

Daily Excelsior, 1 February 2008

**56 cross sides in Karvan-e-Aman**

SRINAGAR, Jan 31: As many as 56 passengers of Karvan-e-Aman bus crossed sides at Kaman, the last Indian military post on the Line of Control (LoC) in Uri sector in north Kashmir today, official sources said. The number of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) residents visiting Kashmir this time was less, reportedly due to the persisting cold wave here. They said 32 passengers from here boarded the bus at an undisclosed location this morning for Kaman post under tight security arrangements

The Tribune, 1 February 2008

**PoK Refugees: Panel asked to sort out differences on relief**

Jammu, January 31: Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has assured to frame a committee comprising revenue department officials and representatives of PoK refugees of 1947 to iron out differences between official records and refugees' claim about their compensation. Talking to a deputation of 1947 PoK refugees here, Azad asked them to select five to six representatives, who would sit with officials of the Revenue Department to look into the discrepancies between official records and their claims

The Tribune, 1 February 2008

**No V-Day, warns Dukhtaran-e-Millat**

Srinagar, January 31: Warning that this year too they will not allow Valentine Day celebrations in the Valley on February 14, the Dukhtaran-e-Millat (DM) has appealed to shopkeepers not to sell gifts and other items being exchanged by people on this day

Greater Kashmir, 1 February 2008

**Encounters in Kulgam, Varmul**

Srinagar, Feb 1: An encounter between militants and troops is on in south Kashmir Kulgam district. Reports said that troops cordoned off Tengbal, Kujer village in Kulgam today afternoon. According to SP Kulgam, Swayam Prakash Pani, Police on a specific information about the presence of militants in the area launched a joint operation with 1-Rastriya Rifles. Another encounter is on in north Kashmir Varmul district, police said. They said that encounter started when militants fired upon Police search party at Rafiabad in Varmul today morning.

The Hindu, 1 February 2008

**Pak youth handed over to Rangers**

Jammu: The Border Security Force on Thursday handed over a Pakistani youth who had inadvertently strayed into Indian territory to the Pak Rangers. The BSF authorities handed over 26-year old Mohammad Azeem of Sialkote, who was arrested near Jaganoo Chak border out post (BOP) in Ranbir Singh Pura on Wednesday, official sources said. Nothing incriminating was recovered from him.

The Tribune, 2 February 2008

**No poll boycott: Salaudin's stance based on ground realities**

Jammu, February 1: In an apparent shift in their strategy, militants have decided not to force boycott of the assembly elections in the state at gunpoint. Instead, they have

appealed to the people to voluntarily boycott the elections. The "change of heart" seems more due to the realisation of ground realities in Kashmir than any serious and sincere intention to let people exercise their free will without any fear. Recently, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir-based chairman of the United Jihad Council, Sayeed Salaudin, told a local news agency that the militants would not use weapons to enforce the poll boycott. However, he sought to clarify that in case the security forces tried to force people for voting, they will resort to guns

Kashmir Times, 2 February 2008

**Snow fetches tourists to Gulmarg; water, power shortage scares them away**

Gulmarg, Feb 1 :The acute water scarcity at the world famous tourist resort Gulmarg, about 40 kilometers from capital city Srinagar is forcing tourists to check out from the hotels. The hoteliers have expressed grave concern over shortage of water affecting their business during peak tourist season. Bestowed with rich scenic beauty, the snow capped forests in winters draw a good chunk of tourists from all over the world to this high altitude tourist resort in Kashmir valley

Greater Kashmir, 2 February 2008

**Government complains against news channels**

Srinagar, Feb 1: The government on Friday urged the State High Court to initiate contempt proceedings against news channels that are telecasting subjudice matters and indicting top executive of the State through media trial. The Court directed the Government to file a proper application regarding the issue. In a case Ghulam Hassan Marazi versus State, the Government pleaded before the Single Bench of Justice Bashir Ahmad Kirmani that the news channels were telecasting and commenting upon the timber scam which is subjudice. The advocate general of the State Altaf Hussain Naik said that the news channels were showing the material which has been clandestinely taken from the court files.

Daily Excelsior, 2 February 2008

**BSP to contest all 87 seats**

SRINAGAR: In coming Assembly elections in the State, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has decided to participate in all 87 Assembly segments. BSP under the leadership of Mayawati has decided to play major role in the State politics and has decided to contest all 87 seats, National General Secretary of BSP, Narinder Kashyap said in a press conference here.

The Hindu, 2 February 2008

**Child trafficking gang unearthed in Bihar**

Patna: A child trafficking gang involved in abducting minors from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Nepal for sexually abusing them has been unearthed by police in East Champaran and Sitamarhi districts. With the unearthing of the gang, Bihar police claims to have exposed a Nithari-like case.

The Hindu, 3 February 2008

**India, Pakistan to discuss Siachen**

CHENNAI: Defence Secretaries of India and Pakistan will meet in April in Pakistan to discuss the Siachen issue, according to Pakistan High Commissioner Shahib Malik. Pointing out that the two sides had come close to discussing possible solutions, Mr. Malik told journalists at The Hindu on Saturday that "we feel that Siachen is doable. It can be resolved. A certain formula has been given to the Indian side which should take care of Indian concerns. The question was raised about authenticating the present Indian position of Indian troops at a particular point. So, we have given a certain formula which, we feel, should take care of the concerns."

The Tribune, 3 February 2008

#### **Infiltrations belie official claim**

Rajouri, February 2: Even as the army authorities may claim fall in the infiltration level in the recent past in the state, but the recent infiltration trends suggest that it has actually increased in the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch. The intelligence sources said that not only the infiltration bids had increased along the Line of Control (LOC) in these twin border districts, but also the infiltrators have successfully managed to sneak into this side.

Kashmir Times, 3 February 2008

#### **Gandhigiri in Valley: IGP compares HM to JKLF**

Reacting to the United Jihad Council (UJC) chairman Syed Salah-ud-Din's statement that gun would not be used by militants during election boycott campaign, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Shiv Mohan Sahai today said the condition of Hizbul Mujahideen is no different from JKLF way back in 1994, when it turned to Gandhigiri and to gun

The Tribune, 4 February 2008

#### **Violence-hit Pak thins out troop strength at LoC**

Jammu, February 3: Pakistan has moved the troops from its key Strike Corps facing India across the Line of Control (LoC) following the increased violence in areas bordering Afghanistan, intelligence sources said. To meet the worsened situation on its western borders, which had escalated after the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan has thinned out its troop strength against India, including across the Loc in Jammu and Kashmir, well-placed sources told UNI

Greater Kashmir, 4 February 2008

#### **Internal crisis in Pak will affect JK: Prof Gupta**

Jammu : Former Minister of State for Defence Chaman Lal Gupta on Sunday claimed that the internal crisis in Pakistan would have a cascading effect on Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing a press conference here Sunday afternoon, Prof Gupta said the situation in the neighbouring country was not normal after the assassination of former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and it would definitely impact the state in coming days. Demanding implementation of De-limitation Commission in Jammu and Kashmir, he said free and fair elections should be conducted under the Governor Rule.

Greater Kashmir, 4 February 2008

### **Observe Feb 5 as Solidarity Day: UJC**

Srinagar : United Jihad Council (UJC) has appealed the people of Pakistan to observe February 5 as Solidarity Day with Kashmiris. Chairman Syed Salahudin said, that the idea of observing February 5 as Solidarity Day with Kashmiris was initiated by president of Jamait-e-Islami Pakistan 17 years back. Since then, the day is being observed not only in Pakistan only but all over the world.

Greater Kashmir, 4 February 2008

### **JKLF calls for shutdown on Feb 11**

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) has called for a complete strike on February 11. The JKLF founder Maqbool Bhat was hanged in Tihar Jail on the same day 24 years ago. The JKLF spokesperson said that on February 11, meetings to pay homage to Shaheed Maqbool would be held in Muzzaferabad, Rawalpindi, London and America.

Daily Excelsior, 5 February 2008

### **Two overstaying PoK citizens repatriated**

POONCH, Feb 4: Two Pakistani nationals, who were illegally staying with their relatives in village Sagra, Mendhar, were repatriated to Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) via Chakkan-Da-Bagh trans-border point in the district. Official sources said that 45-year old Zaman Ali Shah along with his wife Zainab Bibi came to Poonch on January 7 after boarding the Poonch-Rawalakot bus to meet their relatives in village Sagra, Mendhar

Daily Excelsior, 6 February 2008

### **Snowfall blocks NH, Valley cut off**

JAMMU, Feb 5: As there was no respite from the heavy snowfall and rain for the past three days, the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, which was partially reopened yesterday afternoon, got blocked at several places due to continuous snowing today

The Tribune, 6 February 2008

### **PM asked to involve Hurriyat, other groups on Kashmir**

Jammu, February 5: In view of the upcoming Assembly elections in the state, the People's Democratic Party have urged the Government of India to involve Hurriyat Conference and other political groups in the process of finding a resolution for the long pending Kashmir dispute

Daily Excelsior, 7 February 2008

### **NH stays blocked, flights cancelled: Valley cut off for 4th day**

JAMMU, Feb 6: The summer capital of the State remained totally cut off from the rest of the country due to unprecedented snowfall which led to closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway for the fourth consecutive day today and cancellation of all flights

Daily Excelsior, 7 February 2008

### **Soldier killed under snow avalanche, 12 rescued: Supplies disrupted, prices up, roads closed in Valley**

SRINAGAR, Feb 6: One soldier has died and half-a-dozen people have sustained injuries

in different incidents related to the current snowfall since last evening in Kashmir valley where supplies have been disrupted, prices of essential commodities have gone up and many roads in the countryside are closed for traffic

The Tribune, 7 February 2008

**Hurriyat hopes Pak will continue to extend support**

Srinagar, February 6: The Hurriyat Conference held a day-long seminar on the occasion of Pakistan's solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir and organised a protest march here yesterday. The seminar, "South Asia's future hinges on resolution of Kashmir issue" was held at the AHPC headquarters at Rajbagh

The Tribune, 7 February 2008

**Millat opposes Valentine celebrations**

Srinagar, February 6: Describing the celebrations of Valentine's Day as un-Islamic act, Asiya Andrabi, chief of the underground women's organisation, Dukhtaran-e-Millat, has asked the business community to refrain from making arrangements for the occasion on February 14

Greater Kashmir, 8 February 2008

**7 injured in Bandipora blast**

Bandipora, Feb 8: Seven persons including three cops and a para military trooper were injured in a grenade attack in north Kashmir Bandipora district on Friday. Reports said that suspected militants hurled a grenade towards a BSF Gypsy at Gulshan Chowk. The grenade missed the target and exploded on the road.

The Hindu, 8 February 2008

**Snowfall leaves Pashmina goats fodderless**

SRINAGAR: Nearly one lakh goats whose wool is used to make Kashmir famed Pashmina shawls are among 1.50 animals facing death in the Ladakh region on the India-China border due to heavy snowfall. The authorities are making efforts to airdrop the fodder for them as a huge area is cut off from the rest of the world.

The Tribune, 9 February 2008

**3 LeT ultras killed**

Rajouri, February 8: Troops of the 39 Rashtriya Rifles killed three militants believed to be from Laskhar-e-Toiba (LeT) militant outfit at Chhatral near Mendhar today. But according to the intelligence sources, the slain militants, part of the group comprising eight militants, were actually infiltrators who had sneaked in to this side from Ghora post on February 2

Daily Excelsior, 10 February 2008

**IAF airlifts 1701 stranded passengers, 1073 troops**

JAMMU, Feb 9: In a prompt response to the State Government's request after the unprecedented snowfall, Indian Air Force (IAF) today launched "Operation Hamsafar" and airlifted 1701 stranded passengers and 1073 Army and Para-Military personnel from the twin capital cities and Udhampur. These civilians and the troops were stranded at

Jammu, Srinagar and Udhampur for the last six days as massive snowfall and rains blocked the highway connecting twin capital cities at many places

Daily Excelsior, 10 February 2008

**India, Pak may open Kasur route**

ISLAMABAD, Feb 9: Ganda Singhwala border near Kasur could be reopened as another trade route to boost trade between India and Pakistan, a senior Pakistani Revenue Official said today

Daily Excelsior, 10 February 2008

**J&K seeks 15 more IRP battalions**

JAMMU, Feb 9: Police have sought 15 more battalions of Indian Reserve Police (IRP) to overcome manpower shortage, further strengthen its position in militancy infested areas and gradually replace para-military forces in some pockets of the State

Daily Excelsior, 11 February 2008

**Div Commdr's killing major setback for Hizb**

SRINAGAR, Feb 10: While Police today confirmed that Hizbul Mujahideen's top wanted militant and "Divisional Commander" for south Kashmir, Hanief Khan, was among the two militants killed in a gunbattle in Noorpora village of Tral last evening, one of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen's ace commanders has died today in an encounter with Police and security forces in Sopore area of north Kashmir

Daily Excelsior, 11 February 2008

**LeT plotting young girls for grenade attacks**

JAMMU, Feb 10: Militants of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) have been wooing young girls to act as militants especially for planting grenades and mobile telephone bombs to kill targeted persons. This revelation has been made by an active female worker of the LeT outfit, who was recently arrested from Doda town for her close links with LeT divisional commander Shabir Itoo alias Yasir, one of the few most wanted militant in Doda district

Daily Excelsior, 11 February 2008

**3 sportsmen of Pak army held on IB at Suchetgarh**

JAMMU, Feb 10: Security forces today took into custody three sportsmen of Pakistan army's 19 Punjab unit, headquartered at Sialkot, when they inadvertently strayed into Indian side from border post at Suchetgarh in RS Pura sector. Official sources said the Pakistan army men were taken into custody as soon as they crossed over to this side of the international boundary by mistake at about 6 pm

The Tribune, 11 February 2008

**Kashmir lifeline reopened**

Srinagar, February 10: One-way traffic was today resumed on the 300-km long Srinagar-Jammu National Highway which remained closed for seven days due to seven foot snowfall and landslides triggered by rains. "Today we have allowed traffic from Jammu to Srinagar on the highway, the only road linking the Kashmir valley with the rest of the world," a traffic police official told UNI here

Daily Excelsior, 12 February 2008

**Pak army's 3 wrestlers repatriated from Octroi**

JAMMU, Feb 11: The Border Security Force (BSF) today repatriated three sportsmen (wrestlers) of Pakistan army, who had inadvertently crossed over to this side of the international boundary yesterday afternoon, in a flag meeting-cum-exchange ceremony held at Octroi post in Suchetgarh area of RS Pura sector

Daily Excelsior, 12 February 2008

**129 cross sides on LoC**

POONCH, Feb 11: One hundred and twenty nine civilians today crossed Line of Control (LoC) on Poonch-Rawlakot bus service from Chakkan-Da-Bagh in this district. While 81 persons travelled from Poonch to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), 48 boarded the bus from PoK to Poonch, official sources said

Daily Excelsior, 12 February 2008

**Militancy on decline: IG CRPF**

Srinagar, Feb 11: The toll of militants in the Valley has decreased and presently it is less than thousand which is lowest since inception of militancy, according to Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) which is operating as counter insurgency force in the Kashmir valley. "According to our intelligence inputs, present number of militants in the Valley is 450," MS Gupta, IG CRPF Kashmir Operations said. But it is a floating population and they are always on move. The maximum number could be upto 950. They (militants) are always on move

Daily Excelsior, 12 February 2008

**All stranded vehicles on NH cleared; down convoy today**

JAMMU, Feb 11: With Traffic Police clearing almost all the stranded vehicles from the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway till late this evening, there will be down convoy of both passenger and load carriers tomorrow. The Indian Air Force (IAF), however, continued airlifting of the stranded passengers and troops on the third day today

Daily Excelsior, 14 February 2008

**International flights from Srinagar by June**

New Delhi, Feb 13: The international flights to and from Srinagar Airport will operate from this summer with the new terminal building getting ready by June 2008. To start with, flights will be operated to and from the Gulf countries

Daily Excelsior, 15 February 2008

**Farooq blames Delhi for J&K turmoil**

Jammu, Feb 14: Hitting hard against the critics of National Conference, party patron and former chief minister Dr Farooq Abdullah today accused successive Union Governments and Islamabad for the present turmoil in the State. He said that Central Governments always played regional card and tried to divide people of the State on regional and communal basis. "They want us to keep fighting with each other so that they can rule us", he added

Daily Excelsior, 15 February 2008

**Editorial: Route of terror**

Mendhar in the border district of Poonch is once again in the news for all the wrong reasons. During the last one week it has witnessed three major encounters between the security forces and the militants who in the last round belonged to Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT). These occurrences underline the reality that Mendhar remains one of the most favoured infiltration passages of agents of terror. Its undulating mountainous terrain on the Line of Control (LoC) comes in handy for them. A silver lining from our viewpoint is that no more are they able to cross it without risking their lives

The Tribune, 15 February 2008

**Gujjar-Pahari row intensifies**

Chenani (Udhampur), February 14: Two major ethnic communities in the state - the Gujjars and the Paharis - have already intensified their war of words against each other over the latter's demand for a Scheduled Tribe status

The Hindu, 16 February 2008

**Centre always tries to divide J&K people: Farooq**

Jammu: "What else do they want and how much blood do they want from us so that we can prove ourselves Indians," National Conference patron Farooq Abdullah has asked. "Hundreds of our leaders and workers have lost their lives during the last 10 years. However, the party was always stabbed in the back. We never projected the cause of bloodshed and division of the State," Dr. Abdullah, the party's chief ministerial candidate for the 2008 Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, said at a function here on Thursday evening.

The Indian Express, 16 February 2008

**LeT militant involved in UP serial blasts killed**

Pulwama (J&K), February 15:: A top Pakistani militant of Lashker-e-Toiba involved in November 23 blasts in various courts across Uttar Pradesh was on Friday killed along with his associate in a gunfight with police in Pulwama district. Self-styled district commander Abdul Rahman alias Rehman Bhai, a Pakistani, and a local militant Moin Ahmed Mir were killed at Nikloora-Aglar village, Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Kuldeep Khoda told reporters in Pulwama

The Tribune, 17 February 2008

**5,000 ultras waiting to sneak into India**

Jammu, February 16: While Peoples Democratic party, the coalition partner in the state government, is advocating reduction of troops from the valley, around 5,000 militants undergoing training in 52 militants training camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir are waiting to sneak into the Indian side of the valley.

The Tribune, 17 February 2008

**All set for Winter Games at Gulmarg**

Srinagar, February 16: The tourist spot of Gulmarg, known for the best skiing slopes,

which is presently equipped with a "timely snowfall in abundance" leading to optimum temperatures, is preparing for the five-day fifth National Winter Games beginning on Sunday. The event, third of its kind being held in this world famous tourist destination in Jammu and Kashmir, this time has a distinctive addition of the torch that started its journey from New Delhi on February 12 and reached here today

Daily Excelsior, 18 February 2008

**Two infiltrators shot dead on IB**

JAMMU, Feb 17: Security forces gunned down two infiltrators on the international border at Makwal sector along Niki Tawi area in early hours of this morning. It, however, couldn't be confirmed immediately as to whether the slain intruders were Pakistanis or Bangladeshis

The Hindu, 19 February 2008

**Kashmir: The autumn of the jihad? (Praveen Swami)**

Understanding the Jamaat-e-Islami's hijacking by the jihadist agenda needs engagement with the political climate of the period...Believing the jihad has reached a dead-end, the Jamaat has evidently decided to take the chance. Its success or failure will be a critical element in shaping the political future of Jammu and Kashmir

The Tribune, 19 February 2008

**National Winter Games begin**

Srinagar, February 18: Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad today inaugurated the fifth National Winter Games at the famous tourist resort of Gulmarg. President of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), Suresh Kalmadi, minister for youth and sports services, Haji Nissar Ali and others were present on the occasion. This is for the third time that these games are being held in the picturesque and snow-clad meadows of Gulmarg

The Tribune, 20 February 2008

**Pak poll, snowfall hit resource flow of ultras**

Jammu, February 19: Various militant organisations fighting in the Kashmir valley are facing an acute resource crunch, as their supply lines from across the border have been cut off due to ongoing political activities in Pakistan. Heavy snowfall and increased vigil by the Indian Army on the Line of Control (LoC) have also played a major role in the curtailment of the supply lines of militants fighting in the valley

The Tribune, 20 February 2008

**Winter Games: Army makes clean sweep**

Srinagar, February 19: The Army made a clean sweep in the 15-km freestyle cross country race winning all three medals while Bhubhashvari won the first gold for Himachal Pradesh (HP) and hosts Jammu and Kashmir get second and third position in the 5-km freestyle cross country (women) in the fifth National Winter Games

Daily Excelsior, 20 February 2008

**First time, 6 Afghans to go back home**

JAMMU, Feb 19: In a friendly gesture towards Afghanistan, the Ministry of External

Affairs has agreed to release six Afghan militants and border crossers arrested in the State for last three to 14 years and deport them to Afghanistan within the next few days. Of six Afghan nationals, who will soon be flown to New Delhi from different jails of J&K and outside where they have been lodged, two were top militants of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) outfit headed by Maulana Masood Azhar

The Hindu, 21 February 2008

### **Court extends stay on J&K Resettlement Act**

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday extended the stay on implementation of the Jammu and Kashmir Resettlement Act, 1982, providing for resettlement of all those who migrated from the State to Pakistan after March 1947 if they returned to settle down there permanently

The Tribune, 21 February 2008

### **Kashmiri secessionists play up Kosovo independence**

Jammu, February 20: Having been pushed to the margins by the mainstream political parties like the National Conference and the People's Democratic Party, the secessionist sections in Jammu and Kashmir seem to be hanging on to anything that seems to provide some hope (against hope) to them. The unilateral independence declared by the Muslims majority Kosovo from the Serbian nation is currently being blown out of proportion by the secessionist leadership, which has started saying, "Kashmir after Kosovo."

The Tribune, 21 February 2008

### **Separatists satisfied over Pak elections**

Srinagar, February 20: Separatist organisations in Jammu and Kashmir have expressed optimism over Monday's elections in which President Parvez Musharraf's opponents have taken a lead without any decisive victorious party. Both the separatist and mainstream political parties in the state have been keenly watching these elections, particularly in view of Pakistan's Kashmir policy and the Indo-Pak peace process

Daily Excelsior, 22 February 2008

### **3 militants of Jaish killed in Kupwara**

SRINAGAR, Feb 21: In a joint operation, Jammu & Kashmir Police and Army have killed two to three militants of Jaish-e-Mohammed guerrilla outfit in Kupwara district of north Kashmir today. Meanwhile, Police have rescued a 14-year-old girl student minutes after she was kidnapped in a three-wheeler on the National Highway Bypass in Hyderpora-Rawalpora area in Srinagar outskirts

Daily Excelsior, 22 February 2008

### **Pak elections have shown way to separatists: Mufti**

JAMMU, Feb 21: Former Chief Minister and patron of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Mufti Mohammad Sayeed today said that outcome of the general elections in the neighbouring Pakistan has a lesson for all those in Jammu and Kashmir who dont believe in the electoral battle. The lesson is that people in the sub-continent have been rejecting extremism and violence and adopting democratic ways to voice their issues

Daily Excelsior, 22 February 2008

**Employment scenario in J&K State (M L Gupta)**

The Govt services continue to be the 1st preference of job aspirants as it provide social status, job security, least accountability, price index linked salaries and host of other perks like LTC, pensionary benefits generous leave calender and paid holidays. However govt has limitation particularly that of J&K State which is spending 4500 crores annually on salaries of its employees whereas it is hardly generating 1200 crores by way of taxes etc; besides taking away a large chunk of govt funds which otherwise could have been utilized in developmental works

The Tribune, 23 February 2008

**Can Soz balance equation between Azad, PDP?**

Jammu, February 22: When Saif-ud-din Soz was appointed the president of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee it was understandable that he would have a cordial relationship with the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Immediately after taking over as the PCC chief, Soz hardly left anybody in doubt about his agenda of forging a close cordial relationship with the PDP

Daily Excelsior, 25 February 2008

**J&K Govt to revive South Asia's 2nd oldest**

JAMMU, Feb 24: With the objective to promote tourism, save old historic monuments and generate power, J&K Government is contemplating to revive South Asias second oldest 9 MW Mahura power project of Maharaja Partap Singhs period in Kashmir

The Tribune, 25 February 2008

**Separatists leaders hail Kosovos independence**

Srinagar, February 24: While separatist leaders in Kashmir continue to put forward their respective stand on the resolution of this issue in different voices, they do not seem to be unaware of the independent movements outside the subcontinent. These organisations have not missed to comment on the situation in Kosovo which was recently declared as an independent nation and have related it to the Kashmir problem

The Tribune, 25 February 2008

**Hurriyat plans to strengthen cadre base**

Srinagar, February 24: More than a month after unity formula presented by Shabir Ahmad Shah, the separatist Hurriyat Conference has decided to constitute provincial and district-level committees across Jammu and Kashmir to strengthen its cadres at the grassroots level. The idea had been put forth by Shah, with his six-point formula earlier this year, seeking the union of all separatist organisations in the state under one umbrella, that followed his return to the Hurriyat Conference on January 14 last

Daily Excelsior, 26 February 2008

**LG Bhardwaj new GOC-in-C NC**

NEW DELHI, Feb 25: Lt Gen P C Bhardwaj, presently GOC 14 Corps has been promoted as Army Commander and posted as GOC-in-C Northern Command replacing Lt Gen H S Panag who has been posted as GOC-in-C Central Command

Daily Excelsior, 26 February 2008

**124 cross Chakkan-Da Bagh**

POONCH, Feb 25: One hundred and twenty four civilians today crossed Line of Control (LoC) at Chakkan-Da-Bagh on Poonch-Rawlakote bus service in this district. While 65 persons crossed LoC from Poonch to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), 59 travelled to Poonch from PoK, official sources said

The Tribune, 26 February 2008

**Govt scheme to cover 5,700 unemployed youths**

Jammu, February 25: Under the self-help group scheme launched in 2003, about 325 groups of unemployed diploma and degree engineers have been registered. These groups have been allotted 2,116 development works involving a cost of Rs 58.61 crore. Official sources today said that besides, the self-help group scheme, the government had decided to cover 5,700 unemployed youths under the self-employment scheme. So far, 2,477 cases had been sanctioned and out of this, 1,315 cases had been cleared involving an amount of Rs 38.51 crore

Daily Excelsior, 27 February 2008

**Sharif keen to visit J&K**

ISLAMABAD, Feb 26: Former Pakistan Premier Nawaz Sharif has expressed a desire to visit Jammu and Kashmir to participate in a ground-breaking ceremony for a hospital to be built by his friend, well-known cardiologist Fayaz Shawl. "It is Mr Sharif's wish to visit Srinagar to participate in the ceremony but everything will depend on the Indian Government and the prevailing circumstances," senior PML-N leader Siddique-ul-Farooq said

The Tribune, 27 February 2008

**Farooq challenges Lalu to realise Kashmir project**

Jammu, February 26: Reacting to the railway budget presented by Lalu Prasad Yadav today, former Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah has thrown an open challenge to the Union railway minister for making the Kashmir valley rail project, a reality by 2009. However, if Farooq steps into the shoes of Lalu then he has certain scheme of things on his mind that would see trains chugging in remote areas of the state

The Tribune, 27 February 2008

**Ladakh attracts more foreign than domestic tourist**

Jammu, February 26: World's highest inhabited plateau Ladakh, also known as Moonland, in the Jammu and Kashmir is a foreigners delight as it receives more tourists from abroad than domestic ones every year. "Ladakh is hot favourite tourist destination for foreigners. The cold desert - Ladakh is being visited more by the foreign tourists than domestic ones annually" officials of state tourism department said. A record 50,185 tourists visited Ladakh in 2007, an increase of 16 per cent as compared to 2006's figures of 43,900, they said

Daily Excelsior, 29 February 2008

**Release white paper on Rs 24,000 cr package: Omar**

JAMMU, Feb 28: Accusing Coalition Government in the State of inept handling of financial resources and misutilisation of huge sums of money being pumped into States economy in the shape of packages and programmes by the Central Government, the National Conference today demanded a white paper on utilisation of much hyped Rs 24,000 crore package and its impact on the ground