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Either fight to...

the meeting. Overground workers (OGWs) are those that provide logistical support, cash, accommodation, and other facilities to militants or terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir: The police classify an OGW as "anyone who supports the insurgents." A person who provides a safe house, passage, information, or acts as a messenger for suspected militants is immediately labelled as an OGW by the authorities, according to reports.

Security forces had recently taken into detention more than 900 OGWs of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Al-Badr and The Resistance Front (TRF).

The valley has witnessed a spate of attacks on civilians recently, with eleven civilians killed in the valley in October alone. Five of those killed were labourers from Bihar, while three, including two teachers, belonged to minority communities in Kashmir.

DA hike to ...

7th pay commission matrix and does not include any other type of pay like special pay, etc.

"...the Dearness Allowance payable to central government employees shall be enhanced from the existing rate of 28 per cent to 31 per cent of the basic pay with effect from July 1, 2021," said the office memorandum dated October 25.

The hike will also apply to civilian employees paid from the Defence Services, while in respect of Armed Forces personnel and Railway employees, separate orders will be issued by the Defence and Railways Ministry, respectively.

The Union Cabinet had last week approved a 3 per cent hike in dearness allowance (DA) for central government employees and dearness relief (DR) for pensioners over the 28 per cent existing rate.

The decision will benefit about 47.14 lakh central government employees and 68.62 lakh pensioners.

In July this year, and DA rate was increased from 17 per cent to 28 per cent. With a 3-per cent hike now, the DA rate will become 31 per cent.

The combined impact on the exchequer on account of the Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief would be Rs 9,488.70 crore.

Following the COVID pandemic outbreak, the government had frozen the three additional instalments of the DA and DR, which were due from January 1, 2020, July 1, 2020, and January 1, 2021. The freeze was lifted from July 1, 2021, and the DA, DR rate was hiked by 11 percentage points to 28 per cent.

Grenade attack in...

the official said. The injured were taken to SMHS hospital where their condition is said to be stable, he added.

Govt committed to...

Hafeez, Administrative Secretary, Tourism Department and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

DDC Chairpersons, public representatives, people from all walks of life, and tourists in large numbers also witnessed the musical extravaganza.

Cases registered against...

the Association, Nasir Khuehami, said the UAPA charges against students is a harsh punishment which will ruin their future and will further alienate them .

We are not justifying their act, but it will result in their career assassination. The charges will have serious consequences on academic and future career of the students, he said.

Volcano building up...

and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Addressing the rally, Abdullah also defended his advocacy for a dialogue between India and Pakistan and asked people to pray to the almighty for good sense to prevail in both the countries and for a way out in the larger interest of peace and development in the subcontinent.

Taking a dig at the BJP-led government, he said its policies triggered farmer unrest in the country even as it was asked to send the three farm bills to the select committee in parliament.

Both India and Pakistan, the former chief minister said, spend a major chunk of their revenues in preparing for war, impacting their poor.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir are sandwiched between the animosities of the two countries. The hostility is also the main reason to spread hatred and divide people on the name of Hindus and Muslims, he said.

In his view, political parties in both countries are winning elections in the name of Kashmir.

They (Pakistan) say Kashmir is our jugular vein and we have been suffering for 75 years. This side says this is our land and we will take back the land which is under the illegal occupation of Pakistan. Nobody has asked the people of Jammu and Kashmir where we stand, he said.

Abdullah asked the people to be united and frustrate the designs of those bent on dividing them on communal lines.

Mahatma Gandhi, he said, had seen a ray of hope in Kashmir. We will become the beacon of that light once again and spread across the country by upholding unity and brotherhood.

Any government which oppresses its people and fails to mitigate their sufferings is bound to vanish. He also drew examples from the Ramayana and the Quran to make his point.

"I don't know whether I will live till that day but I am sure the time will come when the government indulging in atrocities will witness divine intervention," Abdullah said.

The people want it to happen immediately but god has his own plans and so we have to keep patience."

He hit out at the Congress for their studied silence on the issue of the abrogation of Article 370.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police has registered two cases against medical students under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for celebrating Pakistan's victory over India in Sunday's match. The cases have been registered against students in hostels at Srinagar's Government Medical College in Karan Nagar and SKIMS Soura, officials said.

Speculation over Amarinder's...

Congress gave respect to Amarinder Singh and he enjoyed several posts in the party.

Randhawa has been attacking Amarinder Singh over his friendship with Pakistani journalist Aroosa Alam. He even went to the extent of saying that a probe would be carried out to ascertain if Alam has links with Pakistan's spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

Punjab Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu's wife, Navjot Kaur Sidhu, too attacked Amarinder Singh over the issue of his new political party.

Amarinder Singh never came out of his farmhouse in the last four and a half years, and now, he suddenly talks about floating a party, she alleged.

Navjot Kaur Sidhu further said Amarinder Sigh already had a party and he could have done some work in the last four years.

Singh had resigned as the Punjab chief minister last month amid a bitter power tussle with Punjab Congress chief Sidhu.

After resigning, he had said that he felt humiliated .

The Congress replaced Singh with Charanjit Singh Channi.

Singh had also dubbed Sidhu "anti-national" and "dangerous", saying he would pit a strong candidate against the state party chief in the upcoming assembly polls.

Singh had last month met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi and had discussed the prolonged farmers' stir with him while urging him to resolve the crisis urgently with the repeal of the three farm laws.

Old ways of...

Singh was quoted as saying in the statement issued by the Personnel Ministry. In today's challenging times, he said, "there is a need for integrating our skills, thought process and work culture as the era of silos is over".

India symbolises plurality of culture, society, and geography and yet, it represents a set of shared attitudes, values, goals, practices, and culture, the minister said.

"Therefore, we need to keep common set of goals & approach to develop our nation in all aspects -- economic, social and organisational," he added.

Singh said this is the era of skill and knowledge and therefore, it is important to continuously upgrade relevant skills as it will create a tremendous opportunity in governance to meet the new challenges.

"To exercise collaborative leadership of the kind essential for our country, the course has brought into focus importance of aspects such as deep listening, empathy, presenting, reflective inquiry and collective creativity," he said.

In his address, LBSNAA Director K Srinivas said the entire course has been built around leadership.

He said the mid-career collaborative arrangement will lead to common approach to face present and future challenges in an effective manner.

COVID: 97 fresh...

territory, while the number of recovered patients was 3,26,510, they said.

The death toll in the union territory due to the pandemic is 4,431 as one fresh death was reported in the past 24 hours, the officials said.

Officials said, there were 49 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black fungus) in the Union Territory as no fresh case was reported since last evening.

Meanwhile, Ladakh recorded four fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the tally to 20,908 while the active cases in the union territory stood at 37, officials said.

Ladakh has registered 208 Covid-related deaths -- 150 in Leh and 58 in Kargil - since the outbreak of the pandemic last year.

Four patients of coronavirus have been cured and discharged from hospitals, thereby taking the tally of cured patients to 20,663, they said.

There was no death reported due to Covid in Ladakh on Monday.

Lay down definite...

hundreds of years of suppression, they have to be given, by affirmative action, an equal chance to get over the absence of merit.

"This has resulted in exemptions being given regarding qualifications, exceptions to marks regarding selections and similarly so that they can get seats in education and because of the nature of the jobs, they've been performing for hundreds of years like manual scavenging, etc. They were considered untouchables and they could not compete with the rest of the population. Therefore the reservation," he said.

The apex court was hearing arguments on the issue relating to reservation in promotions to the employees belonging to SCs and STs.

The top law officer said the issue of adequacy of representation arose in 1950 itself.

"What has been done in the last seven decades by the union of India and the states in education and jobs? Your lordships have to see if those things have worked. If that is not satisfactory then it is the duty of the court to suggest an alternative method and direct a method by which a standard or yardstick is laid down. which is certain and definitive.

"These opportunities for these unfortunate people are an equaliser. But equalisers don't work overnight. This may take decades and decades. So far as SCs/STs are concerned they are still suffering to get into the mainstream of life," the AG said.

Citing statistics collected from nine states, Venugopal said all of them have followed one principle to equalise them so that absence of merit does not deprive them of getting into the mainstream.

He said the total percentage of backward classes in the country is 52 per cent.

"If you take proportion, then 74.5 per cent of reservations would have to be given but we set the cut off to 50 per cent," he said.

Venugopal submitted that if the top court leaves the decision on the reservation to the states by taking quantifiable data and adequacy of representation then would be going back to square one.

The AG had earlier submitted that it is more difficult for those belonging to the SCs and STs to get a higher post in group A category of jobs and the time has come when the apex court should give some concrete basis for SCs, STs, and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) to fill up vacancies.

The bench had earlier said it would not reopen its decision on the issue of the grant of reservation in promotion to the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and said it was for the states to decide how they are going to implement the same.

Venugopal had referred to the apex court judgements right from the Indra Sawhney verdict of 1992, popularly known as the Mandal Commission case to the Jarnail Singh verdict of 2018.

The Mandal judgement had ruled out quota in promotions.

The law officer had said that till 1975, 3.5 per cent SCs and 0.62 per cent of STs were in government employment and this is the average figure.

Now in 2008, the figure of SCs and STs in government employment has come to 17.5 and 6.8 per cent respectively which are still low and justify such quota, he had said.

The top court had on September 14 said that it would not reopen its decision on granting reservation in promotions to the SCs and STs as it was for the states to decide how they implement it.

Earlier, Maharashtra and other states had said the promotions have been made in unreserved categories, but promotions have not been granted in reserved categories for SC and ST employees.

In 2018, a five-judge Constitution bench had refused to refer to the 2006 judgement in the M Nagraj case, in which the creamy layer concept was extended to the SCs and STs to a larger seven-judge bench for reconsideration.

It had also paved the way for a grant of quota for promotions in the government jobs to SCs and STs and had modified the 2006 judgement to the extent that the states will not be required to "collect quantifiable data" reflecting the backwardness among these communities to justify the quota in promotions.

Govt notifies framework...

aircraft. Also, a set of supplementary service providers will also be permitted under the framework to provide services such as insurance and data analytics to support the UTM ecosystem.

DigitalSky platform shall continue to be the interface for government stakeholders to provide approvals and permissions to drone operators wherever required, according to the framework.

All drones (except Nano drones operating in the green zone) shall be required to mandatorily share their real-time location through the network to the Centre either directly or through third-party service providers, it mentioned.

It said the third-party service providers will first be deployed in small geographical areas that could be increased gradually.

Moreover, these service providers will be permitted to charge drone operators a service fee and a small portion of it might have to be shared with the Airports Authority of India (AAI), which manages the ATM.

Smit Shah, director of industry body DroneFederation of India, said in a statement: "Traditional traffic management services provided by ATCs (air traffic controllers) for manned aircraft cannot be scaled for managing drone traffic which is expected to become at least 100 times higher since the traditional ATM is manual and requires human intervention."

This policy framework shall allow third-party service providers to deploy highly automated, algorithm-driven software services for managing drone traffic across the country, he added.

The Union government had on September 15 approved a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for drones and drone components with an allocation of Rs 120 crore spread over three financial years.

The ministry had on August 25 notified the Drone Rules, 2021 that eased the regulation of drone operations in India by reducing the number of forms that need to be filled to operate them from 25 to five and decreasing the types of fees charged from the operator from 72 to four. The framework has been issued under the Drone Rules, 2021, only.

UT moves from...

miscreants supported by the terrorist nation of Pakistan. After the removal of Article-370, there is a substantial and measurable decline in terror activity in the J&K Union Territory. As per one report of the Home Ministry, there is a decline of terror incidents up to 60% in Jammu and Kashmir which has reported 614 terror incidents in 2018, while the number reduced to 244 in 2020.

A new targeted approach of development, political-healing and political-participation at the ground level has been initiated at a massive level. In the peaceful election of DDC in December 2020, 100 women were elected for the first time which had a voting turnover of 52%. For the first time, reservation was implemented in the political field following which 6 women, 2 leaders belonging to SC and ST were elected as chairpersons. The communities like Gujjar and Bakarwals were also made part of the political process. Financial delegation to local bodies with 1500 crores in their kitty and delegation of 21 subjects were given.

Till date, 168 MoUs worth Rs 13,600 crores of investments and 5,000 acres of government land has already been allotted. Roads infrastructure is being developed at war-footing. There is a new Helicopter Policy to link the accessibility of internal areas of Kashmir. Almost 2,273 projects worth Rs 5,979 crores have been sanctioned, 506 projects have been completed. Many new hydro projects in the UT have also been coming up like - Ujh and Shahpur Kandi - which were in limbo for over five decades.

The development has focused on multi-sectors giving focus to 14 core sectors like tourism, hydro power, electricity, education, health. In the education sector, 7 new medical colleges have been initiated of which 4 have already started functioning. Medical seats have also been increased from 500 to 955 in colleges, and 25,000 seats have been added in regular degree colleges. IIT has come up at Jammu. Similarly, the health sector is prioritized with a universal health policy under which health cover has been given to one crores local residents. Region of Ladakh is on the road to development after it has acquired its long cherished dream of being a Union Territory. It is a nostalgic feeling to see Tricolour flying at the Lal-Chowk which many times witnessed the hoisting of anti-India flags.

(The writer is national BJP general secretary).

Rescue ops launched...

Gora Bata on Sunday, the officials said.

On getting the information, they said, the police assisted by the Army launched a rescue operation from Budhal in Rajouri and Chasana in Reasi district to trace them.

The rescuers have reached the snow-covered area and an operation is underway, the officials said.

Meanwhile, the Mughal road which connects the twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu with south Kashmir's Shopian district was reopened for traffic on Tuesday after three days owing to heavy snowfall in Peer Ki Gali and adjoining areas.

The snow-clearance operation was completed and the traffic on the alternate road connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country was allowed to move from both sides, the officials said.

However, the added the Kishtwar-Sinthan road linking Kishtwar in Jammu and Anantnag in south Kashmir remained closed for the fourth day on Tuesday due to heavy snowfall at Sinthan top.

The snow clearance operation is underway and the road is likely to reopen for traffic in a day or two, the officials said.

Hideout busted in...

in Poonch and Thanamandi in Rajouri, continued for the 16th day on Tuesday to flush out a group of terrorists who attacked Army search parties on October 11 and



14, killing nine soldiers.

A Pakistani terrorist, who was shifted from the Kot Bhalwal Central Jail Jammu to Mendhar on police remand for questioning in connection with the ongoing operation, was killed when security force personnel accompanying him to identify a hide-out came under fire from terrorists on Sunday.

A police official said the search parties comprising Army and police personnel busted a hideout at the recent encounter site in Bhatti Durrian forest, leading to the recovery of an AK assault rifle, a magazine with 29 rounds, two grenades and two detonators.

Some blankets, tiffins, two pairs of shoes, two syringes and four biscuit packets were also found in the hideout, the official said, adding that the search operation is still continuing.

The officials said some gunshots were heard during the day, and smoke was spotted at different places within the besieged area.

Security forces have cleared almost all the natural caves believed to be used by terrorists to hide but there was no trace of them so far, the officials said.

Over a dozen people, including two women, were detained for questioning after it came to light that they allegedly provided logistic support to the terrorists, they said, adding that most of them are being released as it was found that the support was not voluntary and was given at gun-point.

Meanwhile, traffic movement between Mendhar and Thanamandi along the Jammu-Rajouri highway remained suspended as a precautionary measure for the 11th day on Tuesday in the wake of the ongoing operation.

Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu region have witnessed a rise in infiltration attempts since June this year, resulting in the killing of nine terrorists in separate encounters.

Modi to visit Kedarnath on Nov 5

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DEHRADUN: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Kedarnath on November 5, a day ahead of the closure of the Himalayan temple for winters, to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of Kedarpuri reconstruction projects worth over Rs 400 crore.

It will be his second visit to the state within a month. He had visited AIIMS, Rishikesh, on October 7 to inaugurate an oxygen plant there.

Confirming Modi's visit to Kedarnath next month, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said besides offering prayers at the Himalayan temple, the prime minister will lay inaugurate and the foundation stone of Kedarpuri reconstruction projects.

He will also unveil a statue of Adi Guru Shankaracharya, Dhami said.

Modi has visited Kedarnath several times after becoming prime minister in 2014. He could not come to Kedarnath last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prime Minister Modi has been closely monitoring Kedarpuri reconstruction projects.

The portals of Kedarnath are scheduled to be closed for winter on November 6 on the occasion of Bhaiyya Dooj.

Two daughters of CJM Reasi died in road accident on Chandigarh highway

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Two daughters of CJM Reasi Adnan Sayeed died in road accident near Nawansher on Chandigarh highway. After completing all legal formalities, the bodies are being shifted to Poonch for last rites.

The elder daughter was scheduled to appear in an entrance examination at Chandigarh on October 27 while the younger got selected this year for MBBS course at Dhaka University in Bangladesh. She was accompanying her elder sister on Chandigarh visit. The ill-fated car skidded off the road and both the sisters died on the spot. Our heartfelt condolences to Sayeed family for this irreparable loss.



Union Ministers go for carpool to attend ‘Chintan Shivirs’

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: In a unique move, Union ministers have been practising carpooling while going for 'Chintan Shivirs' -- meetings of the Union Council of Ministers -- being held to improve efficiency, delivery of services and overall governance, sources said on Tuesday.

Three such meetings have already been held so far on efficiency, time management, focussed implementation of projects and policies, and dealing with stakeholders. The fourth meeting is being held on Tuesday, they said. According to sources, the carpooling practice apparently started from the third meeting. One cabinet minister is usually accompanied by two ministers of state in the same car. Preferably all three ministers will be from different ministries and states, sources said. This exercise aims to increase interaction between ministers. A different set of ministers of state accompany a Cabinet minister in each meeting, they said. In the previous 'Chintan Shivirs', Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Mansukh Mandaviya, Piyush Goyal, Gajendra Shekhawat, Narendra Singh Tomar and Hardeep Singh Puri have given presentations. These presentations were followed by free-wheeling discussions on various relevant topics, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi also gave suggestions, the sources said.

The fourth meeting is being held on Tuesday where two Union Ministers are expected to give presentations on general issues related to governance and day-to-day matters ministers handle, the sources said.

SC to pronounce order on pleas seeking independent probe into Pegasus snooping matter today

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce on Wednesday its verdict on a batch of pleas seeking independent probe into the Pegasus snooping matter. A bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli had reserved order on September 13, saying it only wanted to know whether or not the Centre used the Pegasus spyware through illegal methods to allegedly snoop on citizens. Citing national security, the Centre had refused to file a detailed affidavit in the matter.

