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DIGITAL E-PAPER

CRIME

Kashmiri Pandit Activist Rakesh Hando Arrested on Cyber-Terrorism Charges; Daughter Launches Support Campaign



Jammu and Kashmir police detained Kashmiri Pandit activist Rakesh Hando on October 17, alleging that he distributed threatening online content falling under cyber-terrorism laws. According to the police, Hando used digital platforms to spread messages that could incite violence, leading to his arrest.

Hando's defense team has expressed its intention to file a petition with the Jammu and Kashmir High Court, challenging the factual basis of the police report and the validity of the cyber-terrorism charges. Lawyers argue that the evidence is merely circumstantial and that the allegations do not meet the legal threshold for terrorism.

Meanwhile, Hando's daughter, Anjani Hando, has launched a public support campaign seeking assistance from community leaders, civil society groups, and the Kashmiri Pandit diaspora. She has appealed for legal aid, media coverage, and moral support to secure her father's release during the judicial process.

This case adds to a series of high-profile arrests related to digital security laws in the region, raising questions about the balance between anti-terrorism measures and civil liberties. No further details regarding the investigation have been disclosed, and the case is currently under judicial review.

BUSINESS

Jammu and Kashmir Bank Opens 26th Branch at Mini Secretariat in Shopian



Jammu and Kashmir Bank inaugurated its 26th branch in Shopian on Monday, located within the Mini Secretariat building. The branch will offer all banking services, including deposits, loans, and digital transactions, to the local population and entrepreneurs. This brings the total number of branches in Shopian to three, strengthening the bank's network in the Kashmir Valley. Bank officials stated that this location was chosen to eliminate the need for customers to travel to the nearest branch. The inauguration ceremony was attended by local administrative officers and senior bank representatives, reflecting the bank's commitment to regional development.

FOOD

FDA suspends five meat processing licenses in Jammu and Kashmir after 95 inspections



The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has announced the suspension of registrations for five meat processing units in Jammu and Kashmir. This step was taken following 95 recent inspections in the region, aimed at ensuring compliance with food safety standards.

Inspectors found multiple violations regarding hygiene, temperature control, and documentation, prompting the regulator to take corrective action. The suspended units will not be allowed to operate until they rectify the violations and receive approval from the FSSAI.

This measure demonstrates the agency's growing commitment to ensuring a safe meat supply in the region, where consumer trust in processed food products is becoming a major issue. Officials have also urged other processors to fully cooperate with upcoming inspections.

The FSSAI did not disclose the names of the affected businesses for confidentiality reasons but clarified that the suspension is temporary and will be reassessed after confirming corrective measures.

AUTOMOBILE

Traffic regulated on Jammu & Kashmir highways; tanker ban imposed on NH-44



The Jammu & Kashmir administration has issued an order to regulate traffic on all state highways. This measure aims to manage increasing traffic volume and ensure safety on these routes.

Under the regulations, vehicles are permitted to enter the highways only after obtaining clearance from designated checkpoints, and transport companies are required to adhere to a specified schedule. Officials stated that this would reduce congestion and lower the likelihood of accidents.

Additionally, a ban has been imposed on tanker trucks on National Highway 44. The ban is effective immediately and is intended to mitigate potential risks associated with fuel transport on the busy route. Fuel distributors have been advised to use alternative routes to continue their supply operations.

JOBS & CAREER

J&K PWD issues transfer order for 33 engineers



The Jammu and Kashmir Public Works Department (PWD) has issued an official order concerning the change in posting and transfer of 33 engineers within its jurisdiction. The order, published in the Daily Excelsior, mentions a reorganization aimed at improving departmental efficiency, though it does not provide details on the new appointments. This administrative step is part of the department's regular employee management process, which aims to balance workload and project requirements. No additional comments were received from departmental officials at this time. The changes will be implemented shortly after standard procedural approvals.

EDUCATION

25% Reservation for EWS and Deprived Children in Private Schools in Jammu and Kashmir



The Education Minister of Jammu and Kashmir announced a plan to implement 25% reservation in private schools, a policy that will apply to all private institutions.

This measure aims to enhance access to quality education for children from the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and other deprived groups, in line with the central government's inclusive education policies.

Officials stated that the reservation will take effect from the next academic session, and schools will be required to submit compliance reports to the Education Department. The department will also establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure fair distribution of seats.

The announcement was welcomed by several child rights organizations, while some private school associations have sought clarification on implementation details and the potential impact on fee structures.

J&K DGP Prabhavati says local terrorist recruitment is near zero



Deputy General Police officer Prabhavati told the media on Thursday that there has been a sharp decline in new recruitment by local terrorist organizations in Jammu and Kashmir. She stated that intelligence inputs and ongoing security operations have limited the new recruitment capacity of insurgent groups to near zero.

This statement comes amid extensive efforts by the Central Home Ministry and state authorities aimed at dismantling recruitment networks that have historically fueled the insurgency in the region. Officials have intensified surveillance, community engagement, and counter-radicalization programs, which Prabhavati credited for the current trend.

While highlighting the positive shift, Prabhavati emphasized the need to remain vigilant, noting that external influences and online propaganda can still pose risks. She urged local communities to cooperate with the police and report any suspicious activities to sustain the decline in recruitment.

Security analysts welcomed these comments, viewing them as a sign of stability in the Valley. However, they cautioned that sustained political engagement and socio-economic development are essential to prevent any resurgence.

The police department plans to release periodic updates on recruitment figures to maintain transparency and reassure the public about ongoing security measures.

DEFENCE

LG Sinha: Number of Foreign Terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir Has Decreased; Region Will Soon Be Terror-Free



Lieutenant Governor LG Sinha of Jammu and Kashmir stated that only a handful of foreign terrorists remain in the region and that the security situation has improved significantly. He said that intense counter-terrorism operations conducted over the past few months have dismantled most enemy networks, with the remaining elements confined to limited areas.

Sinha stated that the administration is focused on completely eliminating these remaining groups and assured that Jammu and Kashmir will soon be entirely terror-free. He credited the coordinated efforts of the Indian Army, paramilitary forces, and local police as the primary reason for this progress.

efforts to restore normalcy and development in the region following a long-standing insurgency. While no specific numbers or timelines were mentioned, the Lieutenant Governor said that security agencies will remain vigilant to prevent any emerging threats.

SARKARI YOJANA

Jammu and Kashmir to unveil new industrial policy, says CM



The Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir stated that the state will soon unveil a new industrial policy, marking a step towards attracting investment.

The policy is expected to include incentives such as tax exemptions, subsidies, and simplified procedures to facilitate the establishment of manufacturers and entrepreneurs in the region.

The government said that special focus will be placed on sectors such as tourism, agro-processing, and renewable energy, in line with a broader economic development plan.

A detailed document of the policy will be made available to the public and industry representatives in the coming weeks.

The industrial community has welcomed the move, viewing it as a positive step towards revitalizing the region's industrial capacity.

BUSINESS

Kashmir Industry Association Warns JK Government of Restaurant Closures

The Kashmir Industry Association issued an official ultimatum to the Jammu and Kashmir government, stating that if its concerns are not addressed, restaurants and cafés will be closed. The association said that recent policy steps threaten the stability of the hospitality sector, which makes a significant contribution to local employment and tourism revenue. To date, the state government has not issued any official response, and officials have been asked to comment on the possible closures. If the warning is implemented, the closure of eateries in urban and tourist areas will affect many related businesses and impact the livelihoods of many people in the valley.

Lashkar-e-Taiba Operative Latif Bhat Killed in Kulagam



On 15 September 2023, security forces in the Kulagam district of Jammu and Kashmir engaged a suspected militant group. During the clash, Lashkar-e-Taiba operative Latif Bhat was killed; he was considered to have played a major role in cross-border terrorist activities. Police and CRPF units coordinated the operation after receiving reliable intelligence about Bhat's presence. The clash was conducted according to standard operating procedures and no civilian casualties were reported. Authorities announced further investigation of the network linked to Bhat and urged the public to remain vigilant.

EDUCATION

JKBOSE Launches Workshop for Development of Punjabi Textbooks



Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) inaugurated a workshop aimed at creating updated Punjabi textbooks for the state's school system. The event brought together curriculum experts, language scholars, and senior teachers, who discussed content revisions and teaching methodologies. Participants prepared an action plan that includes aligning the new curriculum with the latest state educational policies, incorporating contemporary literature, and ensuring cultural relevance for students. The workshop also emphasized the use of interactive exercises and digital resources to improve learning outcomes. JKBOSE officials indicated that the revised textbooks will be released in the upcoming academic session, providing students in Jammu and Kashmir with a more engaging and accurate representation of the Punjabi language and heritage.

Three Officials Transferred in Jammu and Kashmir Public Works Department



The Jammu and Kashmir Public Works (Roads and Buildings) Department transferred three officials today. According to a Daily Excelsior report, the move is part of an internal restructuring aimed at improving departmental efficiency. The department has not provided additional details about the new postings or reasons for the transfers. The reshuffle was carried out under the authority of senior departmental leadership, reflecting routine administrative changes. Its impact on ongoing infrastructure projects in the region remains to be seen.

BUSINESS

Jammu and Kashmir Projects Peak Power Demand Below 3.3 GW of 2023



The Jammu and Kashmir Electricity Department has issued an estimate that this year's peak electricity demand will be lower than the 3.3 GW recorded in 2023. The figure, reported by Kashmir News Observer, is based on the latest data from the state's load-monitoring centre. More effective load-management programmes, together with a rise in solar and wind generation in the valley, have been identified as the main reasons. A relatively milder seasonal temperature this year is also expected to reduce pressure on cooling systems, thereby lowering overall demand. The lower-demand forecast gives power companies an opportunity to revise their generation plans, potentially reducing the need for expensive thermal power imports. Consumers could benefit from a steadier supply and possible tariff relief, although the grid will still rely on inter-state power to meet baseline requirements. Energy analysts say the forecast indicates improvement, but the projected peak remains close to installed capacity, underscoring the need for continued investment in renewable projects and grid strengthening. The electricity department said it will closely track actual consumption patterns and make necessary adjustments to procurement strategies to ensure reliability.

Only a Few Terrorists Remain in Jammu and Kashmir, LG Manoj Sinha Promises Swift Elimination



Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha informed the media on Thursday that security forces have significantly reduced the number of active terrorists. He stated that the remaining few terrorists are under close surveillance and a coordinated action will be launched soon to eliminate them.

The Lieutenant Governor mentioned recent successes where the army and police have dismantled several terrorist networks in the valley. He explained that intelligence information played a crucial role in identifying the remaining few groups, and the situation is now stabilizing.

Sinha urged the public to remain vigilant and cooperate with security agencies, assuring them that the final phase of the anti-terrorism campaign will be "concluded soon". The statement did not specify any particular timeframe or casualty figures.

This statement comes amidst the central government's continuous efforts to curb cross-border infiltration and militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, where the army has maintained a heightened deployment along the Line of Control.

DEFENCE

Last Local Recruit of LeT, Latif Bhatt, Murdered Outside Kulgam Mosque



Latif Bhatt, identified as the final local recruit of LeT, was killed outside a mosque in Kulgam, Jammu & Kashmir. The incident was reported by local media on the same day. Bhatt's death marked the elimination of the last home-grown recruit linked to LeT in the area, according to security agencies. The group has previously carried out several operations in the Kashmir Valley using both foreign and local members. Kulgam, which has periodically suffered armed conflict, again became a site of gunfire near a religious site, underscoring the region's fragile security situation.

Four Jammu & Kashmir Cricketers Retained for IPL 2027, Two Released



Kashmir Life reported that four cricketers from Jammu & Kashmir have been retained by their respective teams for the upcoming IPL 2027, while two others were released. The announcement was made by franchises before the league's auction. This move highlights the growing importance of players from the northern state, as the BCCI encourages talent scouting across all states. While the franchises that retained the players were not specified, the retained cricketers will continue their preparations at their respective training camps. The released players will now have the opportunity to sign with other teams, forming part of the process of finalising squads for IPL 2027.

SARKARI YOJANA

Jammu & Kashmir CM Omar Abdullah Announces Industrial Policy



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announced that the Jammu & Kashmir government is preparing to launch a new industrial policy. The policy aims to encourage investment, facilitate trade, and accelerate the development of manufacturing units in the state. Specific details have not yet been released, but officials said it will address infrastructure gaps and offer incentives to attract domestic and foreign investors. The announcement is part of efforts to diversify the state's economy and create employment for youth. Stakeholders await the official release of the policy document in the coming weeks. The new policy reflects the government's commitment to revitalize the industrial landscape and aligns with national economic growth objectives. Industry bodies welcomed the move, highlighting potential gains in production and export capacity. The CM emphasized that creating a business-friendly environment through support mechanisms is a priority for sustainable development. Further details on provisions and implementation timelines will be made available once the Department of Industries & Commerce issues an official statement.

CM Omar Abdullah Opens 13 Development Projects in Mendhar, Total Cost ₹92.84 Crore



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah will inaugurate 13 development projects in Mendhar today. The state government has announced a total expenditure of ₹92.84 crore for these initiatives, aimed at strengthening local infrastructure and services. The projects cover various sectors, though detailed plans have not yet been made public. By concentrating resources in Mendhar, the administration seeks to bridge development gaps in remote areas. Officials say these initiatives are part of a broader strategy to accelerate development in Jammu & Kashmir's distant regions. The CM's presence underscores the political significance of tangible benefits for the local populace. The inauguration is expected to feature local leaders, officials, and residents, marking a significant milestone in the state's development agenda.

CRIME

Lashkar Commander Lateef Bhat Surrounded in Jammu and Kashmir, Police Appeals for Surrender via Video Call



Federal agencies in Jammu and Kashmir have successfully surrounded Lashkar commander Lateef Bhat, who has been on their radar for several years.

Police officials said a video link was established with the suspect, urging him to surrender by laying down his arms.

This action follows several intelligence-based raids aimed at dismantling the Lashkar-e-Taiba network in the region, particularly after recent terrorist incidents.

Authorities stated that the situation is under control and any further resistance will be dealt with by the force, while they continue to gather evidence for prosecution.

Chhattisgarhi Citizen Held in Jammu on Allegations of Pakistani Connections



Jammu police officials confirmed that a person from Chhattisgarh was detained on suspicion of being connected to Pakistan. Based on intelligence reports, he was arrested after an investigation into possible foreign ties. Authorities have not yet released detailed information about the detainee's identity or the allegations. The action is part of ongoing security measures to prevent cross-border infiltration. No formal charges have been filed and the case remains under investigation.

HEALTH

Jammu & Kashmir Police Officer Dies of Heart Attack



The Jammu & Kashmir Police announced that an officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Police Service (JKPS) died of a suspected heart attack while on duty. Medical assistance was rendered immediately, but the officer could not be saved.

Family members and colleagues were informed of the sad news, and a condolence register has been opened at the district police headquarters. Standard procedures have been initiated to record the death and notify senior officials.

JKPS expressed deep sorrow over the loss and remembered the officer as a dedicated public servant. No further details about the officer's identity or the exact location of the incident have been released.

Jammu & Kashmir State Election Commission Member Shantmanu Meets President at Rashtrapati Bhavan



Shantmanu, a member of the Jammu & Kashmir State Election Commission, held a meeting with the President at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. The Daily Express confirmed that the meeting took place at the President's official residence.

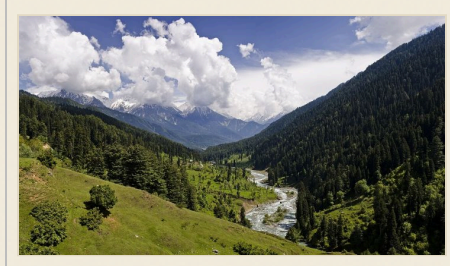
The discussion was part of regular dialogue between central and state officials, covering matters of mutual interest.

Analysts believe such meetings reflect the central government's continued focus on electoral framework and governance issues in Jammu & Kashmir.

No additional information about the agenda or outcomes of the meeting was available at the time.

EDUCATION

Practical Exams to Commence in Jammu & Kashmir Polytechnics from 21 December



The Jammu & Kashmir government decided to start practical examinations for all polytechnic courses from 21 December. The exams will cover mechanical, electrical, civil and computer engineering subjects and will be conducted across 14 polytechnic institutions in the state. Students are advised to review the detailed timetable and venue information in the official notification. The move aims to complete semester assessment before the winter holidays.

Pulwama: Daughter-in-Law and Her In-Laws Accused of Hiring a Professional Killer to Murder 70-Year-Old Mother-in-Law



In Pulwama district, Jammu & Kashmir, police detained the daughter-in-law and her in-laws on charges of hiring a professional killer to murder a 70-year-old mother-in-law.

Initial evidence suggests the murder was pre-planned and a professional assassin was engaged.

The victim, a resident of Pulwama, was found dead, prompting a swift criminal investigation. Police seized mobile records and financial transactions linking the accused to the killer.

The case has been forwarded to the district court for further legal action, and police have appealed to the public for any additional information.

No further arrests have been made and the killer's identity has not been officially released.