

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !!

### J&K Admn seeks...

privatisation and other issues entered second day despite the administration's request



Army assisting to restore essential services hit by ongoing strike of electricity department employees.

to resume work, officials said.

Over 20,000 power sector employees had boycotted work around midnight on Friday in support of their various demands, including shelving of a proposed joint venture between the Jammu and Kashmir Power Transmission Corporation Limited and the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited.

The employees, from all unions and associations, from linemen to senior engineers, decided to go on indefinite strike after failure of talks with the government, and staged demonstrations in the twin capital cities besides in district headquarters for the second day on Sunday, a spokesperson of the coordination committee of power supply employees said.

Officials said many parts of the Union Territory witnessed total blackout due to the ongoing strike, as a result of which people are facing tremendous hardships due to non-availability of electricity and water supply, leading to protests by angry residents in Jammu city and other districts who are reeling under severe cold wave conditions.

The spokesperson said they had presented a four-point formula to the government, but it failed to accept their demands, including a white paper on non-fulfilment of the recommendations of the unbundling report and the failure to create positions as mandated by the committee at gazetted and non-gazetted levels, regularisation of daily wagers and all power development department engineers.

They are also demanding delinking their salary from grant-in-aid and releasing a regular budget for all PDD employees on deputation to different corporations and a white paper of service condition of PDD employees on deputation to the Chenab Valley Power Projects Private Limited (CVPPL) and similarly situated employees deputed from the NHPC.

An official spokesman said the government of J&K, taking a sympathetic view of the issues raised, has engaged in several rounds of talks with the coordination committee of the power employees.

During each round of talks, the government representatives have appealed to the power employees to call off their strike as people in both Jammu and Kashmir divisions are suffering. In the wake of COVID-19 contagion and nail-biting cold in both the divisions, the coordination committee of the power employees is requested to end its strike, the spokesman said.

Reacting to the situation, Union minister Jitendra Singh expressed hope of a peaceful resolution to the issue at the earliest.

The administration is on the job the time cannot be stopped as we have to keep pace with development in the rest of the country. The employees are part of the society and if they feel insecure, it is the responsibility of the rulers to address their concerns and move forward along with them, he told reporters here.

National Conference vice president and former chief minister Omar Abdullah asked the government to leave privatisation decisions to an elected government.

The J&K administration may be able to claim the constitutional authority to privatise the assets of J&K, but it completely lacks the political authority. Decisions of this nature with far-reaching consequences should be left to an elected government, he wrote on Twitter. The striking employees have made it clear that the repairs and restoration work would not be undertaken at all unless the feeder is supplied to any hospital. Senior BJP leader and former legislator Devender Singh Rana also expressed concern over many parts of the Jammu city as also peripheries plunging into darkness and urged the administration to take earnest measures in resolving the issues with the striking employees, especially during these chilly days.

He hoped that all concerned will act responsibly as the stakes are very high, not only in terms of restoring electricity in the affected areas, but also to ensure that students do not suffer as they are solely dependent on online classes and examinations. Failure in power supply is impacting the internet services, he added.

### India's Omicron count...

vaccinated. Another patient is a five-year-old boy from Junnar in Pune who is a close contact of Dubai travellers from Junnar, it said in a statement.

"Total six cases were diagnosed today - four of them found during the airport screening in Mumbai. One of these four patients is from Mumbai, two from Karnataka and one from Aurangabad," it said.

Out of 54 cases in the state, 22 have been found in Mumbai.

In Gujarat, a non-resident Indian tested positive for the coronavirus infection in the RT-PCR test carried out at the Ahmedabad international airport soon after he arrived from the UK on December 15, a health department official said on Sunday.

"The man's sample was later found infected with the Omicron variant," Anand district health officer Dr M T Chhatri said.

He was scheduled to reach the state's Anand city from Ahmedabad.

"But, after he tested positive for the coronavirus, he was taken to the Ahmedabad civil hospital from the airport. The patient is currently recovering at the Ahmedabad civil hospital," Dr Chhatri said.

His co-passengers and other contacts have tested negative for the viral infection, the official said.

A 15-year-old boy from Gandhinagar was also detected with the Omicron variant after returning from the UK, Gandhinagar Municipal Commissioner Dhaval Patel said.

On Saturday, Maharashtra had reported eight more cases, Telangana's tally jumped from eight to 20, while Karnataka and Kerala reported six and four cases respectively.

Of the six cases reported in Karnataka on Saturday, one was a passenger from the UK, while five others were from COVID-19 clusters in two educational institutions in Dakshina Kannada district, officials had said.

While Omicron was first reported in South Africa on November 24, India's first two

cases of this heavily mutated version of the coronavirus were detected in Karnataka on December 2.

### Top Pakistani LeT...

terrorist-related activities in the districts of Pulwama, Srinagar, Ganderbal and Budgam, the spokesman said.

He said Saifullah was working as a Group Commander of the LeT in Srinagar as he had operated in the city earlier. He was familiar with Srinagar's topography as well as that of Pulwama.

He was also involved in receiving new groups of FTs (foreign terrorists) after infiltration, the spokesman said.

As per police records, the terrorist was wanted by law for his complicity in terror crime cases, including attacks on police and security forces and civilian killings.

He was involved in an attack on a police party at Gulshan Chowk in Bandipora on December 10, in which two police personnel were martyred.

Saifullah, along with his associates, was involved in an attack on an Army convoy on national highway Bemina Bye-pass near SKIMS Hospital in Srinagar on April 1, 2017, resulting in injuries to three soldiers, the spokesman said.

He was also the mastermind behind the attack carried out by his associates at Lawaypora, Srinagar in which two security forces personnel were martyred and one AK-47 rifle was also snatched. Besides, attacks on police/SFs he was also involved in civilian killings, including killing of then Bandipora BJP president Waseem Bari, his brother and father in July 2020, the spokesman added.

He said Saifullah was also a mastermind behind the revival of terror folds by luring the gullible youth into militancy.

He was also instrumental in reactivation of hardcore terrorist associates of LeT outfit in the areas of Srinagar and Pulwama and police district Awantipora, the spokesman said.

Incriminating material, arms and ammunition, including an AK-47 rifle, three magazines and a grenade, were recovered from the site of the encounter, he said, adding they were taken into case records for further investigation.

IGP, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar congratulated the joint team of the security forces for conducting a successful operation without any collateral damage.

Kumar said with the elimination of Saifullah, three Pakistani terrorists have been killed within a month in Srinagar.

He said the terrorists were involved in several attacks on police, security forces and civilians, which clearly show that Pakistan is hell-bent to disturb peace in Kashmir, especially in Srinagar.

### Sarpanch, VLW caught...

and accepting bribe of Rs 10,000 from complainant. He was arrested on the spot by ACP team while another accused VLW Farooq Joo was also arrested later. Searches were also conducted at premises of accused persons," said official, adding that further investigation into the case is going on.

### Efforts on to...

moving ahead to bring about meaningful and lasting change in the life of the people by connecting every citizen with the mainstream of development, observed the Lt Governor.

With innovations like the Walnut Cracking Machine, Thresher for Maize Extraction and Gas Cylinder Lifting Machine under his belt, people like Mushtaq Ahmad Dar of Dooru Anantnag are emerging as shining examples of innate ingenuity, dedication and doggedness, said the Lt Governor;

The Lt Governor mentioned about the young innovator Harmanjot Singh of Jammu and the first female hockey coach of the valley, Reebu Hassan who defied odds and emerged victorious.

Tangmarg-based skier Arif Khan will represent the country in the Beijing Winter Olympics to be held in February. The whole nation is proud of him, the Lt Governor said.

Responding to the suggestion received from Bandipore's Aadil Naseer pertaining to a detailed roadmap for the development of Gurez, the Lt Governor said that the administration is fully committed to the cause of Gurez and has taken some path-breaking decisions in the last one year to promote its geographic and demographic potential.

While mentioning a suggestion of Rishabh Khajuria of Jammu that discusses the need for the establishment of a Centralized Control Room in the capital municipalities, the Lt Governor observed that the administration has been instructed to work on replicating the Ahmedabad model of Integrated Command & Control Centre for our two capital cities.

Responding to the insight received from Chandra Bhushan, a resident of Udhampur, pertaining to maximising the use of tools of knowledge-technology era to bridge the gap between towns & villages and promoting the concept of Cillage, the Lt Governor said that the government has set the goal of empowering rural areas by making a science & technology-based and environment-friendly action plan for sustainable techno-economic development of the villages of J&K.

Referring to Amir Basher Wani's letter on the state of horticulture graduates, the Lt Governor asserted that regardless of the legacy of the logjams that the present dispensation has inherited, "we are committed to the overall development of the sector and fast and transparent recruitment drives."

On Mahreen Altaf's suggestion on the need to introduce an e-office module in the field and district offices, the Lt Governor said that the valuable suggestion bodes well with the government's commitment to the practices of good governance.

While responding to a suggestion, the Lt Governor highlighted various measures being undertaken by the government for improving the standard of living of common citizens in Jammu city. As many as 39 important projects have been completed under Smart City at a cost of Rs. 673 crore and work on 45 other projects are going on at a fast pace, he informed.

The Lt Governor extended his heartfelt tributes to the Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat, his wife, and all the officers and jawans who lost their lives in a tragic tragic crash.

He also paid homage to the brave hearts of the Police Force who were martyred in the cowardly terrorist attack on J&K Police bus in Srinagar. I want to assure the fellow countrymen that the sacrifice of our brave police personnel will not go in vain, added the Lt Governor.

The PC president said if Delhi has been consistent on anything, it has been its consistency for disdain and condemn for the people of Kashmir.

We have not seen any let up in the last so many decades in their attitude. Erosions

Tillo and Dheeraj Mehra alias Dakshu, son of Yashpal Mehra, resident of Bhagwati Nagar, who snatched Rs 10,000 from a person namely Surjeet Singh, son of Chater Singh, resident of Udhampur, Doda. The modus operandi of these snatcher were that they used to cut news-paper pieces in 100 rupee note shape and tie these pieces in handkerchief and on the top of bundle, used to put a note of Rs 100 for cheating innocent people.

### IED material recovered in Tral

#### STATE TIMES NEWS

PULWAMA: An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) material was recovered from forest area Buchoo in Tral on Sunday.

As per details, security forces recovered a tin container filled with urea and a loose wire, appearing material of an IED, from forest areas of Buchoo. Investigation in this regard is going on.

### CRPF officer shoots himself dead

#### STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A head constable of CRPF committed suicide by shooting himself with his service rifle in Gund area of Ganderbal district on Sunday.

As per details, CRPF trooper namely Deonath Yadav, resident of Mirzapur (UP), posted with 118th Bn CRPF shot himself while he was on duty at CRPF camp Gund. The body of deceased CRPF trooper was shifted to hospital for performing legal formalities.

### Trucker, associate arrested; three quintal poppy straw recovered

#### STATE TIMES NEWS

CHENANI: Police on Sunday nabbed a trucker and his associate besides recovering three quintal poppy straw from the vehicle.

As per details, a Police party during Naka checking at Motorshed Chenani stopped a truck (HP72B/7537) loaded with apples boxes. During checking of vehicle, police found 19 plastic bags containing poppy straw like substance weighing 3 quintals, hidden under apple boxes.

started the moment Article 370 was enacted in the 1950s and ended with its abrogation in 2019.

"Not a single year or a single month has passed since 1989 when the people of Kashmir have not been mercilessly killed or jailed. The people of Kashmir have been the victims of Delhi's excesses for decades now irrespective of which party was in power. Let our memories not fail us, he said.

Lashing out at the administration for choking and stifling the voices of the people and creating a pressure-cooker like situation in Kashmir, Lone said those at the helm are spreading poison for our future generations.

### J&K reports 136...

Territory has gone up to 181 - 160 in Leh and 21 in Kargil -- from 173 the previous day, according to the officials. The officials said that 14 patients were discharged from hospitals in Leh and five in Kargil, taking the total number of recoveries in Ladakh to 21,532.

### Courts can't lose....

succeeding in 2020 and then was absconding for seven months.

The Supreme Court bench, also comprising Justice B R Gavai and Justice B V Nagarathna, said a balance between the right to liberty and the severity of the case has to be struck by courts while dealing with such pleas.

"Ultimately, the court considering an application for bail has to exercise discretion in a judicious manner and in accordance with the settled principles of law having regard to the crime alleged to be committed by the accused on the one hand and ensuring purity of the trial of the case on the other," said the bench.

While considering the bail plea, a prima facie conclusion must be supported by reasons and must be arrived at after having regard to the vital facts of the case brought on record, it said.

The bench said that due consideration must be given to facts suggestive of the nature of the crime, the criminal antecedents of the accused, if any, and the nature of punishment that would follow a conviction for the offences alleged.

"While we are conscious of the fact that liberty of an individual is an invaluable right, at the same time while considering an application for bail courts cannot lose sight of the serious nature of the accusations against an accused and the facts that have a bearing in the case, particularly, when the accusations may not be false, frivolous or vexatious in nature but are supported by adequate material brought on record so as to enable a court to arrive at a prima facie conclusion," Justice Rao, writing the judgement for the bench, said.

Dealing with the facts of the case, the bench said the accused has been facing trial in several criminal cases and had attempted to kill the accused in 2017 before finally succeeding in 2020.

It also took note of the submissions of the lawyer that the accused suppressed his criminal history before the high court.

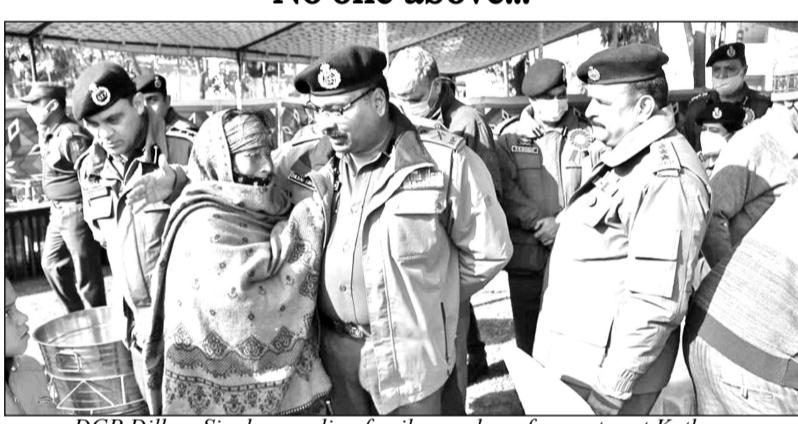
"The High court has lost sight of the... vital aspects of the case and in very cryptic orders has granted bail to the respondent accused. For the... reasons, we find that the High Court was not right in allowing the applications for bail filed by the respondent accused. Hence, the impugned orders passed by the High Court are set aside. The appeals are allowed," the Supreme Court ordered.

According to the police, Pappu Singh along with co-accused Deepak Kumar killed Rupesh Kumar on the night of February 19, 2020, in front of his mother at his home in the Naubatpur police station area of Patna district.

Pappu Singh was on the run and was arrested on September 30, 2020. He was in judicial custody for nine months before being granted bail by the High Court, the lawyer said.

An appeal seeking cancellation of bail was filed by complainant Brijnani Devi, the mother of the deceased, in the apex court. A separate FIR was lodged against the accused in 2017 for his attempt to kill Rupesh Kumar due to political rivalry.

### No one above...



DGP Dilbag Singh consoling family member of a martyr at Kathua.

cost, he said. Our aim is to uproot terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir; he said, referring to the recent killings of several Pakistani terrorists in different encounters, including the one in Harwan area of Srinagar on Sunday. Without mentioning the arrest of a woman and her daughter in Raghre area of Srinagar following the killing of two terrorists last week, the DGP said, No one is above the law and strict action will be taken if found guilty, irrespective of age and gender. Almost all mainstream parties have lashed out at the Jammu and Kashmir administration over the arrest of the two women on charges of anti-national sloganeering, with the Peoples Democratic Party accusing the local authorities of persecuting civilians to please their masters in Delhi. The Jammu and Kashmir Police is bravely fighting the proxy war for over 30 years with courage and dedication and has rendered supreme sacrifice of many brave hearts. The security scenario is very progressive as compared to the past and is improving with each passing day, he said.

### Era of hopelessness...

occasion, Y V Sharma called for assuaging the urges of all the region, saying unity in diversity has been strength of this part of the country.

Those present on the occasion prominent among others included Sham Lal, Prerana Nanda, Dinesh Nagar, Manju Verma, Jatinder Sharma and Amreep Singh.

### Several places in Kashmir...

annual Amarnath yatra, recorded a low of minus 8.7 degrees Celsius.

The resort was the coldest recorded place in the valley. The mercury in Kupwara in north Kashmir settled at a low of minus 6.1 degrees Celsius. Qazigund, the gateway town to the valley, recorded minus 6.5 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag recorded a low of minus 6 degrees Celsius. The cold wave conditions led to freezing of water supply lines in many areas of the valley as well as the fringes of several