

INBRIEF

UPI Fee: Govt
sets 0.4% charge
above Rs 2,000

NEW DELHI: Ending nearly six years of fully free UPI payments, the government on Tuesday introduced a 0.4 per cent fee on transfers worth more than Rs 2,000 made to merchants through the platform from October 15 while explicitly ring-fencing everyday person-to-person transactions as well as small payments from any charge. "Customers will not be required to pay any charge when making such payments through UPI," the finance ministry said in a statement, adding, "MDR is a charge within the merchant payment ecosystem. It is not a charge on customers making UPI payments."

Also, individuals will continue to have "unlimited free usage, with no ► P11

India-US joint
military exercise
gets underway

NEW DELHI: A joint military exercise -- 'Yudh Abhyas' -- involving the troops of Indian and US armies, which seeks to bolster interoperability among the two forces and address emerging challenges while further strengthening the bilateral defence partnership, kicked off on Tuesday.

The opening ceremony of the 22nd edition of the exercise was held at Auli Foreign Training Node in Uttarakhand. The exercise is simultaneously being conducted at Auli and Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan, the Indian defence ► P11

Ex-ACR, 4
booked in
illegal land
deal case

JAMMU: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday registered an FIR against a former Jammu assistant commissioner (revenue) Nisar Ahmad Shad and four private beneficiaries for allegedly granting illegal permissions for the transfer of land in Chowadi and Deeli areas of Jammu city.

The FIR was registered on the outcome of a preliminary enquiry, which prima facie disclosed that the accused public servant, while functioning as ACR ► P11

Omar inaugurates IEI guest house at Sonwar
CM hands over appointment orders
to 55 JKAS, accounts service officers

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday distributed appointment orders to 55 newly selected candidates of the Combined Competitive Examination entering the Jammu & Kashmir Administrative Service and Jammu & Kashmir Accounts ((Gazetted) Service at a function held at SKICC here.

The 55 newly appointed officers include 28 Junior Scale JKAS officers and 27 Accounts Officers of the J&K Accounts (Gazetted) Service.

Ministers Javid Ahmed Dar & Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir



Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, ► P11

Omar calls BRICS' Pahalgam 'stand' a diplomatic win

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the BRICS Summit's condemnation of the Pahalgam terror attack was a success of India's foreign policy. ► P11

'Gimmicks': India on Pakistan's fresh
announcement on JeM chief bounty

Masood Azhar wanted in 2001 Parl strike, 2008 Mumbai attacks, 2016 Pathankot airbase assault & 2019 Pulwama bombing



NEW DELHI: India on Tuesday dismissed as "gimmicks" Pakistan's fresh announcement of a seven million rupees bounty on Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar, demanding that Islamabad take "concrete action" to combat terrorism.

Pakistan has maintained the bounty on Azhar, who continues to be listed in the country's Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) "Red Book" of most-wanted terrorists.

Azhar remains wanted in India for major terror attacks, including the 2001 Parliament strike, the 2008 Mumbai attacks, the 2016 Pathankot airbase assault and the 2019 Pulwama bombing.

"Such gimmicks and hoodwinking by Pakistan is nothing new. We have seen similar gimmicks in the past as well," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his regular media briefing, responding to a question on Pakistan maintaining the bounty on Azhar.

"For a state sponsor of terrorism to make such phoney announcements, we all know how hollow it is. Pakistan must take concrete action and not make phoney announcements. It is of no consequence," Jaiswal added. ► P11

J-K BJP slams
Pak's bounty
as 'big fraud'

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir unit of the BJP on Tuesday said Pakistan's putting a bounty on Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar was a "big fraud, and urged Islamabad to hand him over to India."

"Islamabad cannot escape accountability by merely declaring one of its most notorious terrorists a fugitive. Masood Azhar has not fled anywhere, and he continues to remain in Pakistan under the protection of the establishment," ► P11

India-US joint military exercise gets underway

vs

BJP

Omar: BJP has no locus standi to question session's duration

BJP slams NC Govt over brief Assembly session

Govt has made 'mockery' of J&K people's expectations: LoP Sunil

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the BJP has no locus standi to question the duration of the upcoming Assembly session, as the states ruled by the saffron party are known to have even shorter sessions.

Abdullah was reacting to BJP MLA and Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma's accusation that the government kept the forthcoming Assembly session short as it was not serious about addressing people's issues.

"It is a seven-day session. What is non-serious about that? It would have been non-serious had we followed the path shown by the BJP, which convenes one or two-day sessions in states ruled by it. These are people who do not even appear before Parliament; you ► P11

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir BJP on Monday criticised the National Conference-led government over the short duration of the upcoming Assembly session, with Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma demanding that the House be convened for at least a month to give adequate time to legislators to raise and debate people's issues.

Sharma said the people of Jammu and Kashmir had high expectations from the elected government and that the Assembly was the primary platform through which their concerns could be raised and taken up with the government. "Unfortunately, the government of Jammu and Kashmir has ► P11



Ex-ACR, 4 booked in illegal land deal case

SC 'rap' prompts J-K Govt to clear Mir's Asian Games trip

Dr Jitendra inaugurates SPROUT Facility at BRIC-NIPGR

SC asks Govt to consider longer tribunal tenure

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday allowed international canoeing coach and umpire Bilquis Mir to travel as a technical official for the Asian Games beginning September 19 in Japan after being rapped by the Supreme Court for withholding the No Objection Certificate.

The Supreme Court, which came down heavily on the Union Territory administration during a hearing last week, had given time on or before September 15 to the Jammu and Kashmir government to issue all necessary orders for Mir, who has been waging legal battles with the UT administration for the past four years.

"Bilquis Mir, Physical Education Teacher, is hereby accorded the requisite limited NOC/permission and is relieved for the purpose of joining and discharging the remaining assignment as Coach/Chief Coach of the Indian National Kayaking and Canoeing Team and for accompanying and assisting the Indian National Team in connection with the Asian Games, 2026," the order, which came on the last day of the Supreme Court's deadline, said. ► P11

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Dr. Jitendra Singh today inaugurated the "SpeedSeed Phenotyping and Resource Optimization for Unified Trait Analysis" (SPROUT) facility at BRIC-National Institute of Plant Genome Research (BRIC-NIPGR), New Delhi, describing it as an important indigenous capability for developing climate-resilient crops suited to different weather conditions.

The Minister said that in

nology as well as human biotechnology. The BioE3 policy itself includes climate-resilient agriculture among its strategic thematic sectors.

The event was attended by Prof. Manoj Prasad, Director, BRIC-NIPGR; Dr. Senthil K. Muthappa, BRIC-NIPGR; and Dr. Nitin Jain, Scientist-H, Department of Biotechnology (DBT). During the programme, Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the SPROUT facility and planted a sapling under the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign. He also interacted with scientists and officials ► P11

NEW DELHI: Observing that tribunals should not become defunct owing to vacancies, the Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Centre to consider extending the tenure of retiring presiding officers and members of such quasi-judicial bodies for a month or so till fresh appointments are made.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Joyimalya Bagchi and V Mohana was urged by the Centre through Attorney General R Venkataramani ► P11



a country as geographically and agro-climatically diverse as India, the ability to study and evaluate crops under different environmental conditions is critical for strengthening agricultural resilience.

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GOC reviews counter-terror ops, security across Poonch

88 dead, 1K hurt in 699 accidents in Jammu; over 8,000 riders fined

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JAMMU: General Officer Commanding (GOC) of White Knight Corps Lieutenant General P K Mishra on Tuesday visited operational locations in the Surankote area of Poonch district in Jammu and Kashmir to review the prevailing security situation and ongoing focused counter-terrorism operations, the Army said.

"The Corps Commander was briefed on ongoing operations for domination of the Pir Panjal Range, robust joint intelligence network and seamless synergy with ► P11

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JAMMU: With 88 people killed and over 1,000 injured in road accidents across Kathua, Samba, Rajouri and Poonch during the first seven months of this year, Traffic Police Rural Jammu conducted a special drive targeting two-wheeler violations, which accounted for 44 per cent of the crashes, resulting in 88 fatalities and injuries to 1,001 persons.

The analysis revealed that two-wheelers were involved in 309 accidents, accounting for 44 per cent of the total accidents reported during the period, ► P11

lighted the significant involvement of two-wheelers in crashes across the four districts, a spokesperson of the traffic police (Rural Jammu) said.

According to an analysis of road accident data from January 1 to July 31 by Traffic Police Rural Jammu, a total of 699 accidents were reported in the four districts, resulting in 88 fatalities and injuries to 1,001 persons.

The analysis revealed that two-wheelers were involved in 309 accidents, accounting for 44 per cent of the total accidents reported during the period, ► P11