

03 Delimitation Commission has with it Agenda of Distant & Backward Area people of J&K & not that of BJP

J&K Admn seeks army's assistance as power employees' strike affects essential services

Talks with agitating employees fail; angry people stage protests

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The army is assisting to restore essential services hit by the ongoing strike of electricity department personnel. The administration has requested the army to assist the government in restoration of electricity after a dialogue with the agitating Power Development Department (PDD) employees reportedly failed to break ice.

Later in the evening, Dr Raghav Langer addressed a press conference and clarified the government's stand. He said that the decisions regarding the power sector are progressive to bring reforms.

Divisional Commissioner claimed that the government's intent is to ensure 24x7 quality power supply in Jammu and Kashmir. "I ensure that the government is here to work with sincerity to protect public interests."



ADGP Mukesh Singh, Div Com Raghav Langer addressing media on Sunday.

As far as the concern of agitating employees union, it has been already clarified that none of the service conditions, the pay structures, the salaries and the pensionary benefits, would be altered to the disadvantage for any employee of PDD. From the last 24 months, all employees are getting timely salaries and other benefits."

Mukesh Singh, ADGP said that several rounds of talks were held and many grievances have been addressed

on spot while many policy issues have been taken for discussions with higher ups.

"We appealed to the striking employees to call off strike. If anyone tries to hurdle the power restoration, they will not be spared," Singh said.

In a communication addressed to the army, Jammu Divisional Commissioner Raghav Langer said that due to the strike by electricity department personnel, essential

09 NIA raids businessman's residence in Srinagar

India's Omicron count crosses 150

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI: India's Omicron COVID count rose to 151 on Sunday after Maharashtra reported six more cases while a 45-year-old NRI and a teenage boy, who recently arrived in Gujarat from the United Kingdom, also tested positive for the variant.

According to central and state officials, omicron cases have been detected in 11 states and union territories - Maharashtra (54), Delhi (22), Rajasthan (17) and Karnataka (14), Telangana (20), Gujarat (9), Kerala (11), Andhra Pradesh (1), Chandigarh (1), Tamil Nadu (1) and West Bengal (1).

Six persons tested positive for the Omicron variant of coronavirus in Maharashtra on Sunday, raising the state's tally of such cases to 54, the health department said.

While two of these patients had a history of travel to Tanzania, two others had returned from England and one from the Middle East. All five of them are fully

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10 Trials for Cross Country on Dec 25

Top Pakistani LeT terrorist killed in Srinagar encounter

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A Pakistani Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT) terrorist wanted in many terror cases including the killing of two policemen in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district recently was gunned down in an encounter with security forces in the Harwan area here on Sunday, police said.

A cordon and search operation was launched by the security forces in the Theed Harwan area of Srinagar based on specific input about the presence of a terrorist there, they said.

When the presence of the trapped terrorist was ascertained during the search operation in the morning, he was given ample opportunities to surrender. However, he fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter, a police spokesman said.

In the ensuing gunfight, the terrorist was killed and his body retrieved from the encounter site, he said.



Pulwama: Policeman injured as terrorists open fire

SRINAGAR: Terrorists shot at a policeman in Pulwama district on Sunday leaving him injured, officials said.

"At about 7:10 pm, terrorists fired at & injured a JKP Follower (a police designation) namely Mushtaq Ahmad Wagay near his residence at Bundzoo," a police official said.

He said the injured has been shifted to Bone and Joint Hospital here for treatment. Further details were awaited.

The spokesman identified the slain terrorist as Safiulla alias Abu Khalid alias Shawaz, a resident of Karachi in Pakistan.

As per police records, the killed terrorist was a categorised terrorist linked with

proscribed terror outfit LeT.

He had infiltrated in 2016 via Bandipora Sector and later on sneaked into Srinagar on the directions of Pakistan-based commanders of LeT for intensifying

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Two arrested on espionage charges in Rajouri

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Two persons were arrested on charges of spying for Pakistan in a village in the border district of Rajouri, officials said on Sunday.

A man working as a porter with the Army and his relative, both residents of Nowshera, were picked up by a joint team of the Army and police on specific information late on Saturday, they said.

The arrested Nazir Hussain and Mohammed Mukhtar are accused of taking videos of vital and sensitive security installations and sharing them

with their handlers outside the country in lieu of money.

According to the officials, the two had shot a video clip in the Army premises (erstwhile tactical headquarters of Rashtriya Rifles) on a mobile phone.

A piece of information was received at the Rajouri police station on December 16 regarding an espionage racket operating in the area. On this complaint, both the accused have been arrested and further investigation is underway, a police spokesperson said.

Efforts on to improve living standard in areas deprived of progress for decades: LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday said that efforts are on to mobilize all the resources to improve the standard of living in the areas which have been deprived of progress for decades.

"In the past two years, under the guidance of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, we have tried to create a system that serves everyone with equal opportunities", the Lt Governor said during 'Awaam Ki Awaaz' programme.

He dedicated this month's



People listening to LG's Awaam Ki Awaaz programme.

episode to the martyrs of 1971 War.

"I pay homage to the brave hearts of Armed Forces whose tales of valor etched the saga of December 16 as a glorious chapter in the rich legacy of our nation", said the Lt Governor.

During the radio programme, the Lt Governor voiced valuable insights received from the various corners for drafting development policies as per the needs of the people and passed directions to the concerned departments in this

regard, thus making the governance process more inclusive, participatory and people-centric.

Addressing the people, the Lt Governor also shared a slew of measures recently taken by the UT Government for the growth and prosperity of J&K. He called upon the people to discharge their social and moral responsibilities and complement government's efforts in taking J&K to new heights of development.

Following the ideals of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, we are

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Sarpanch, VLW caught red-handed while accepting bribe

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) has arrested two persons namely Nasir Sheikh, Sarpanch, Halqa Zainpora Baramulla and Farooq Joo, Village Level Worker (VLW), Norkhah, Baramulla for accepting bribe of Rs 10,000 on Sunday.

As per an official spokesperson, the sleuths of the ACB received a complaint, wherein complainant alleged that Nisar Ahmad Sheikh, Sarpanch, Halqa Zainpora and Village Level Worker (VLW) Farooq Joo of Block Development Office, Norkhah, District

Baramulla were demanding a bribe of Rs 40,000 from him for releasing labour payments etc. "On receipt of complaint, a discreet verification was conducted by Anti Corruption Bureau. On basis of findings of the Enquiry Officer, prima facie offences under section 7 of Prevention of Corruption Act 1988 (as amended in 2018) and Sec 120-B IPC were made out against both the accused and a case was registered. During the course of investigation, a trap team was constituted, which caught Sarpanch Nasir Sheikh red-handed while demanding

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Several places in Kashmir record coldest night of season

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Cold wave conditions continued in Kashmir as most places experienced the coldest night of the season so far, with the weatherman forecasting further dip in mercury over the next few days, officials said on Sunday.

The temperature on Sunday night was several degrees below the freezing point, they said.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 6 degrees Celsius on Sunday night, same as the previous night, which is the lowest minimum temperature of the season so far in the city.

The minimum was 4.5 degrees below the normal for this part of the season.

Gulmarg resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district recorded a low of minus 7.5 degrees Celsius.

The officials said Pahalgam, which serves as the base camp for the

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J&K reports 136 new COVID cases, 1 death

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday reported 136 Covid cases, 22 from Jammu division and 114 from the Kashmir Valley, thus taking the total number of positive cases in Jammu and Kashmir to 339827.

Also, one Covid deaths has been reported from the Kashmir Division.

Moreover, 142 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 42 from Jammu Division and 100 from Kashmir Division.

According to the daily Media Bulletin, out of 339827 positive cases,

1451 are Active Positive (341 in Jammu Division and 1110 in Kashmir Division), 333864 have recovered and 4512 have died; 2194 in Jammu division and 2318 in Kashmir division.

The Bulletin further said that out of 18658073 test results available, 339827 samples have tested positive and 18318246 samples have been tested as negative till date. Besides, 54,153 COVID tests have been conducted in last 24 hours.

Till date 4987079 persons have been enlisted for observation which included 7507 persons in home quarantine including facilities operated by government,

1451 in isolation and 429706 in home surveillance. Besides, 4543903 persons have completed their surveillance period.

Meanwhile, Ladakh's tally of COVID-19 cases increased to 21,930 with 27 fresh infections, officials said.

While 15 new cases were detected in Leh, the rest 12 cases surfaced in Kargil district, they said.

The officials said the Covid-related death toll remained at 217 and of these, 159 deaths have been reported from Leh and 58 from Kargil. The number of active cases in the Union

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Sajad Lone asks NC to explain U-turn on participation on delimitation panel meet

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: People's Conference president Sajad Gani Lone on Sunday said the issue of Article 370 -- revoked by the Centre in August 2019 -- was sacrosanct and the demand for its restoration will never die.

He said the party will fight for whatever has been snatched from the people of Jammu and Kashmir unconstitutionally.

"The issue of Article 370 is sacrosanct and its demand will never die. It is not subservient to our raising of the issue. The chapter of Article 370, contrary to what Delhi

thinks, is not closed, Lone said addressing a gathering of party workers in the Shangus assembly segment in south Kashmir. It was the party's first public outreach programme in recent times.

He said the People's Conference (PC) will speak truthfully to the people about the status of Article 370 and its stand on it is clear.

He asked the National Conference leadership to explain its u-turn on the participation in the delimitation exercise.

If participating in the meeting was an endorsement of abrogation of Article 370 in

May, then how is it not an endorsement in December. If something was wrong in May, how could it be right in December? Were they lying then or are they lying now, he asked.

Lone was referring to the decision of the NC over its participation in the meeting of the associate members of the commission which is scheduled to take place on Monday.

The PC president asked whether it again was a part of an act scripted and directed in Delhi.

The NC must come out clean and explain the reasons

for change of heart. What has changed in Kashmir for them to now deem this exercise legitimate? We can't afford duplicity after what happened on August 5, he said.

Accusing the traditional mainstream parties of being hand in glove with Delhi, Lone said in lieu of political space, these parties have irreversibly damaged the cause of the people of Kashmir.

"People of Kashmir need to understand the concept of political space. Either the traditional parties are

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No one above law; strict action against guilty regardless of age, gender: DGP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Dilbag Singh on Sunday said his department will take strict action against the guilty, irrespective of their age or gender.

Though he did not take any name, the Union Territory's police chief was apparently referring to the criticism over the arrest of a woman and her daughter for allegedly raising anti-national slogans after the killing of two terrorists in an encounter in Srinagar recently.

The DGP also said launch pads and terror camps are active in Pakistan and are being used to infiltrate more terrorists with the support of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and its army but

the Indian forces are on high alert to thwart any such attempts.

Speaking to the media after declaring open the 10th edition of police martyrs memorial cricket tournament in Kathua district, Singh said the police, along with other security forces, would take all stringent actions to bring an end to the proxy war initiated by Pakistan.

The fight against the proxy war of Pakistan and its terror groups will be dealt with more stringent response. Operation against the terrorists is carried out day and night and the war against all those elements inimical to peace and development is being accelerated. We will not let them succeed at any

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Courts can't lose sight of serious nature of accusations while considering bail pleas: SC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: An individual's liberty is an invaluable right but courts cannot lose sight of the serious nature of accusations while considering a bail plea, the Supreme Court has said while setting aside a Patna High Court order granting bail to Pappu Singh, the head of a pan-chayat in Patna district, while taking note of the submissions of lawyer Smarhar Singh that the accused had attempted to kill Rupesh Kumar in 2017 before

The observation was made by a bench headed by Justice E L Nageswara Rao.

The top court was critical of the high court judgement granting bail to Pappu Singh, the head of a pan-chayat in Patna district, while taking note of the submissions of lawyer Smarhar Singh that the accused had attempted to kill Rupesh Kumar in 2017 before

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 35.0°C Min: 25.8°C

Humidity

Max : 85 Min : 66

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 31.8°C Min: 16.6°C

Humidity

Max : 74 Min: 36

Sunset : 18:52 Hours

Sunrise : 06:10 Hours