

03 Jammu province in danger, 'Separate State' only solution: Ankur

09 Four killed in mishaps

10 Volleyball coaching camp concludes at Poonch

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Police constable martyred in terror attack at Srinagar

Ultra arrested from hospital in Shopian, grenade hurled at SFs party in Kulgam

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: A policeman was martyred by terrorists in the Batamalo area of the city on Sunday, officials said. He was identified as Constable Tausif Ahmad, they said. "At about 8 pm, terrorists fired upon JKP Constable Tausif Ahmad near his residence at SD Colony, Batamalo," the officials added. They said the cop was critically injured and was taken



to the SMHS hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead.

The area has been cordoned off, and a hunt has been launched to nab the attack-

ers, the officials added. In a related developments, terrorists hurled a grenade towards a security forces party in Kulgam district this evening, police said. No loss of life or injury has been reported so far in the incident. "At 6:25 pm, terrorists hurled a grenade upon 18 Bn CRPF party at Nehama chowk in district Kulgam which exploded on the roadside," a police official said.

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History-sheeter succumbs; toll in Jammu shooting rises to 3

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A history-sheeter, who was among two persons critically injured in a shooting incident here, succumbed to injuries on Sunday, raising the death toll in the incident to three, officials said. They said efforts are on to nab the two accused including a policeman who used his service rifle to shoot four persons after a brawl over some issue in Salehar village of Arnia in R S Pura on Friday. Bullet-riddled

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Be bridge of faith between party, common people: Modi to BJP members

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday asked BJP members to become a "bridge of faith" between the party and the common man and expressed confidence that the BJP will win the trust of people in the upcoming assembly polls in five states. Addressing the valedictory session of the BJP's national executive, Modi stressed that the BJP runs on the values of "Sewa, Sanklap aur



Sampanan (service, resolution and commitment)" and "does not revolve around a

family", urging its members to work for people, Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav said quoting the prime minister. In his address, Modi also mentioned the BJP's win in Telangana bypolls, its improved performance in Ellenabad assembly by-election in Haryana and local body elections in Tamil Nadu besides a rise in its vote share in an Andhra Pradesh by-election to assert that

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Maj Gen Prashant Srivastava takes over as GOC of Victor Force

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Major General Prashant Srivastava on Sunday took over as the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Army's south Kashmir-based counter-insurgency Victor Force, a defence spokesman said. Major Gen Srivastava took

over the charge from Major Gen Rashim Bali, who has moved to Delhi on an important assignment in the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Army), defence spokesman Col Emron Musavi said. He said Maj Gen Srivastava was

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LG's Grievance Cell comes under cloud; anonymous complaints lead to blackmail, harassment

ANCHOR
SPECIAL REPORT
JAMMU: The credibility of the Lieutenant Governor's Grievance Cell in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory has come under a dark cloud due to 'motivated' approach of some of the unscrupulous officials with growing reports of harassment pouring in at frequent intervals. At times, the harassment manifests in virtual blackmail.

Essentially formed with the honest intention of redressing the grievances and addressing the genuine problems of the public, the Cell has turned out to be an institution of 'settling scores' and harassing law abiding citizens on the basis of anonymous or pseudonymous complaints.

According to sources, the modus operandi being adopted is to engineer a complaint, order verification of the contents and give leverage to 'unscrupulous' investigating officials. This obviously leads to harassment or blackmail of the pointed person or persons in the complaint.

Such a mechanism is not new, either in Jammu and Kashmir or outside the Union Territory. This is a tested process for 'vested interests' to engage adversaries and rivals in official wrangling. The offshoot of such a vicious circle generally ends up in extortions and harassment. This is why the Central Vigilance Commission told on September 27, 2020 all government departments not to take cognizance of anonymous corruption complaints, saying any violation of this guideline will be "viewed seriously". The Commission said that earlier orders by the DoPT and the CVC prescribed that "no action would be taken on anonymous/pseudonymous complaints" by ministries/ departments/organisations. Also, the Government of Haryana last year decided not to take any action on anonymous and pseudonymous complaints. An order issued by the Chief Secretary, inter alia, said a large number of anonymous/pseudonymous complaints were submitted to the government, often to blackmail and intimidate the honest people. The order specifically directed that these complaints should be ignored. Besides, complaints containing vague allegations should not be filed without verification of the identity of the complainant, the order added.

Even the courts say that anonymous complaints shall not be entertained. After taking off with a big promise, the LG's Grievance Cell is facing credibility deficit-courtesy, a nexus between the officials and habitual anonymous complainants. It is not that grievances should not be redressed but at the same time, it is incumbent upon the officials dealing with these sensitive issues to verify the veracity of the complaints or the motivations behind these. Of course, the genuine complaints, submitted by the people with due identity, should be investigated fearlessly and guilty should be punished as per law. The genuine complainant will never shy away from giving his or her address and mobile number to facilitate the officials to reach out to the complainant to establish authenticity.

In the normal course, the Cell should satisfy itself about the genuineness of complaint by ascertaining it either through mobile phone or email or any other such platform but perhaps some officials are floating all the norms and entertaining anonymous complaints by virtue of which anonymous complainants start blackmailing or harassing the person concerned as the case may be, sending to winds all the rules of justice and by becoming party to such act.

This is not in the government sector only; the private sector too is facing this malady. The corporate giant Infosys has stated that anonymous letters with allegations and no evidence cannot be regarded as being credible.

With these shady experiments being faced by the government agencies and the private institutions, it is incumbent upon the administration to take cognizance of the complaints pouring in about the performance of the LG's Grievance Cell. After all, its credibility needs to be maintained to firm up the faith of the people in the institution.

Therefore, to keep the sanctity of LG Grievances Cell, instructions must be given to the staff concerned to adhere to the genuineness. Stern action must be taken against the unscrupulous officials, who entertain anonymous complaints for the other reasons.



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