

03 Bar Association bids farewell to Justice Ramalingam, Justice Mir

09 India favours peace, dialogue but Pak not: BJP Chief

10 FIVB lifts VFI provisional suspension

Website : www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

ROZA TIMING
SUHUR: 3:54
IFTAAR: 7:26

Encounter breaks out at Shopian
■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
SRINAGAR: An encounter broke out between security forces and terrorists in Shopian district on Wednesday, police said. The terrorists opened firing on an Army patrol at Jannagri in Shopian district, the police said, adding that the Army personnel retaliated the fire which triggered the gun battle. No casualties were reported. Earlier in the day security forces launched a search operation in forest area of Tral in Pulwama following

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ADGP briefs Guv on security arrangements for PM's visit

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
SRINAGAR: Additional Director General of Police, Security Muneer Ahmad Khan on Wednesday briefed Governor N N Vohra about the arrangements made for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the State later this week. He also briefed him about several important matters relating to security management during ensuing Shri Amarnathji Yatra also, an official spokesman said. "The Governor emphasised the vital importance of regularly reviewing and effectively ensuring the security of all vital installations and sensitive establishments in each

Four KAS officers transferred

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: The State Government on Wednesday transferred four KAS officers. Naseema Wani, KAS, General Manager, DIC, Budgam has been transferred and posted as Personnel Officer, Associated Hospitals, Srinagar, vice Abdul Rashid Dass, who has been posted as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Bijbehara; Syed Sajad Qadri, KAS, General Manager, DIC, Srinagar shall hold the additional charge of post of General Manager, DIC, Budgam till further orders. Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik, KAS, General Manager, J&K State Road Transport Corporation has been transferred and posted as Secretary, J&K State Social Welfare Board, vice Shahid Mehmood, who has been posted as Deputy Director, Employment (Central), J&K.

WEATHER
Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 36.9°C Min: 21.8°C
Humidity
Max: 56 Min: 23
Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 24.8°C Min: 11.7°C
Humidity
Max: 68 Min: 48
Sunset: 19:24 Hours
Sunrise: 05:32 Hours

Center halts operations against terrorists in Kashmir during Ramzan

Mehbooba, Omar welcome decision

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NEW DELHI: Security forces will not launch any operations in Jammu and Kashmir during the holy month of Ramzan, a move seen as a bid to bring peace and provide a conducive atmosphere in the restive valley. The announcement by the Home Ministry comes two days ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. Today's decision has been taken to help the peace loving Muslims observe Ramzan in a peaceful environment, a Home Ministry spokesperson said. The Ministry said the security forces, however, reserve the right to retaliate if attacked or if essential to protect the lives of innocent people. The move of the Centre is similar to the Non Initiation of Combat Operations



Security men in action during an encounter in Kashmir. (file photo)

(NICO) announced by the first NDA government, headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, during Ramzan in 2000. Today's announcement comes a week after Mufti had said that the central government should consider a unilateral ceasefire in the state starting from Ramzan till the completion of the Amarnath yatra in August. The fasting month of Ramzan is likely to start tomorrow or Friday depending on sighting of the moon

the spokesperson said. The government expects everyone to cooperate in this initiative and help the Muslim brothers and sisters to observe Ramzan peacefully and without any difficulties, the spokesperson said. Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti and opposition National Conference leader Omar Abdullah welcomed the Centre's decision. "The decision would go a long way in healing the wounds of people of the state who have been suffering the pain of violence and uncertainty for the past three decades or so. What best a time to go for this decision than the onset of holy month of Ramadhan which promotes values of patience, self-restraint and tolerance," Mehbooba said in a statement. She said the ceasefire would also provide the necessary breather to the

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Massive BSF operation to uncover tunnel across IB in Kathua-Samba sector

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
HIRANAGAR: The BSF has launched a massive operation along International Border (IB) to uncover a tunnel through which armed infiltrators are suspected to have sneaked inside the Kathua district, a senior official said on Wednesday. "An operation has been started to uncover the tunnel. It is going on," BSF's IG, Jammu Frontier, Ram Awtar said here. He said the BSF has inducted several JCB machines, a large number of troops and other types of manpower into the area and a search was going on. The terrain is like the riverine Chambal valley belt but we are at it, Awtar said. Yesterday, BSF DG KK Sharma had termed as "very serious" Pakistan's attempts to push infiltrators across, including the latest instances which come days ahead of Prime Minister Narendra

Infiltration bid foiled

JAMMU: BSF troops thwarted an infiltration bid on Wednesday along the International Border (IB) in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, where a high alert has been sounded ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, officials said. "There was an (infiltration) attempt today and it was foiled," Inspector General of BSF, Jammu Frontier, Ram Awtar said. A group of infiltrators tried to cross over to the Indian territory in Bobiyian area earlier today, taking advantage of the heavy foliage in the region. A few rounds of fire were exchanged between the two sides before the infiltrators fled, Awtar said. This is the fourth infiltration bid to be foiled by the BSF along the IB in the past four days. Jammu region was put on high alert after movement of suspected militants was detected along the IB in Kathua district on Monday. A 28-year-old BSF jawan was killed as Pakistani troops opened fire at forward posts in Manguchak area yesterday to help infiltrators cross over.

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Governor invites BJP to form Govt in Karnataka

■ **AGENCY**
BENGALURU: Governor Vajubhai Vala on Wednesday invited BJP legislator party leader B S Yeddyurappa to form the government in Karnataka, capping a day of intense jockeying for power and allegations by the Congress of bribery and horse-trading against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "I invite you (Yeddyurappa) to form the government and be sworn in as the Chief Minister of Karnataka," a communication from Raj Bhavan said. Vala also asked Yeddyurappa to seek a vote of confidence within 15



Yeddyurappa invited to form Karnataka government, oath ceremony on Thursday.

days of assuming office as the chief minister. Briefing reporters, BJP General Secretary Muralidhar Rao said Yeddyurappa will take oath here tomorrow at 9 AM. Toiling hard to control the levers of power in Karnataka, Yeddyurappa and H D Kumaraswamy, the leader of the newly formed JD(S)-Congress

alliance had earlier met Vala and staked claim to form the government. Following the governor's announcement, Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad accused the Congress of "blowing up the Constitution to shambles". "The party that blew up the constitution to shambles is teaching us the constitution, the party that imposed President rule the most number of times is giving us lessons," Prasad said. Congress spokesperson Priyanka Chaturvedi slammed the governor for his "partisan decision" and giving "official sanction" to "horse trading".

Hope all in Kashmir will reciprocate: BJP

■ **AGENCY**
NEW DELHI: The BJP on Wednesday expressed hope that the Centre's decision to stop operations of security forces in Jammu and Kashmir during Ramzan will be reciprocated by all in the valley. "We welcome the prudent decision taken by Hon'ble PM and HM with a profound hope that this gesture will be reciprocated

by one and all in the valley (and it) will witness peace during d holy month of Ramazan (sic)," BJP's General Secretary Ram Madhav tweeted. Madhav is the BJP's pointsman for Jammu and Kashmir, where his party is a junior partner to the PDP in the government. The Home Ministry announced that the security forces will not launch any operations in Jammu and Kashmir during the holy month of Ramzan, seen as conciliatory move by the Centre as it tries to restore peace in the Valley.

Vaishno Devi: NGT slams J&K Govt for defying its order

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NEW DELHI: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Wednesday slammed the Jammu and Kashmir government for "open defiance" of its order on rehabilitation plan for horses and mules which have been barred from carrying pilgrims from Katra to the Vaishno Devi temple. A bench headed by acting NGT Chaiperson Jawad Rahim warned the state government while taking exception over the submission of the counsel for the Jammu

and Kashmir government that the issue was pending consideration before the state cabinet. The green panel said it had penned down each and every step for the rehabilitation in its order and yet the state government has not complied with its direction. "We have had enough. If you want to comply with our order, its okay. Otherwise we know how to get it done. You are mischievously frustrating the orders of the tribunal. We are pained by your conduct. "The counsel for the state government has submitted a tabulated statement of timeline of events, the reading of which shows that there is open defiance of the orders of the tribunal. No progress has been made. Meetings after meetings have been held without any result," the bench said. The tribunal directed the state government to file a detailed affidavit on the rehabilitation plan before May 23, the next date

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Terrorists decamp with rifle from guard post

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
SRINAGAR: Suspected terrorists decamped with a rifle from a guard post at the main gate of the Kashmir University in the Hazratbal area of the city, police said. "A rifle was snatched from the guard post at the Kashmir University near the Rumi Gate. The guards were deployed at the university on deputation from the Armed Police," a police official said. He said the security forces have launched searches in the area to recover the rifle even as efforts are on to identify the culprits.

Kathua case: SC allows J&K Govt to file status report

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed the Jammu and Kashmir government to file a status report tomorrow in the sensational Kathua gang rape and murder case of an eight-year-old girl after the State alleged that the three college friends of an accused might have misled the probe. A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra was hearing a fresh plea of three college friends of Vishal

protection by a central agency. Lawyer Ravi Sharma, representing students Sahil Sharma, Sachin Sharma and Neeraj Sharma, said that they hail from the Jammu region and they and their families were being threatened. The bench, also comprising justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud, did not agree with the contention of the students that their further questioning be videographed. "We have

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BJP ministers visible on posters, invisible in offices

JAMMU: Newly appointed BJP ministers in Mehbooba Mufti led coalition government are yet to make their presence felt in their offices but their posters are already making their 'visible' on the streets and in their assembly constituencies. After getting inducted into the Council of Ministers, these ministers were greeted by king-size posters by their supporters and well wishers. Advertisements were published in local newspapers. Then surfaced different departmental posters with their larger than life images, super imposed on the posters and hoardings. Incidentally these ministers occupied same spots where their predecessors used to raise posters. Supporters of Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, Health Minister D. K Manyal and Housing

and Urban Development Minister Sat Pal Sharma have already covered major spots across Jammu city to welcome them, greet them and congratulate them on joining the ministries. But when it comes to making their presence felt in their offices or opening camp offices inside the Civil Secretariat in Jammu these ministers have failed on the lines of their predecessors. The common people of Jammu continue to struggle for round the clock power supply, regular drinking water and better road conditions. A large number of people continue to hold protest demonstrations in their respective areas highlighting the scarcity of basic amenities in their residential areas. On his part, new Power Minister Sunil Kumar Sharma is attending review meetings and setting deadlines for engineers to streamline and ensure 24x7 power supply to



GOOD MORNING JAMMU: See your minister in his larger than life avatar at flyover near Super Specialty Hospital.

residents of Jammu. Similarly, Health Minister Dr D. K Manyal is continuously touring and spending most of the time outside the office attending different functions. Former State party Chief and minister Sat Pal Sharma is yet to

Ruthless abuse of tax payers' money

Display of larger than life size hoardings of ministers is not only brazen waste of the tax-payers hard earned money but also violation of the standing court orders, banning advertisements of politicians holdings public offices. In a historic and landmark judgment, the Supreme Court on May 13, 2015 had held that taxpayers' money cannot be spent to build "personality cults" of political leaders and restrained ruling parties from publishing photographs of political leaders or prominent persons in government-funded advertisements. Ironically, the embarrassing pomp and show is being shamelessly displayed by the BJP Ministers in Jammu and Kashmir, who day in and day out espouse the high values and public propriety being set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi but do reverse of it on ground. Sadly, while Narendra Modi portrays himself as the Chief Sevak of the country, his party's first time--and probably the last time--ministers are ruthlessly wasting public money on their own cut-outs, which interest none except their family members and sycophants. pletion of Artificial Tawi Lake project, development of Tawi River Front on the pattern of Sabarmati River in Ahmedabad, etc. Similarly, Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta is yet to show his presence and hold meeting of all key functionaries of Jammu division to share his vision of development of Jammu region and carrying forward the work done by his predecessor in office.