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ED questions Omar...

as its vice-president's residence as well as an office where he holds meetings with party MPs and others.

"There is a rent agreement between the NC and a Mumbai company for it. Rent is regularly paid by cheque from the party accounts," they said.

Slamming the questioning of Abdullah by the ED, the NC further said, "Over recent years, we have seen that wherever state elections are due, agencies like the ED move in and target those parties who pose a challenge to the BJP."

A party spokesperson said the summons to its vice-president is in the same vein. "We have no doubt that this fishing expedition will yield no concrete results to the BJP and the people will give a ringing endorsement to the National Conference as and when required."

The spokesperson said Abdullah had been asked to appear before the ED in Delhi on the grounds that his attendance was necessary in connection with an investigation.

"In spite of it being the holy month of Ramzan, and Delhi not being his primary place of residence, Mr Abdullah did not seek a postponement or a change of venue and appeared as per the notice," he said.

The party alleged that the central government has "made a habit of misusing investigative agencies" and Thursday's questioning of Abdullah was "another step in the same direction".

"No political party that puts up meaningful opposition to the BJP has been spared, whether it is the ED, CBI, NIA, NCB all have been used for political purposes," the NC spokesperson said.

The party said the summons is another step in the "vicious vilification" campaign that started even before August 5, 2019, when constitutional position holders like the then governor were used to make "slanderous accusations" against opponents of the BJP, knowing well that there was no legal recourse available to those at the receiving end of these "lies".

Even though this exercise is political in nature, Abdullah will cooperate with investigative agencies as there is no wrongdoing on his part and he is not an accused in any matter under investigation, the spokesperson said.

Six JSD AEEs...

pay and grade, for a period of six months purely on temporary basis against the available vacancy, or till the posts are filled up under rules on regular basis by the DPC/PSC whichever is earlier, with immediate effect," reads an order issued by M. Raja, Commissioner/ Secretary, Jal Shakti Department.

The Six Incharge Assistant Executive Engineers who have been placed as Incharge Executive Engineers include Sudhir Kumar Sharma, Syed Arshad Qadri, Rajneesh Kohli, Anil Sharma, Ajay Gupta and Sisar Khajuria.

Consequently, Sudhir Kumar Sharma, Incharge Assistant Executive Engineer, PHE Sub-Division Mendhar has been posted as Incharge Executive Engineer, Hydraulic Division Ramban; Ajay Gupta, Incharge Assistant Executive Engineer, PHE Sub-Division Samba as Incharge Executive Engineer, Technical Officer to Chief Engineer, PHE Jammu; and Sisar Khajuria, Incharge Assistant Executive Engineer, Irrigation Sub- Division R.S. Pura as Incharge Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mahore Irrigation Division Dharman.

Syed Arshad Qadri, Incharge Assistant Executive Engineer, Flood P&D Sub Division Sopore, Rajneesh Kohli, Incharge Assistant Executive Engineer, PHE Sub-Division Dhownt and Anil Sharma, Incharge Assistant Executive Engineer, Designs, Inspections & Quality Control have been posted as Incharge Executive Engineer and their services are placed at the disposal of I&FC Department for further posting.

Four SED employees...

respective Directorates of School Education, with immediate effect," reads an order issued by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Principal Secretary, General Administration Department.

The four employees include Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din, Deputy Chief Education Officer; Abdul Karim, Senior Assistant at HSS Kandhote, Doda; Jatinder Jyoti Singh, Junior Assistant at GHS Kalideh Sunderbai in Rajouri; and Yasir Sharief, a Class-IV employee posted at GHS Chareel Banihal in Ramban district.

The GAD earlier this week ordered that Fayaz Ahmad Fayaz, Principal School Education Department, attached in the Nucleus Cell (Academic Section), shall be deemed to have been relieved from the School Education Department.

J&K to adopt...

Department. Dr Mehta said that the current year would be a transformational year with respect to the education system and important changes would be required in the process. He said that the UT will implement the NEP from April 1 and sought suggestions from VCs about the modalities to be adopted for making a smooth transition in its implementation. The VCs unanimously suggested the need to synchronize the academic calendar with the national academic calendar and move to a single calendar. They said that adoption of uniform calendar system would not only enable the students from JK to compete with students in rest of the country for admissions to top institutions but also save valuable time.

The Chief Secretary advised the universities to ensure implementation of the calendar in such a way so not to lead to any disruptions or loss of time. He also advised them to start the admissions process as soon as possible and also offer foundational courses to the students in line with the NEP.

Asserting that Universities have a great role to play in research and vocational development, the Chief Secretary said that universities should become a centre of innovation and students instead of chasing government jobs should become innovators and job creators. He said that the government will provide every kind of support to all universities in this regard. He said that the focus of this year's financial budget will be to address the gaps in terms of academic infrastructure and teaching resources. He emphasized for greater coordination among higher secondary schools, colleges and universities that only greater coordination and supervision could lead academic excellence. He said that J&K universities should chase excellence in education and obtain the best possible rankings.

He asked the VCs to develop a robust framework for getting feedback from the students as academic feedback is more strongly and consistently related to achievement and quality of higher education. He also stressed on the need for a vibrant academic and cultural ecosystem, organizing more intra and inter University competitions and a healthy campus life.

Principal Secretary Higher Education briefed the meeting regarding the various steps being taken for the implementation of the NEP. He informed the meeting that all degree colleges in J&K would apply for accreditation or provisional registration (PAC) under the NAAC framework this year. In addition, at least 10 Government

J&K administration launches portal for verification of Government works

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration launched a physical verification portal to monitor development works and ensure transparency, officials said on Thursday.

Additional Chief Secretary (Finance) Atal Dulloo launched the portal at the civil secretariat here.

The portal has been developed by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics in collaboration with National Informatics Centre (NIC) for filing of online verification reports of development projects in a structured and standardised format.

The aim of the portal is to carry forward an institutionalised system of transparency and accountability at all levels of governance for ensuring financial discipline and proper project management of works, Dulloo said.

COVID: 7 new cases in J&K

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported seven fresh Covid cases on Thursday that took the infection tally to 4,53,845, officials said.

All the fresh cases were reported from the Kashmir division, they said.

Of the new cases, six were recorded in Srinagar while Budgam district registered one case, officials said.

Eighteen of the 20 districts in the Union Territory did not report any fresh case.

There are 148 active cases while the overall recoveries has reached 4,48,947, officials said.

The COVID-19 death toll stands at 4,750. No Covid-related fatality was reported in the last 24 hours, officials said.

There were 51 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black fungus), they added.

Degree Colleges across Jammu and Kashmir would identify sister Colleges which would have collaboration with reputed International Institutions to boost faculty and student exchange programs. From the academic Session 2022-23, 14 Centers of Innovation, Invention, Incubation and Training would be established under Hub and Spoke model. In addition, IIT and IIM Jammu would develop 10 Incubation Centers (each) in Degree Colleges under Hub and Spoke model.

Regarding Learning Management System (LMS), Principal Secretary informed that JK Higher education department has launched its own LMS that supports Online Learning for students. In the first phase, 22 GDCS have been connected while all GDCS will be connected with LMS in next Phase. It was also informed that JK Higher Education department has directed all institutions to ensure equitable access to quality education, with a special emphasis on Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs).

182 KP families...

specially invited for the programme, a state government statement said.

The rest of the families received the letters from the state's ministers and officers, who virtually attended the programme, it said.

A total of 209 families had purchased land in Sector 2, Bahadurgarh, some three decades ago, but could not occupy it until now.

Today is a historic day in Haryana's history as the wait of families of Kashmiri Pandits who had purchased land during 1991 and 1993 has finally ended.

In these 30 years, they must have even lost the hope of getting their land which was sold to them without even telling its disputed status, Khattar said, as per the statement.

After making suitable amendments in 1997, some of the plots were released in favour of Kashmiri Pandits, but those that did not get the land at that time had to wait for almost three decades, he said.

On April 6, 2022, after verification and required measurement of these plots being recorded at that time, the allotment process has already been done through a draw and today, the letters to 182 families have been distributed to them.

Other than this number, some of the families have already got their plots. Thus, through this entire process, promises made to these 209 families have been fulfilled, he added.

Khattar said Vachanpuri Mission', which translates to a mission to fulfil a promise, is a befitting reply to the claims of the Opposition, which has been alleging that the present state government had stopped financial aid of Rs 5,000 per month to the Kashmiri Pandit families.

I would like to clarify that the scheme of giving Rs 5,000 per month as financial aid to these families was not started by us, it was the Congress that had framed these rules that any family would get the said amount for a period of five years.

As per our official data, right now out of the total five such families, only one family is getting this aid because it has not yet completed the five-year rule, while the rest have completed their five-year norm, he said.

The chief minister alleged that the opposition was now making baseless statements as it was unable to digest the success of the movie, 'The Kashmir Files', which is based on the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley.

The beneficiaries thanked Khattar for allotting the land that they had purchased with their hard-earned money almost 30 years ago, after they were forced to vacate their houses in Kashmir overnight with the onset of militancy in the Valley.

In 1991-92, we came to Bahadurgarh. After coming here, we purchased a small piece of land hoping to restart our scattered lives, but it took us almost three decades to get possession of it. We can't express our happiness and gratitude towards the chief minister because of whom we got our land back, said one of the beneficiaries, as per the statement.

Labourer from Punjab...

establish the full circumstances of this terror crime. Area has been cordoned and search in the area is going on.

This is the third attack on people from outside Jammu and Kashmir in Pulwama district since Sunday. Five persons were injured in these attacks.

LeT terrorist associate...

seeing the MVCP party tried to flee from the spot, but was apprehended after a brief chase. He has been identified as Iqbal Mir son of Gh Nabi Mir resident of Mungam Wagoora. During search, incriminating material, ammunition including an AK magazine, 20 AK rounds, 02 UBGL grenades & 02 detonators concealed in a bag were recovered from his possession.

During preliminary investigation, it was learnt that he was a close associate of an active terrorist Hilal Sheikh alias Hanzula resident of Shrankwara Kreeri affiliated with proscribed terror outfit LeT & he was also in contact with a Pakistani terrorist Usman. Worth to mention that a major terrorist plot has been avoided by his arrest. A case under relevant sections of law has been registered at PS Kreeri and further investigation into the matter is in progress.

BSF recovers arms...

of AK-47 rifle, two magazines, two made-in-Italy pistols, 40 rounds of pistol and four pistol magazines, they said, adding the troops averted a major tragedy by ensuring the consignment smuggled from Pakistan did not enter India.

Talking to reporters, BSF DIG S K Singh said the troops once again exposed the evil designs of Pakistan-based terrorists and made a big dent on their nefarious activities.

He further said the BSF is on high alert all the time and committed to secure the International Border.

Meanwhile, the BSF has arrested a Bangladeshi national from near the International Border (IB) in Samba district, officials said.

The 50-year old man was roaming suspiciously along the border with Pakistan when alert BSF troops nabbed him, they said.

During initial questioning, he revealed his identity as Mohammad Siraj of Barisal district of Bangladesh, they said. The troops did not find any incriminating material on him. The BSF handed him over to police for further interrogation.

Two hurt in....

soldiers and protesters. The injured were identified as Abdul Ahad Mir and Mujeeb Ahmad Sofi, the officials said, adding that they were rushed to the SKIMS hospital at Soura here.

"Troops of 21 Rashtriya Rifles were on a routine patrol in Handwara town. In view of an Iftar party planned by the Army near the Town Chowk, the troops took a few photos of the Jamia Masjid in Handwara at about 1.30 pm to showcase happiness and offering of prayers during the holy month of Ramzan," the spokesperson said, adding that they also requested a local resident to get a few photos clicked from inside the mosque.

"When he was going to take the photos, some rogue elements protested and insti-

gated others to get into an altercation with the troops. While attempting to pacify them, two-three individuals got into a scuffle with the troops, wherein there was an accidental discharge of weapons, injuring two civilians," he said.

Political parties condemned the incident, with People's Conference chairman Sajad Lone, who hails from Handwara, claiming that it was a result of the "sorri state of affairs" prevailing in the Union Territory.

"What a sorry state of affairs. One of the most peaceful towns Handwara at the receiving end. Hoping against hope the guilty are punished," he said in a tweet.

People's Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti expressed dismay and shock over the incident.

Hitting out at the security forces for "barging" into a religious place, "profiling" worshippers and "shooting civilians at will without any fear of justice", she said such incidents highlight the level of unaccountability pervasive across institutions in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Government of India's interference in religious matters by its unwarranted surveillance of a simple act of offering prayers shows that Kashmiris pay dearly for the illusion of Naya Kashmir," the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said in a tweet.

"Security forces barging into religious places, profiling worshippers and shooting civilians at will without any fear of justice is the level of unaccountability pervasive across J&K. Rather than moving forward, Kashmir seems to have been taken back to 90s again," a PDP spokesperson said in a tweet.

Petition regarding dearth...

further asked Registrar General to convene a meeting as suggested above. DB further said that the meeting will also be attended by Adv Sunil Sethi, Senior Counsel as well as Amit Gupta, Advocate General.

Recovery of IED...

radicalized youth through social media platforms to target security personnel and public places with an intention to wage war against government of India. A Charge sheet was earlier filed by NIA against 3 accused persons on December 22, 2021," said official, adding that investigation has established that accused Fayaz Ahmad Khan and Tawseef Ahmad Wani are members of TRF, who in connivance with their Pakistani handlers of TRF were involved in spreading subversive activities in Jammu and Kashmir. Further Investigation in the matter is going on.

LG urges sports...

measures. During the same time, Accessible India Campaign turned into a mass movement creating accessible infrastructure for specially-abled, in government and private buildings, railway stations, airports, schools and colleges, noted the Lt Governor.

Highlighting the unprecedented work being done keeping in mind the needs and aspirations of all the sections of the society, the Lt Governor said the UT of J&K is moving forward in the direction of positive progress with the spirit of strong service nurtured by national values and public consciousness.

Jammu and Kashmir government is working on a mission mode to ensure 100% saturation of Divyangjan pensions and distribution of tricycles, he added.

The Lt Governor lauded Special Olympics Bharat, its Chairperson Dr. Mallika Nadda and everyone associated with it for providing much-needed platforms to the specially-abled to showcase their talent.

The Lt Governor also extended his best wishes to the Special Athlete Paramjeet Singh, who hails from a border village and despite facing many hardships managed to secure selection for the next year's Special World Winter Games to be held in Kazan, Russia.

It is the responsibility of Jammu and Kashmir administration to develop a flourishing sports culture among the specially-abled, identify their talent, and provide the world stage to special athletes, the Lt Governor said.

Our endeavor is to develop sports infrastructure, provide world-class coaching, and incentivize sporting talent with special emphasis on specially-abled sportspersons; creating an inclusive and equitable sports ecosystem without any discrimination, the Lt Governor added.

In the last one year, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has ensured that every panchayat is provided with a playfield and sports kits. Under a special program, efforts are being made to connect 7.5 lakh youth with different disciplines of sports. This year, 221 playfields will be constructed in all 20 districts, besides construction/upgradation of 157 sports courts will be completed, informed the Lt Governor.

Dr Ashwani Jojra, President Special Olympics Bharat, J&K UT while speaking on the occasion briefed about the various initiatives and yearlong programs being organized for athletes with intellectual disabilities, special needs.

Other speakers who spoke on the efforts and commitment of their respective organizations towards promotion of sports and providing other growth opportunities to people with special abilities were Avey Pargal, National Joint General Secretary, SAKSHAM; Dr. R.K Suri, Chairman, Institute of Dental Sciences, Sehore, Jammu; and Ritu Singh, Chairperson, FICCI Ladies Organization's (FLO) Jammu-Kashmir & Ladakh Chapter.

Anshul Garg, Deputy Commissioner Jammu; Dr. Shashi Sudhan Sharma, Principal & Dean, GMC; besides various dignitaries, Divyanjan, their parents, caretakers and health officials were present on the occasion.

J&K Police releases....

various scenes depicting the period of militancy, including women in mourning. The background score features poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz's "Hum Dekhenge", an iconic poem that was also used in 'The Kashmir Files'.

"Militants barged in the house of SPO Ishfaq Ahmed and killed him along with his brother Umer Jan" and "these killings are in a series of cold-blooded murders of peace-loving Kashmiris," read two texts in the video.