating the latest technologies.

The ministry said Singh appreciated the Army's efforts to develop niche technologies in collaboration with civil industries including premier educational institutions.

SC appoints expert...

judiciary shies away from.

In one of the significant verdicts in recent times over the issue of citizens' right to privacy, a bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana said that mere invocation of national security by the state cannot render the judiciary a "mute spectator" and asserted that indiscriminate spying on individuals in a democratic country cannot be allowed.

The bench appointed the panel, to be monitored by former apex court judge R V Raveendran, in response to the pleas seeking investigation into the alleged widespread and targeted surveillance of politicians, journalists and activists, among others using the Israeli firm NSO's Pegasus spyware.

Members of a civilized democratic society have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Privacy is not the singular concern of journalists or social activists. Every citizen of India ought to be protected against violations of privacy. It is this expectation which enables us to exercise our choices, liberties, and freedom, the apex court order said.

Writing the 46-page order for the bench, the CJI though acknowledged the issue of national security, the power of the authorities and limited scope of judicial review in such matters and said, however, this does not mean that the state gets a free pass every time the spectre of national security is raised.

The bench referred to the allegations that the Centre or state governments are party to the rights' deprivation of the citizens while declining the vehement submission of the central government to permit it to appoint an expert panel on its own, saying such a course would violate settled judicial principle against bias as justice must not only be done, but also be seen to be done'.

National security cannot be the bugbear that the judiciary shies away from, by virtue of its mere mentioning. Although this Court should be circumspect in encroaching the domain of national security, no omnibus prohibition can be called for against judicial review, said the bench, which also comprised Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli.

The government must necessarily plead and prove the facts which indicate that the information sought must be kept secret as their divulgence would affect national security concerns, it said.

FIR against 3...

police station in the early hours of Wednesday, the three students from the Raja Balwant Singh Management Technical Campus have been booked under Indian Penal Code sections 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups) and 505 (1)(B) (intent to cause, or which is likely to cause, fear or alarm to public).

They have been also charged under section 66F of the Information Technology Act. On Wednesday, various organisations, including right-wing outfits, protested at the Collectorate premises here and demanded action against the students.

They also submitted a memorandum to officials concerned in this connection.

According to faculty members of the college, members from right-wing outfits allegedly barged in to the college campus on Tuesday and staged a protest against the college and its students.

Dr Pankaj Gupta, the institute's director of administration and finance, said they forcefully entered the campus at around 3.45 pm on Tuesday when classes were being held and they also tried to gain access to the students' hostels.

"Their act was inappropriate and unacceptable. They did not even try to contact the college management and when they were stopped from entering the hostel premises, they began raising slogans against the college," Gupta said.

"The college has suspended the three students. But they still raised objectionable slogans to defame the college ," he said.

In protest to the incidents inside the college, its management said it has decided to indefinitely shut all its educational institutions and demanded action against the groups responsible.



Man found hanging

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: A man was found hanging in his house at Chenani on Wednesday.

As per details, Mukesh Nayak, son of Dadul Nayak, resident of West Bengal, presently staying at Mada area was found hanging in his house and was shifted to hospital where doctors declared him as brought dead. Police has registered a case and started investigation.

Battery stolen from truck

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Thieves on Wednesday stole battery, tyres and other goods from a truck parked in Kanachak area.

As per details, Sikandar Singh, son of Darshan Singh, resident of Gurha Singu, Samba, driver of a truck (JK02CT-8281) lodged a complaint with police that someone has stolen battery, tyres and other goods of his truck parked in Kanachak area. He further disclosed that truck was engaged in construction work of ring road and parked at night after work stopped.

Meanwhile, bike (JK02AD-9869) of a cop was also stolen from venue of Amit Shah's rally in Bhagwati Nagar area. The cop, namely Jaswant Singh, resident of Jogi Gate, has lodged a complaint with Canal Road Police in this regard.

Accused arrested for not appearing in Court

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: An accused was arrested on Wednesday for not appearing in Court since

long.

As per details, Davinder Singh, resident of Hoshiyarpur, Punjab who was accused in a murder case was arrested by police on the directions of Court as he was not attending the court since long. Today, when he appeared in Court and was unable to give satisfactory reply for not appearing in Court since long, he was arrested on directions of Judge.

Father arrested for raping daughter

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Wednesday arrested a man for raping his daughter in Gangval area. As per details, two sisters of Shanti Nagar, Gangval approached Gangval Police Station and stated that their farther has raped one of them and now physically torturing the other as well. The victim disclosed that her father has raped her several times and also administered alcohol to her forcefully. The younger daughter told that when her sister (victim) went to Chandigarh for some work, then her father started harassing her. The accused was identified as Janak Raj, son of Charan Dass. It was also stated that wife of accused died on 2014 after which he started raping his elder daughter.

Jail inmate dies under mysterious circumstances

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A jail inmate died under mysterious circumstances at Amphalla Jail on Wednesday. As per details, Shabir Ahmed, resident of Srinagar, who was lodged in Amphalla Jail in connection with drug-peddling case, fell ill. He was shifted to hospital where he died during treatment. Police has registered a case and started investigation.

Dropping of arms by drone: Accused taken on 10-day remand

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Satwari Police on Wednesday took an accused on remand for ten days who

was arrested in connection with drone arms dropping case. Irfan Ahmed Bhatt, son Farooq Ahmed, resident of Verinag Anantnag was arrested by police on 12 October. He had come to the area on that day to collect weapons dropped by drone, but as security was tightened, he went back without collecting weapon.

After police got clues about him, he was arrested and after interrogation, police arrested two more accused including selection grade constable of Jammu & Kashmir Police Ishfaq Malik, son of Nazir Ishfaq, resident of Verinag Anantnag and his companion Ghulam Rasool, son of Habib Ulla Mir, resident of Anantnag. Both were in touch with handlers sitting in Pakistan. They had information that weapons would be dropped from drones in Makwal sector. So far three people have been arrested in the case. The police have come to know about their some links with Kashmir during interrogation. It also came to fore that a house of the policeman is also in Nikki Tawi area of Jammu, where he lived for several days. He was working to help terrorists for a long time.

4 drug peddlers arrested; contraband substances recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

AWANTIPORA: Continuing efforts to eradicate menace of drugs from society, Police on Wednesday arrested 4 drug peddlers in Awantipora and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

As per details, officers from Police Station Khrew during daily routine checking at Wahab Sahab, intercepted a vehicle bearing registration number JK01M-7814 with four persons onboard. They were identified as Sahil Ahmed Jogi, son of Manzoor Ahmed Jogi, resident of Mattan Anantnag; Mohd Iqbal Bhat, son of Ab Salam Bhat, resident of Wahab Sahab; Manzoor Ahmad Sheikh, son of Ab Gani Sheikh and Ajaz Ahmed Sheikh, son of Ab Rehman Sheikh, both residents of Shar Shali. During checking, officers recovered 11 Kg contraband substances (5 Kg Poppy Straw and 6 Kg Cannabis) from their possession.

They were arrested and shifted to police station where they remained in custody. Vehicle used in commission of crime has also been seized. Accordingly, FIR No. 76/2021 under relevant sections of law was registered at Police Station Khrew and further investigation is under progress.

