

Govt orders probe into IAS officer's misconduct with woman colleague

Guidelines issued to ensure 'decorum'

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Friday ordered a high-level inquiry into the alleged verbal abuse directed at a female Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officer by senior IAS officer Kumar Rajeev Ranjan during a meeting earlier this week, footage of which reignited the debate around dignity at the workplace for women.

The action came as political parties reacted sharply to the incident and the National Commission for Women (NCW) took suo motu cognizance of video footage of the incident that went viral on social media, sparking widespread condemnation across the Union territory and calls for strict disciplinary action.

According to an official order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), Mandeep Kaur, a 2004-batch IAS officer and Commissioner-Secretary to the Housing and Urban Development Department, has been appointed as the inquiry officer to investigate the matter. Amit Vermani, Additional Secretary in the GAD, has been appointed as the presenting officer. The inquiry panel has been directed to submit its report within 15 days.

Later, the Jammu and Kashmir government today issued guidelines to officers to observe decorum at all levels of administration and to ensure that official interactions are conducted with due courtesy, restraint, dignity and mutual respect, a day after an IAS officer used abusive ►P11

Not in keeping with expected standards: CM



SRINAGAR: Taking note of the alleged verbal abuse of a woman Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officer by a senior IAS officer in "strongest possible terms", Chief Minister ►P11

CJP's March: 6K cops, 220 CAPF companies deployed

Dipke, Neha Bora detained

NEW DELHI: Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leader Abhijeet Dipke and AISA chief Neha Bora were preventively detained by Delhi Police here on Friday while on their way to participate in the 'Lehra Do Tiranga' protests, with Dipke headed to Connaught Place and Bora to Mandi House.

While Dipke was picked up from his residence in Jhandewalan, Bora was detained at Mandi House. The detentions triggered scenes of jostling among crowds, camera crews and security personnel.

Police sources said Dipke was taken to Jafarpur Kalan police station after being detained.

Earlier in the day, more than 20 Delhi Police personnel had visited Dipke's residence in Jhandewalan and served him a notice directing him to refrain from any action that could prejudice the rights of citizens, traders, commuters, patients and others. The detentions came amid

heightened security arrangements in the national capital ahead of the proposed protest on Friday evening.

Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar visited the DCP New Delhi office at Parliament Street police station to review security arrangements.

"We have detained Dipke and Bora. The situation is very peaceful. Some protesters have reached Connaught Place and will be removed soon. Our main objective is to maintain law and order and ensure smooth traffic movement," a senior police officer said.

Security personnel cordoned off Central Park in Connaught Place, forming a human chain along its metal railings. A tear gas vehicle and a Vajra vehicle were stationed outside the park, while Rapid Action Force personnel were deployed inside.

Several traffic police personnel were also deployed to regulate movement ►P11

Drug trade, organised crime 'flourishing' in Punjab: Shah

MHA seeks report on drug related cases

NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the Centre will seek Punjab government's response over two incidents in the state: a father consuming poison under pressure in Dirba and the broad daylight killing of anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota in Mansa.

In a post on microblogging site X, Shah said Punjab is today grappling with a rising threat of drugs, gangsterism and organised crime, and asked Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann who will ultimately bear the responsibility for the safety of Punjab's people.

"In Dirba, a father succumbing to pressure and consuming poison, and in Mansa, the broad-daylight murder of Parvinder Singh Jhota -- who had raised his voice against drugs -- have raised serious questions about the law and order situation in Punjab,"



Shah wrote. Jhota's father has levelled grave allegations against the ruling Aam Aadmi Party government and their MLA, Shah said.

The Home Ministry will seek responses from the Punjab government on both the incidents, he said.

Jhota, an anti-drug activist, was shot dead by a medical store owner at a busy market in Mansa on Tuesday.

Ashwani Kumar, the store owner who fired at Jhota when he was being questioned for selling addictive drugs to an elderly man, was subsequently arrested.

The first incident Shah referred to was the death by suicide of Gulzar Singh, who hailed from Dirba in Sangrur, on September 7. Gulzar's family had alleged that he consumed poison after being harassed and ►P11

INBRIEF

Samarthak warship inducted into Navy

KARWAR: Samarthak, India's first multi-purpose vessel built by a private shipyard, was commissioned into the Navy on Friday, marking a major milestone in expanding the role of domestic industry in warship construction.

Addressing the commissioning ceremony in the presence of Vice-President C P Radhakrishnan at the Navy's base at Karwar, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Krishna Swaminathan said the vessel, built by Larsen and Toubro (L&T) at its Kattupalli shipyard in Tamil Nadu, has more than 75 per cent indigenous content. ►P11

Army Cmdr reviews Op preparation

JAMMU: Western Army Commander Lieutenant General Pushendra Singh on Friday held focused operational discussions with commanders of Rising Star Corps on the evolving security landscape, emerging threats and preparedness to meet future contingencies.

The commander visited Rising Star Corps at Yol, PRO Defence said.

The deliberations focused on enhancing future-ready capabilities, leveraging technology-enabled warfare and strengthening integrated combat power to ►P11

Security forces, police launch various search Ops in Poonch

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Security forces and police launched search operations at four locations as part of heightened security measures in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Friday, officials said.

The multiple search operations come close on the heels of four suspected terrorists from Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir being killed in a suspected IED (improvised explosive device) blast across the Line of Control adjacent to the Krishna Ghati sector in Poonch, and the subsequent busting of a terrorist hideout in the Satharban forests on Tuesday.

An automatic rifle, six hand grenades and ammunition were recovered from the hideout this week.

According to officials, the Special Operations Group (SOG) of Gursai launched a search operation in the Gursai-Harooni-Baidhar area of Mendhar sub-division.

Another joint search operation was launched by the SOG Mendhar and the Army's Rashtriya Rifles in Dharana village, Kashmir Mohalla, Behri forest and adjoining areas. ►P11



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Missing SPO found dead in Kishtwar

JAMMU: A 55-year-old special police officer, who had gone missing with his service rifle, was found dead in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district on Friday, officials said.

The body of Bashir Ahmed was found in a forest area near his residence in Trigham, along with his self-loading service rifle and a magazine, police said.

A forensic team has reached the spot to collect evidence, and the exact cause of death will be known once the autopsy report is received, they said.

Ahmed, who was posted at the Pedil police post, left for his home on Thursday morning but did not reach his destination. ►P11



Final Touch: A worker walks past giant Ravana effigy heads at a workshop as preparations for Dussehra gather pace in Jammu.

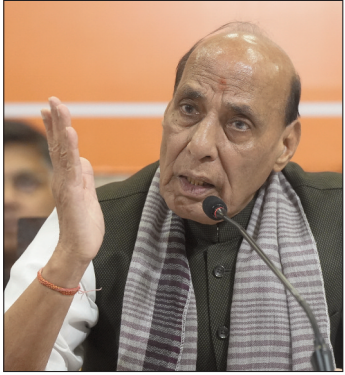
Oppn seeking Bangladesh-like regime change: Rajnath Singh

LUCKNOW: Union Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday lashed out at the Congress and its allies over the protests in the national capital, accusing them of seeking a regime change along the lines of Bangladesh and using the energy of youth to spread "anarchy".

Addressing a press conference here, Singh asserted that democracy does not give anyone the licence to create disorder or undermine the credibility of constitutional institutions.

"It appears that the Congress and its political allies, directly and through their supporting organisations, are trying to use the energy of the youth to fuel political confrontation and spread anarchy instead of channelling it towards constructive work and nation-building," the defence minister said.

"The youth of the country are be-



ing made pawns in the politics of anarchy," he stated.

Singh alleged that the Congress and its allies want a change of government in India along the lines of Bangladesh.

"They openly say at press conferences that they have drawn ►P11

ACB books two officials, others for illegal mining in Udh, Reasi

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Jammu and Kashmir, has registered a case against two mining officials and several private persons over alleged illegal extraction and transportation of minor minerals, overcharging and manipulation of electronic challans in connection with mining operations.

The case has been registered as FIR No. 09/2026 at ACB Police Station, Udhampur, against Rajeev Jammu, Assistant Mining Engineer and District Mining Officer, Udhampur, Rameshwar Sangra, District Mining Officer, Reasi, Swaran Singh Rathore and other private persons.

According to the ACB, the case has been registered under relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, as amended, and other appli-

cable laws.

The enquiry has allegedly revealed that certain private mining operators, including stone crusher operators, extracted minor minerals beyond permissible limits and continued mining activities after the expiry of their leases.

The allegations also include charging rates higher than those notified by the Government, manipulation and misuse of electronic challans, and operation of stone crusher units beyond the validity of their mandatory Consent to Operate (CTO).

The ACB has also alleged that public servants concerned facilitated these activities in connivance with private operators.

The investigation is aimed at establishing the individual roles of the accused, determining the extent of alleged illegal extraction and ►P11

Navratri rush: Over 2.53L pilgrims visit SMVD shrine

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Over 2.53 lakh pilgrims have visited the Mata Vaishno Devi cave shrine in the Trikuta hills of Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district in the first six days of the ongoing Sharad Navratri, which began on October 11, officials said.

The pilgrimage is proceeding smoothly, with over 2.53 lakh pilgrims having paid obeisance at the shrine till 3 pm on Friday, according to the figures.

A total of 47,574 pilgrims visited the shrine on October 11, followed by 48,400 on October 12, 46,558 on October 13, 41,961 on October 14 and 39,951 on October 15.

As many as 28,713 pil-

grims had visited the shrine till 3 pm on October 16.

Comedian Kapil Sharma also visited Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Darbar in Katra.

Long queues of devotees formed at RFID registration counters in Katra on the sixth day of Sharadiya Navratri as pilgrims collected their cards before heading to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi shrine for darshan.

"We performed darshan at the cave shrine. It was divine in nature. Best arrangements have been put in place by the Shrine board", devotee Asvina Bhat said.

Like her, Aayat Chambyal, who also paid obeisance this morning, said: "We are happy. Our wish to pay ►P11

CBI nabs SMC ward officer in graft case

SRINAGAR: A ward officer of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has been arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for demanding and accepting a bribe, the agency said on Friday.

A spokesperson said the agency registered an instant case against Ward Officer Safakadal on Thursday based on a complaint.

"It was alleged that the accused ward officer demanded a bribe of Rs 10,000 to permit the ►P11

J-K Bank steps up institutional engagement across Ladakh UT

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Taking forward J&K Bank's strategic focus on strengthening institutional relationships through engagement at the senior leadership level, Executive Director Sudhir Gupta visited Ladakh and held meetings with Commissioner/Secretary, Finance, UT Ladakh, Tsewang Tharchin (IA&S) and Director General of Police, Ladakh, Anand Jain (IPS).

The interactions formed part of the Bank's continued efforts to deepen partnerships with government institutions and key stakeholders,



particularly across Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and align its banking outreach with regional priorities.

During the meetings, the Executive Director briefed the senior officers on the Bank's key initiatives and on-

going efforts to support economic growth and expand access to banking services in Ladakh. He also sought their perspectives on institutional requirements, regional priorities and areas where closer coordination could strengthen service delivery and facilitate greater collaboration.

The visit reflects the Bank leadership's emphasis on sustained institutional dialogue as a strategic means of building enduring partnerships, understanding emerging needs and translating stakeholder engagement into responsive banking services. It also reaffirms ►P11

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