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AC approves Inter...

Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The Administrative Council approved the transfer of land measuring 15 Kanal at village Majee, Tehsil & District Jammu to Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) on lease for 40 years. The Board will be constructing a Yatri Niwas and a Disaster Management Centre for better management of the yatra aimed at boosting religious tourism in the Union territory.

The construction of these facilities will enhance the number of pilgrims visiting the holy cave and subsequently generate substantial indirect employment. It will also ensure compliance to the orders of the Supreme Court of India and the National Green Tribunal.

Further, approval was given to the transfer of state land measuring 38 Kanal and 19 Marla at village Chak Jawala Tehsil Vijaypur, Samba to the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, for establishing the Composite Regional Centre (CRC) for Skill Development, Rehabilitation and Employment of persons with disability (Divyangjan) in Jammu District.

Once functional, the Center will provide multitude of services to the Persons with Disabilities in the field of education, employment, vocational training, research and manpower development, rehabilitation of Divyangs, and distribution of assistive aids through a team of experts, besides working on the principle of trans-disciplinary approach.

The Administrative Council further approved the transfer of land measuring 10 Kanal 11 Marla in favour of Health & Medical Education Department for establishing a 50-bedded integrated AYUSH Hospital in district Budgam. Establishment of the AYUSH Hospital will promote the Indian System of Medicine (ISM) in the region, provide health care facilities and strengthen the healthcare infrastructure in the area. The ISM focuses both on preventive medicine as well as the medical treatments for various ailments to promote overall health and fitness.

Moreover, a parcel of land measuring 28 Kanal at village Donipawa, Tehsil and District Anantnag was transferred to the School Education Department for establishing a Kendriya Vidyalaya. Opening of the school will provide education avenues to the children and will enhance the standard of education in the area.

Another parcel of land measuring 8 Kanal situated in village Ichgam, Tehsil & District Budgam was transferred to the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj for constructing the Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI); to provide skill development trainings to the youth and boost employment generation. The RSETI provides opportunities of learning diverse skill sets in multitude of trades including courses in driving, IT, plumbing, electrical, masonry, among others.

The Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department was also given 6 Kanal land for constructing office accommodation for the District Development Council, Baramulla. The Administrative Council also sanctioned transfer of 1 Kanal of land at Langate to the Finance Department for construction of a Treasury building.

Seven Admin Officers...

posted as In-charge Administrative Officer, Government Medical College, Jammu; Tariq Umar Handoo, awaiting orders of adjustment has been posted as In-charge Administrative Officer in SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar; Hamida Zargar, awaiting orders of adjustment has been posted as In-charge Administrative Officer in Government Medical College, Baramulla; Hilal Ahmad Wani, awaiting orders of adjustment has been posted as In-charge Administrative Officer in the Directorate of Family Welfare, MCH & Immunization, J&K; Ali Mohammad Malla, awaiting orders of adjustment has been posted as In-charge Administrative Officer in the Government Unani Medical College, Ganderbal, Kashmir; and Nazir Ahmad Mattoo, awaiting orders of adjustment has been transferred and posted as In-charge Administrative Officer in the Directorate of Motor Garages Department.

Newly constituted SIA...

were searched in compliance to the search warrant obtained from Hon'ble Court of Special Judge, Designated under NIA, Act Srinagar. 16 special teams had been constituted for conducting search simultaneously at these locations. The search at every place was started at the first light of the day and could be completed only in the late afternoon. Incriminating material such as documents, records, electronic gadgets having specific evidentiary value and bearing on the instant case were seized in the presence of the Executive Magistrates and other independent witnesses. Police Station Counter Intelligence Kashmir, Srinagar has registered the case on receipt of information through reliable sources that the suspected persons have made illegal and fraudulent entries in the revenue records for transferring Kahecharie land to Jamaitat-us-Saulihat Marhama illegally and fraudulently.

Besides, they also have aided and abetted the terrorists of various outfits to carry out terrorist and unlawful activities and cause large scale violence and unrest in J&K particularly, the Marhama area, which has seen a rise in terrorist and others secessionist activities. The investigation is also looking into the allegations that funds have been raised by the said institute by different ways for furtherance of terrorist activities.

Holding polls in...

total of seven plots have been bought by people from outside the Union territory. "All the seven plots are located in the Jammu division," the minister said.

DGP terms war...

and Kashmir Police is a brave force which has emerged victorious in different situations.

Fully aware that there is always an element of risk to our lives while doing our duties, we march ahead to protect our people, the DGP said.

He said that we have to work with commitment to ensure long lasting peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

He also paid rich tributes to the J&K police martyrs and said that Jammu and Kashmir Police would provide all possible help and assistance to the families of our fallen heroes. Two minutes of silence was also observed to pay homage to the police martyrs who sacrificed their lives in Zewan.

ADGP armed S.J.M. Gillani, IGP Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, DIG North Kashmir, Udaybhashkar Billa, SSP Baramulla Rayees Mohammad Bhat, CO-IR 20th Bn,

Cold wave intensifies in Kashmir

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Most places in Kashmir, including Srinagar city, recorded the coldest night of this winter as the cold wave conditions in the valley intensified, officials said on Wednesday.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 3.9 degrees Celsius on Tuesday night, down by 1.3 degrees from the previous night's minus 2.6 degrees Celsius.

It was the coldest recorded temperature in the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir this winter. The city had last week recorded minus 3.6 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district recorded a low of minus 8.6 degrees Celsius, down from minus 5.6 degrees Celsius previous night.

The resort was the coldest recorded place in the valley.

The officials said Pahalgam, which serves as the base camp for the annual Amarnath yatra, recorded a low of minus 6.4 degrees Celsius. The south Kashmir resort had recorded minus 2.8 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a low of minus 3.8 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund, the gateway town to the valley, recorded minus 4.2 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag recorded a low of minus 3.9 degrees Celsius.

The weather office has forecast colder nights towards the weekend with possibility of strong Western Disturbance affecting the region around Christmas.

Union Cabinet learnt to have cleared bill on electoral reforms

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday is learnt to have cleared a bill on electoral reforms, including allowing the Election Commission to seed Aadhaar number with electoral rolls on voluntary basis.

According to the bill cleared by the cabinet, the electoral law will be made gender neutral for service voters.

Another provision of the bill will allow the youth to enrol as voters on four different dates every year, as of now those turning 18 or before January 1 of every year are only allowed to register as voters.

Bakar Samoon, CO IR 9th Bn, Abdul Qayoom, CO IR 21st Bn Shabir Nowab, CO IR 3rd Bn Hakeem Munshi and other senior officers posted in the complex were present on the occasion.

"It is our responsibility to work against the terrorism collectively to protect the interests of our country and people," ADGP Armed/IR, S.J.M. Gillani said and added "Our working environment demands that we must use protective gears."

He stressed for remaining alert and vigilant during duties to avoid any unpleasant incident. He assured that Armed police would continue to work with full commitment for peace and stability of J&K.

IAF chopper crash...

which Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika and 11 armed forces personnel were killed.

Group Captain Singh was conferred with the Shaurya Chakra in August for averting a possible mid-air accident after his Tejas light combat aircraft was hit by a major technical snag last year.

Meanwhile, President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday condoled the passing away of Group Captain Varun Singh, tweeting, "Sad to learn that Group Captain Varun Singh breathed his last after putting up a valiant fight for life. Though badly injured in the chopper crash, he displayed the soldierly spirit of valour and indomitable courage. The nation is grateful to him. My condolences to his family".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed anguish at the passing away of Group Captain Varun Singh.

"Group Captain Varun Singh served the nation with pride, valour and utmost professionalism. I am extremely anguished by his passing away," Prime Minister Modi tweeted.

"His (Singh's) rich service to the nation will never be forgotten. Condolences to his family and friends. Om Shanti," the prime minister said.

Group Captain Singh, a decorated air warrior, died on Wednesday at a military hospital in Bengaluru, the IAF said.

Most wanted HM...

he fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated, leading to an encounter," the police spokesperson said in a statement.

In the encounter, a member of proscribed terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen, identified as Feroz Ahmad Dar, a resident of Heff-Shrimali in Shopian, was killed.

"As per police records, the killed terrorist was 'A+' categorised and was part of groups involved in several terror crime cases, including attacks on security forces and civilian atrocities," the statement said.

Dar was active since 2017, it added.

The slain terrorist was also involved in the killing of a girl, Ishrat Muneer, in February 2019.

"Dar was involved in killing of a non-local labour, Charanjeet, a resident of Fazila, Punjab, and injuring others in October 2019, when they were loading apple boxes in a vehicle in the Zainapora area of Shopian. Besides, he was also instrumental in luring the gullible youth to join terrorist ranks," the police spokesperson said.

Incriminating materials, arms and ammunition, including an AK rifle and three magazines, were seized from the possession of the slain terrorist, he added.

J&K to rollout...

in the public domain under the 'Apni Zameen Apni Nigrani' for people's scrutiny. Over three lakh and twenty-five thousand visitors have already visited the site in the last 6 weeks. As a reform to further boost transparency in the public dealings of the Revenue Department, the Chief Secretary has directed the Department to evolve a mechanism of issuing revenue passbooks to the people, containing information on all their legal land possessions within one month for formal issuance by 26th January 2022. The process will be completed in the districts of Jammu and Srinagar by 31st March 2022 and in all other districts by 15th August 2022.

As a further measure to improve service delivery, all processes will be digitized, including applications made by the public which will enhance transparency and accountability.

One more Jammu...

Chief Medical Officer, Jammu shall ensure deployment of sufficient teams for sampling and surveillance of the designated zones. He shall ensure contact tracing of positives and their testing as per the SOP.

"Any violation of this order shall invite punitive action under section 188 of Indian Penal Code and other relevant sections of Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and the Disaster Management Act, 2005," the order stated.

Meanwhile, 125 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 17 from Jammu Division and 108 from Kashmir Division.

According to the daily Media Bulletin, out of 339271 positive cases, 1446 are Active Positive (347 in Jammu Division and 1099 in Kashmir Division), 333322 have recovered and 4503 have died; 2191 in Jammu division and 2312 in Kashmir division.

The Bulletin further said that out of 18431117 test results available, 339271 samples have tested positive and 18091846 samples have been tested as negative till date. Besides, 55,708 COVID tests have been conducted in last 24 hours.

Till date 4885651 persons have been enlisted for observation which included 7140 persons in home quarantine including facilities operated by government, 1446 in isolation and 429488 in home surveillance. Besides, 4443074 persons have completed their surveillance period.

As per reports, Ladakh has reported 10 fresh COVID-19 cases, which took the tally to 21,849 in the Union Territory.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic last year, the union territory has recorded 216 Covid-related deaths -- 158 in Leh and 58 in Kargil, officials said.

Fourteen patients have been discharged from hospitals and the number of people who have recovered now stands at 20,459, the officials said.

There are 174 active cases in the union territory -- 160 in Leh district and 14 in Kargil district, they said.

BJP ended discrimination...

of discrimination with the Jammu region and taking whole of J&K on the path of development.

Dr. Nirmal Singh said that the paramount development that has taken place in Jammu region is due to the special emphasis of BJP to work on all the loopholes

that led to the underdevelopment here.

Shamsher Singh Manhas said that the collaborative effort by all of us will lead to a new era of peace and progress which will benefit every resident of the region.

Dr. Manay said that BJP is an ideology based party which works sincerely to ensure equal benefit to every section of society.

Surjit Singh Slathia in his address said that all the new entrants who have pledged for the BJP members will work dedicatedly to strengthen the party. He said that all the new entrants will contribute positively in the development of the region.

Devinder Singh Rana insisted that they will leave no stone unturned to keep working for the welfare of the public while at the same time extending the base of BJP into every nook and corner of the region.

Why voice from...

being deprived and discriminated against. Above all it means hegemony of no region over the other. He said having realised this mindset taking centre stage in political leadership of Kashmir, he and Surjeet Singh Slathia decided to part ways of their association of respectively 22 years and over 40 years with the National Conference. He said whenever they spoke about the interest of Jammu region, some leaders in Kashmir would get peeved and the climax came when both of them met the Delimitation Commission during its public outreach and called for equal rights to all the regions and the sub region. Seeking assurance for the legitimate rights of the Jammu region is not an impropriety, he observed.

Rana said the Jammu region and those speaking Dogri, Pahari, Gojri and any other language have equal right to decide the destiny of Jammu and Kashmir, as it is not a matter of right to any particular class. In common parlance, he said Maharaja Hari Singh Ji has not given a 'Patta' or a credential of entitlement to govern this great state to anyone. He said times have changed and everybody has the right to govern at the strength of the public mandate.

The BJP leader said the narrative for Jammu is aimed at opportunities to all and appeasement to none. It guarantees protection of rights of every region, every community and every ethnic group. He said Home Minister Amit Shah is on record having assured during his J&K visit that the Centre will ensure the protection of rights and interests of all the regions.

Dwelling upon the overall political situation, Mr Rana said Jammu and Kashmir is at the threshold of a big promise for development and progress under the decisive and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Rana also supported the demands put forth by Surjeet Singh Slathia for a special recruitment drive, fast tracking of the recruitment process and humanitarian view on the eviction of poor people from their paltry pieces of lands.

PSU bank employees...

said. Most of the banks, including State Bank of India (SBI), have already cautioned their customers about the strike's possible impact on banking operations like cheque clearance and fund transfer.

A conciliation meeting before the Additional Chief Labour Commissioner on Wednesday failed, so unions are going ahead with their planned strike, All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC) General Secretary Soumya Datta said.

The government had in Budget 2021-22 announced its intent to take up privatisation of two public sector banks (PSBs) during the year.

The two-day strike on December 16 and 17 was called by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU).

UFBU is an umbrella body of nine unions, including AIBOC, All India Bank Employees Association (AIBEA) and National Organisation of Bank Workers (NOBW).

AIBEA General Secretary C H Venkatachalam said representatives of unions, Indian Banks' Association and finance ministry participated in the conciliation meeting.

"We reiterated our stand that if the government would assure that the Bank Privatisation Bill (Banking Laws Amendment Bill, 2021) would not be tabled during this session of the Parliament, we would be inclined to reconsider the strike but the government could not give any such assurance to us," Venkatachalam said.

Unions tried their best to avert the strike to avoid inconvenience to public but the government was not forthcoming, he said, adding that the strike has been called to defend and preserve PSBs.

UFBU's Convenor (Maharashtra) Devidas Tuljapurkar said around nine lakh bank employees and officers from various public sector banks, old generation private sector banks and regional rural banks will participating in the strike.

Public sector banks have always been at the forefront in implementation of various government schemes, including demonetisation, Jan-Dhan Yojana, social sector insurance schemes and Mudra schemes, he told reporters on Wednesday.

He claimed that if PSBs are privatised, then bank branches in rural and backward regions will be closed and implementation of all the government schemes meant for socially and economically weaker sections will get affected.

Tuljapurkar said bank employees right from sweepers to senior executives in scale 5 will observe the two-day strike and protests would be held across the country.

In Maharashtra, around 60,000 bank staffers will go on strike.

On Monday, all public sector lenders including SBI requested unions to reconsider their decision and refrain from participating in the strike in the interest of customers, investors, and banks.

Considering the ongoing pandemic situation, resorting to a strike will cause great inconvenience to the stakeholders, SBI had said.

CS led panel...