

03 Jammu & Kashmir will get its first gas pipeline by 2024

09 5 narco smugglers arrested with heroin

10 KKR beat DC by 3 wickets in IPL Qualifier 2, set up title clash with CSK

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NINTH NAVRATRA



Maa Siddhidhatri
Ninth incarnation of Maa Durga 'Siddhidhatri' can bless one with all the 'Siddhis'. According to Puranas even Bhagwan Shiv got Siddhis by virtue of Maa Siddhidhatri and his body was converted into 'Ashu Narsimhar'. The ride of Maa is Lion and she is on lotus. Her four hands have Chakra, Gadha, Shankha and Lotus.

By her blessings one gets heaven after enjoying all pleasures of life. Mantra to be recited nine times is :-
"Om Aing Hareong Kleong Chemunday Vichal Bhagwati Siddhidhatri Mam Sarvam Sarv Siddhim Parikalapay Parikalapay Swaha"

ॐ ह्रीं क्लीं नमोऽर्पये विन्ने
भगवती सिद्धिदात्री यम कर्म्य क्लं
सिद्धिं परिकल्पये परिकल्पये स्वाहा

NIA arrests 9 terror associates after multiple raids in J&K

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: The NIA has arrested nine terror associates during searches at 18 locations in Jammu and Kashmir after registration of a case over a conspiracy launch attacks in the union territory and other major cities including New Delhi, an official said on Wednesday.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) had registered the case on October 10 and initiated an investigation.

An NIA spokesperson said a total of nine people were arrested -- five on Wednesday and four a day earlier -- after multiple searches in different districts of the valley over the past two days.

The NIA identified the five accused arrested on Wednesday as Mohammad Haneef Chiralu and Arif Farooq Bhat of Srinagar, Hafeez of Budgam, Owais Dar of Pulwama and Mateen Bhat of Shopian.

"The NIA conducted searches at two locations in Srinagar and seized electronic devices and incriminating jihadi documents," the spokesperson said on Wednesday.

The NIA also said during the day that four accused people -- Waseem Ahmad Sofi, Tariq Ahmad Dar, Bilal Ahmad Mir alias Bilal Fafu and Tariq Ahmad Bafanda, all residents of Srinagar -- were arrested during the searches carried out at 16 locations in Srinagar, Pulwama and Shopian districts on Tuesday.

The spokesperson said preliminary investigation has revealed that the nine arrested accused are terror associates or Over Ground Workers (OGWs) of various proscribed terrorist organisations and have been providing logistical and material support to terrorists and facilitating them in their nefarious designs.

"During the searches conducted yesterday (Tuesday), several electronic devices, incriminating jihadi (holy war) documents and records of suspicious financial transactions were seized," the spokesperson said.

The NIA said the case pertains to alleged hatching of a conspiracy both physically and in cyberspace to carry out violent terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir and other major cities, including New Delhi, by the cadres of the proscribed Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Al Badr and other similar outfits and their affiliates such as The Resistance Front (TRF) and People Against Fascist Forces (PAFF).

"The terror associates/Over Ground Workers of these organisations are conspiring with their handlers and commanders based in a

'Safety, security of minority communities, our foremost duty': Div Com
STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Reaffirming the resolve of the Govt to ensure safety and security of all especially minority communities, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, has said that whatsoever has been mentioned in the minutes of the meeting regarding absence of migrant employees following killing of two school

75 fresh cases reported in J&K 16 districts achieve 100 pc coverage of first dose of COVID vaccination
STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Six districts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir-- Anantnag, Bandipora, Baramulla, Budgam, Doda, Ganderbal, Jammu, Kathua, Kulgam, Poonch, Pulwama, Rajouri, Ramban, Samba, Shopian and Srinagar have achieved 100 per cent coverage of first dose Covid vaccine for the age group

Sinha pays obeisance at Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

STATE TIMES NEWS
KATRA: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, who is also the Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, on Wednesday inaugurated hi-tech Multipurpose Video Walls installed at prominent locations en route Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, at a cost of Rs. 5.13 crore, with assistance from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

The Lt Governor also visited the Holy Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi on the auspicious occasion of Durga Ashtami and paid obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum.

He prayed for peace, harmony, and prosperity in the UT.

The Lt Governor observed that the installation of hi-tech multipurpose video walls at various locations on the track will enable dissemination of real-time information to the visiting pilgrims with regard to the Yatra, and also add to the aesthetics of vari-



LG Manoj Sinha during visit to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine.

LG visits family of slain teacher Deepak Chand in Jammu

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha on Wednesday visited the family members of Deepak Chand, a teacher who was shot dead by terrorists in Srinagar recently, and offered his condolences to them for their "irreparable loss", an official spokesperson said.

Chand was among the seven civilians killed by terrorists in separate incidents in the Kashmir valley recently. Sinha visited Chand's residence at

People-friendly Admn in J&K prime objective of Centre: Union Minister Balyan

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Union Minister Sanjeev Kumar Balyan on Wednesday said establishing a people friendly administration in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is the prime objective of the central government for enabling governance at doorstep.

The Minister of state for fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying was speaking at a function before the conclusion of his two-day visit of Samba district as part of central government public outreach programme.

On the second day of his

visit, the minister inaugurated a primary health centre (PHC) at Utterbehni, interacted with sheep and goat rearers, various public delegations and distributed fish seeds under centrally sponsored schemes in different parts of the district, an official spokesman said.

He said the PHC Utterbehni was constructed at a cost of Rs 6 crore having double story building which will cater to the medical health needs of the local population. The minister directed

India, European Union collaboration represents aspirations of 2 billion people: Dr Jitendra

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said India and European Union (EU) collaboration represents aspiration of 2 billion people.

Welcoming an EU delegation led by Ambassador Ugo



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh holding a meeting with the European Union (EU) delegation led by Ambassador Ugo Astuto at New Delhi on Wednesday.

Astuto, the Minister expressed happiness that the India-EU Science & Technology Agreement has

been renewed recently for a period of five years. He also called for reinforcing the EU-India strategic partnership and developing a shared approach at the multilateral level to address global challenges.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's exhortation that the ultimate aim of all scientific endeavor is to bring "Ease of Living" for common man, Dr Jitendra Singh said, India-EU must deepen cooperation in the areas like

Govt needs to give sense of security to people: Omar

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Voicing concern over the recent killing of civilians, former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday said "everyone is feeling unsafe", and asked the administration to give the people a sense of security cutting across religions.

Pointing out that terror attacks in the Union Territory this year had claimed the lives of 28 civilians cutting across religious lines, Abdullah, who is the vice-president of the National Conference (NC), at the same time hoped there

Reacts to Rana, Slatia's resignations
SRINAGAR: Days after Devendra Singh Rana and Surjeet Singh Slatia joined BJP in New Delhi, National conference senior leader and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in an interview said that there are no permanent friends in politics.

He was quick to add that for years he

Panchayat Secretary arrested for taking bribe in Poonch

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A Panchayat secretary was arrested on Wednesday after he was caught accepting a bribe of Rs 50,000 to clear payment to 10 families under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, an official said.

Mohammad Sharief, posted as secretary (Rural Development Department) in Draba Khatana panchayat was held following a complaint by a sarpanch, a spokesperson of the anti corruption bureau (ACB) said.

He said a complaint was received against Sharief, also a resident of Draba Khatana, that he was demanding a bribe of Rs 5,000 per file for the release of the first installment of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in favour of 10 homeless and poor beneficiaries.

Based on the complaint, the spokesperson said a verification was conducted that proved the charges

Top JeM terrorist commander killed in Pulwama

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Top terrorist commander of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) Sham Sofi was killed in an encounter with security forces in Pulwama district on Wednesday, police said.

Acting on specific inputs about the presence of terrorists in Tilwani Mohalla Waggad in the Tral area of Avantipora, in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, security forces launched a cordon and search operation there, a police official said.

He said an encounter broke out after the terrorists opened fire at the security

personnel, who retaliated.

In the exchange of fire, a terrorist was killed, the official said.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir) Vijay Kumar said the slain terrorist has been identified as He has been identified as Shamusud-Din Sofi alias ShamSofi a top commander of proscribed terror outfit JeM.

As per police records, the killed terrorist was categorized and active since June-2019 figuring among the list of most wanted terrorists operating in the valley. He was also part of groups involved in several terror crime cases including attacks on security

3 booked for illegal cultivation of cannabis in Ramban

STATE TIMES NEWS
RAMBAN: Three people have been booked for illegal cultivation of cannabis in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, police said on Wednesday.

The cannabis was destroyed by police on Wednesday, they said.

Information was received that a person Tirath Singh, from Demote area of the district and two others, Hemraj and Amar Singh, has been clandestinely cultivating cannabis in their fields, the police said.

On the basis of this, cases were registered against the three men at Ramban

Union Minister Puri inaugurates Vertical Garden under Jammu Flyover

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday inaugurated Construction of Vertical Garden under Flyover at B.C Road, Jammu.

The Minister said that vertical gardens are particularly suitable for cities, as they allow good use of available vertical surface areas. They could also function for Urban Agriculture, Urban Gardening or for its beauty as a piece of art, he added.

The Vertical Garden project was initiated under Smart City Project which involves covering the flyover columns with vertical garden/ bio wall system to beautify the entire stretch.

The Minister was appraised that about 25 pairs of piers of the flyover between

will not be a fresh exodus of Kashmiri Pandits and

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 33.4°C Min: 19.3°C

Humidity
Max: 66 Min: 46

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 22.0°C Min: 8.3°C

Humidity
Max: 84 Min: 71

Sunset: 18:02 Hours
Sunrise: 06:35 Hours

Fake Gun Licenses Scam: Raids not enough; suspend officers under scanner

ANCHOR SPECIAL REPORT
JAMMU: Raids by the Central Bureau of Investigation in the most sensational and infamous Jammu and Kashmir Fake Gun Licenses case raises a question as to how long shall the scammers holding high positions, succeed in dodging the investigations and enjoy the coziness of the power by managing lucrative and authoritative postings on their asking.

The recent raids on the residences of an advisor to Lieutenant Governor speak of the enormity of the scandal. By showing him the door, the administration confirmed the wrongs committed. Lingering on for years, the Centre and the UT administrations must have been privy to the status of the case and still they chose the accused to hold the highest positions in the governance. Similarly, the other accused are occupying coveted posts, some of which are directly connected with internal security. Since the licensing authorities are generally the magistrates; the nexus appears to be deeper and wider with fellow bureaucrats acting as shields, which is why the named officers are not placed under suspension pending investigations. Suspension of a big lot of officers involved would have led to speedy

investigations without interference.

According to media reports, a whopping number of arms licences being issued during over a decade in the terrorism hit Jammu and Kashmir were also being probed by the Rajasthan Police's Anti Terror Squad. This means that the licences have landed into the hands of terrorists. This is a grave criminal act involving national security. Proprietary demanded that the unscrupulous officers named and involved in the scam should have been treated as 'terror sympathisers' and dealt with accordingly. But such an action is too much to be expected when the shield in terms of higher bureaucracy was very strong. This can be substantiated by the observations of a senior Rajasthan Police official on July 19, 2019 precisely a month after the PDP-BJP government packed up leading to Governor's Rule on June 19 that the Jammu and Kashmir government did not give lists of former special secretaries, deputy secretaries and under secretaries, saying all records were washed away in the 2014 floods (in Srinagar). This shows the element of connivance. Rajasthan Police had flagged several letters to the Jammu and Kashmir Government in 2018. Ironically, none of the letters was responded to.

Now that the government has woken up from deep slumber and removed one of the top func-

tionaries, who is under scanner, the process needs to be expanded and expedited to demonstrate the will that it will not compromise with anything that jeopardizes national security. Many of the licenses have allegedly gone to elements inimical to tranquility and harmony. They have the potential to strike at will. Who is responsible for all the mess? Obviously, the officers posted as authorities to issue licenses. They have, intentionally or unintentionally, committed wrongs which are not condonable. Let the investigation agencies investigate. Till then the government can, on its own, remove the named officers from their positions and suspend them, as they did in the case of an advisor.

This will send a terse message to the unscrupulous limbs of the administration to desist from wrong doings. This will also help in speedy investigations, as the element of interference will reduce.

The license scam has been deep rooted in J&K. According to sources in the Home Department, 37,824 arms licences were issued during 2015 in several districts of the then State with Kupwara topping the tally at 10,978 licences, followed by 6,345 in Baramulla, 5,910 in Poonch and 4,746 in Kishtwar. Similarly, 30,438 licences were issued in 2016 with Kupwara topping the list with 9,340 licences followed by 4,723 in Baramulla and 3,202 in Ramban.

In 2017, 13,834 licences were issued with Udhampur district having the maximum number of 2,838.

Aggregately, the maximum arm licences totaling 31,688 were issued in three districts of north Kashmir - Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora. Owing to security reasons and the privacy of the individuals, the Home Department, however, did not divulge the details of the licence holders.

In September 2017, the Rajasthan Anti-Terrorism Squad had busted a well-knit inter-state racket with roots in J&K, which was engaged in issuance of fake arms licences to the people, including retired army personnel.

State Vigilance Organization, Jammu has registered FIR (11/18) against the issuing authorities of various districts owing to malpractices and irregularities in issuance of arms licences.

Registrations of cases or raids are not enough to bring culprits to justice. These have taken years and may get stretched to decades. Till then many of the accused might retire or hold posts of importance due to their clout. To eschew these chances, the government must divest all the accused from the mechanism of governance; put them under suspension pending investigations and devise a fast track mechanism to take the case to logical conclusion.