

INBRIEF

Shah pitches ‘automated’ mechanism to counter terror

NEW DELHI: Emphasising the importance of ensuring "zero delay" in counterterrorism operations, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday called for institutionalising an "automated response mechanism" at every level of the country's counter-terror framework 'PRAHAAR'.

Inaugurating the conference on 'PRAHAAR - CT Policy and Strategy', Shah also launched a dedicated extradition portal aimed at expediting efforts to bring fugitives back to India.

The new portal brings on one platform MHA, MEA, CBI and state agencies in the extradition efforts when a fugitive is detained abroad and extradition request is supposed to be transmitted to the country with the approval of the competent court, sources said. ▶P11

7 dead, six hurt in two road mishaps

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR/JAMMU: Seven people were killed and six others were injured in two separate road accidents across Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.

In first incident, five people were killed and six others were injured after an SUV plunged into the Kis-hanganga river in Kupwara district on Monday, officials said.

The accident took place on Seemari road in Teetwal area of the north Kashmir district. A rescue operation was launched immediately, they said. People who sustained injuries when ▶P11

J-K Assembly passes Statehood Resolution amid Oppn protests

BJP moves motion to remove Speaker

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Monday passed a resolution seeking urgent restoration of full statehood, amid a walkout by the opposition BJP.

The resolution was moved by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday last week. However, it was deferred as several members wanted to speak over the issue.

The opposition BJP protested against the resolution on Friday as well as on Monday, with party members jumping into the well of the House, tearing business papers and conducted mock proceedings.

"In addition to the resolutions passed by this House on 26, June 2000 and 6 November, 2024, the House calls upon the Government of India for the immediate and urgent restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and resolves that this resolution be forwarded to the Government of India," the resolution read.

The NC-led government headed by Farooq Abdullah had passed a resolution on June 26, 2000 for restoration of greater autonomy as existed before August 9, 1953.

On November 6, 2024, the House passed a resolution seeking the restoration of special status.

Several members, including from the ruling National Conference (NC), had moved



BJP MLAs conduct mock proceedings, tear papers



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly descended into chaos on Monday as BJP members protesting a resolution seeking urgent restoration of statehood jumped into the well of the House, tore business papers

4 MLAs marshalled out from Assembly

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Four MLAs were marshalled out of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly here on Monday after BJP members created a ruckus in the House, protesting the resolution moved by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to restore statehood. As Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather continued the proceedings, BJP MLAs staged mock proceedings in the House well, despite warnings that action would be taken for disrupting the House. Amid the din, Leader of Opposition, Sunil ▶P11

amendments to the resolution, with many seeking that the resolution also demand the restoration of special status.

However, while responding during the debate, the chief minister urged the members to withdraw their amendments, saying "they had got trapped in this scheme (of the BJP) and moved amendments".

"This House has already passed resolutions twice for special status -- one in (former CM) Farooq Abdullah time, and the other in 2024 soon after formation of this government. Special status is a provision that other states do not have. We have asked the Centre to restore the special provisions which we had before 2019. So, I request my colleagues not to press the amendments which will give the BJP an excuse to oppose it," Abdullah said.

Following the CM's appeal, the Speaker asked the members whether they intended not to press the amendments, to which all eight MLAs agreed.

The Speaker then put the resolution to vote, even as BJP members continued with their protest.

The resolution was passed through voice vote amid a walkout by the BJP.

The BJP said the reference to autonomy and special status in the resolution was an insult to the Constitution and it would not allow a discussion on it or its passage in the House.

Earlier, Opposition BJP today also moved a motion to remove Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Abdul Rahim Rather for allowing the resolution brought by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah demanding full statehood restoration. The BJP said the ▶P11

Omar Abdullah seeks immediate ‘restoration’ of Statehood to J-K

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah sought the immediate restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, reminding the Centre of prior assurances following elections, as the Legislative Assembly passed the resolution on Monday amid a walkout by the opposition BJP.

"We want justice for the humiliation that we have gone through. It is not charity or favour from the Centre; it (statehood) is our right. The Centre has made promises, and they should fulfil them," he said.

Replaying in the legislative assembly debate on his resolution, the chief minister asked which dictionary translates 'as soon as possible' to two years, referring to the Centre's assurance in the Supreme Court during a hearing on Article 370 petitions.

The chief minister questioned the Centre's delay in



CM moves five Bills in Assembly

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday introduced five bills in the assembly, including those relating to amending the salaries of ministers and legislators, and to foster ease of doing business. Abdullah introduced three separate bills to ▶P11

No room for Pak agenda; BJP firm on restoring Statehood to J-K: LoP

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Sunil Sharma, on Monday said that the Assembly session should remain focused on public welfare, development and issues concerning the people of Jammu and Kashmir, rather than being used to reopen settled constitutional questions.

Sharma reiterated that the BJP is firmly committed to the restoration of Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and said the party would support any resolution confined exclusively to this issue.

"Statehood is the agenda of the BJP, and we are firmly



committed to it. If the Chief Minister brings only a Statehood resolution, we will support it. Statehood will be restored, but such a sensitive matter cannot be rushed or dictated by unilateral deadlines," Sharma said. Objecting to the govern-

ment resolution, Sharma said that references to the 2000 autonomy resolution and the 2024 special-status resolution have unnecessarily mixed the issue of Statehood with matters relating to the erstwhile constitutional arrangement of Jammu and ▶P11

SPO dismissed over ‘bribery’ charge; inquiry ordered against 3 policemen

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KATHUA: A special police officer (SPO) was dismissed from service for allegedly demanding and accepting bribe from a truck driver in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, officials said.

A departmental inquiry was also ordered against three policemen, including an assistant sub-inspector, for alleged dereliction of duty and failure to report the misconduct of the SPO to their senior officers, they said.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Kathua, Mohita Sharma, ordered the action on the recommendation of the

district police headquarters after a video surfaced on social media. The clip purportedly showed SPO Ameer-ud-Din demanding and accepting Rs 100 from a truck driver during checking at Lakhampur, the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir bordering Punjab, in the presence of three senior colleagues on Sunday.

The police said the act of the SPO constituted a grave violation of discipline and tarnished the image of the department.

Accordingly, the SSP disengaged the SPO from service with immediate effect, treating his post as vacant. He was also directed to deposit his

uniform, arms and ammunition, if issued, with the concerned police authorities forthwith, officials said.

The SSP also directed a departmental inquiry against ASI Gian Chand, Head Constable Dhruv Singh and Selection Grade Constable Shamsher Singh for "dereliction of duty", officials said.

The inquiry has been entrusted to the Superintendent of Police (Operations), Border and Kandi, Kathua, who has been directed to conduct proceedings under the Rules of the J&K Police Manual and submit findings along with specific recommendations to the authorities at the earliest.

India-France space links enter new phase with focus on ‘human spaceflight: Dr Jitendra Singh

“TRISHNA, Gaganyaan and India’s 400+ space start-ups create new opportunities for India-France partnership

NEW DELHI: India-France space cooperation has evolved from the early sounding rocket experiments of the 1960s into a broad and expanding partnership encom-



passing joint satellite missions, launch vehicle technologies, human spaceflight and emerging space applications, Union Minister of State

Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, said today.

He said the long-standing relationship between the two countries now provides an opportunity to build a larger ecosystem by bringing together governments, research institutions, industries and start-ups, including through deeper engagement in the rapidly expanding space sector.

A high-level French delegation led by Prof. Philippe Baptiste, French Minister for Higher Education, Research and Space, met Dr. Jitendra Singh in New Delhi today. The meeting covered the Space Summit, ▶P11

“Steely Resolve” of Modi, Parrikar led to surgical strikes: Lt Gen Nimbhorkar

MUMBAI: Lieutenant General Rajendra Ramrao Nimbhorkar (Retd), who played a key role in the surgical strikes on terror camps across the Line of Control in 2016, on Monday said the action was possible only due to the "steely resolve" shown by PM Narendra Modi and then Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar. "We had the capability, but somebody had to give the go-ahead. Till then, there was a lot of talk of avenging the death of our soldiers, but no action had been taken," Nimbhorkar said.

They (Modi and Parrikar) were willing to take responsibility for the fallout of their action, said the army veteran, who was one of the three senior army commanders at the helm of key operational commands during the surgical strikes.

Nimbhorkar, who was the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Nagrota-based 16 Corps (White Knight Corps), played a central role in operational preparedness

and tactical execution along the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch.

"On the night of September 28, 2016, our soldiers went across the border and killed 82 terrorists across Uri, Poonch and Bimber sectors," he said. It must be noted that our strike was so meticulously planned and executed that there was no collateral damage, he added.

The two units chosen for the task comprised Special Forces soldiers of the Udhampur-based 9 Para (SF) and 4 Para (SF).

"We showed Pakistan that we can hit them hard. This was further carried forward in Balakot strikes and Operation Sindoor," Nimbhorkar said.

The September 18, 2016 attack on the Uri brigade headquarters' administrative area that led to the death of 19 soldiers prompted India to take action, he said.

"The then army chief asked us for the (strike) plans. We gave him the plans but were not sure of their ap-

proval. We were pleasantly surprised when Parrikar conveyed the go-ahead decision to Lt Gen Deependra Singh Hooda, the Northern Army Commander, Lt Gen Satish Kumar Dua, then the GOC of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps (Chinar Corps) and me," Nimbhorkar said.

"When we launched the surgical strikes, only 18 people in India knew of the launch decision. The three of us were the junior most," he said in a lighter vein.

"Our soldiers were back on Indian terrain around 5 am the next day after accomplishing their mission and hitting the targets. We got whatever equipment we asked for, and also air support requirements," he said.

"It was the steely resolve of PM Modi and Parrikar that helped accomplish this unprecedented mission," Nimbhorkar said.

Modi on Sunday said the surgical strikes were India's decisive response to the pain of terror attacks ▶P11

Pre-2009 appointees get OPS cover in J&K



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah-led Government today extended the benefit of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) to thousands of employees appointed against posts advertised or notified prior to December 24, 2009, but who subsequently joined service under the New Pension Scheme (NPS).

The Government issued the orders following the decision taken by the Council of Ministers, chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, at its meeting held earlier this month.

Under the decision, employees appointed against

posts advertised or notified prior to December 24, 2009 and who joined service under the NPS have been given a one-time option to switch over from the New Pension Scheme to the Old Pension Scheme.

The eligible employees will have to exercise the option through the proper channel within three months from the date of issuance of the Government order.

The Government has clarified that the option, once exercised, shall be final. Employees who do not exercise the option within the stipulated period will continue to remain covered under the New Pension Scheme.

The decision fulfils the Council of Ministers' decision to extend the benefit of the Old Pension Scheme to employees whose posts had been advertised or notified before December 24, 2009, providing eligible employees an opportunity to opt for OPS coverage.

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