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President visits Mata...

washrooms and toilets for the devotees. The aim of consolidating multiple facilities under one roof is to curtail the crisscross movement of devotees seeking locker facil-



Jammu Mayor Rajinder Sharma presenting bouquet to President Droupadi Murmu.

ities and bathing spaces in the Bhawan area and channelize the devotees towards the Skywalk. The retrofitted Parvati Bhawan is a free-of-cost facility that shall able to facilitate around 10,000 pilgrims per day. The inaugural ceremonies commenced with hawan and pooja rituals.

The President complimented the efforts being initiated by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board under the Chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha towards facilitating the journey and holy Darshans of the pilgrims.

While on return, the President also visited the Bhairon Temple via Passenger Ropeway and paid obeisance.

Meanwhile, the Lt Governor, who is also the Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, apprised the President about the initiatives being taken by the Shrine Board for upgrading and expansion of the infrastructure to facilitate pilgrims to the Holy Shrine. These initiatives are aimed at making the yatra more convenient and memorable for pilgrims which is a testament to the dedication and commitment of the Board.

India's voice getting...

overcome poverty, he said.

Addressing the people of Uttarakhand as "dear family members", Modi said he has personal bond and memory attached to every inch of the land and expressed his gratitude to the people for giving him such a warm welcome.

"The people of Uttarakhand take me as a family member. They share their joys with me like the birth of a child or a daughter doing well in her studies through letters. I am really blessed to enjoy such an intimacy with them," PM Modi said.

Describing Uttarakhand as the land of spirituality and valour, the prime minister reposed faith in the unique ability of its people and said the decade belongs to them. "I had said it first from the land of Baba Kedar (Kedarnath). Today I am returning from the feet of Adi Kailash and I reiterate my faith in the unique ability of its people," he said.

Accusing the previous governments of ignoring the development of border areas, the prime minister said, "Development of border villages, which we consider as our first villages, is our priority."

Lack of development had led to migration from Uttarakhand's villages with many of them completely deserted. With the change in circumstances, people are gradually returning to their homes, Modi said.

Earlier in the day, the prime minister inaugurated and laid the foundation of multiple development projects in Uttarakhand worth nearly Rs 4,200 crore. He said the projects will steer the Kumaon region on the path of development.

Uttarakhand is going to benefit immensely from the paradigm shift in the attitude towards the development of border areas.

The number of pilgrims arriving for Char Dham yatra this year is nearing 50 lakh, breaking all records, Modi said.

"Major reconstruction projects have been undertaken in Badrinath and Kedarnath. The ropeway link between Kedarnath and Hemkund Sahib is going to benefit the physically challenged people. I want Manaskhand also to prosper and grow like Kedarkhand." He asked people to prepare themselves to receive many pilgrims and tourists in the near future.

Pakistan epicentre of...

Following the initial seizure, a special investigation team was formed to trace both

backward and forward linkages, Singh said.

In a meticulous process, technical intelligence was gathered and a truck carrying a portion of the consignment was apprehended, he said, adding that the truck driver, responsible for delivering the contraband, was arrested.

During interrogation, the driver revealed crucial information that resulted in the arrest of another peddler from Kupwara, the DGP said adding this chain of detentions eventually led to the recovery of an additional four kilos 198 grams of a cocaine-like substance and Rs 43.17 lakh in cash.

Simultaneously, efforts were underway to trace the forward linkage of the cartel, he said. A collaborative effort with IB team, Jammu, and assistance from the Punjab Police culminated in the apprehension of a major drug magnate, Manjeet Singh, hailing from Ludhiana, Punjab, he said.

The subsequent search revealed an astonishing array of fraudulent documents, sophisticated equipment, and an extensive cache of assets, including a revolver of German make, he said.

He said that a significant amount of cash, gold, silver, and electronic devices were confiscated, underscoring the extensive network and resources at the disposal of the apprehended kingpin.

This operation marks a significant milestone in the ongoing battle against drug trafficking, reaffirming the commitment of law enforcement agencies to curb the menace of narcotic smuggling in the region, the DGP said.

As per details, under Operation Sanjeevani, in an all out war against drugs, Ramban Police seized huge consignment of 30 KG cocaine like substance worth Rs. 300 crores from two Punjab based peddlers who were transporting the contraband in an Innova car bearing registration No HR02W-4925. In this regard, case FIR No 252/2023 u/s 8/21/22/27/29 NDPS Act was registered and special investigation team was constituted under the supervision of SSP Ramban, Mohita Sharma. Further, to ascertain backward and forward linkages, special teams were deputed by the SSP, both to Kashmir for backward linkage and to Punjab for ascertaining forward linkage.

Technical intelligence was gathered and after strenuous efforts truck bearing registration No JK04F-8057 was seized and driver arrested, who was responsible of delivering the consignment of 30 KG contraband in lieu of receiving Rs 45 Lakhs cash at Parimpora. Further, on sustained questioning, the accused driver disclosed name of another peddler who was arrested from District Kupwara. In order to nab the kingpin, continuous technical and human intelligence was simultaneously gathered which further led to arrest of 03 more peddlers belonging to District Kupwara, who confessed having receive the contraband from across the border. Their questioning further led to recovery of cocaine like substance weighing 4 kg 198 gram and cash worth Rs 43 lakh 17,000.

In simultaneous investigation, which was going on to ascertain the forward linkage, a special team was constituted in collaboration with IB Team Jammu, assisted by Punjab Police after obtaining permission from DIG DKR Dr. Sunil Gupta. Technical inputs, analysis of IPDR and CDR data alongwith gathering the trail of digital footprint on various networks, led to the arrest of major drug magnate belonging to District Ludhiana, Punjab and recoveries were made from him which included 14 cheque books - two fixed deposit receipts; 22 passbooks; 12 Aadhar cards; nine ATM cards; two pen drives; 38 fake number plates of vehicles; two fake badges of BJP and Punjab Police; one fake stickers of Punjab Government; one fake driving license; 14 R.Cs; one pan card; 8 mobile phones; one revolver (Made in Germany); four diaries; one fake passport; Passport- 06; one currency counting machine; three weighing scales; one rent deed; 44 grams gold; 385 grams silver; 600 grams cocaine like substance and currency amounting to Rs. 4,94,50,000.

Sanatan Dharma is...

RSS chief said, adding that "ye Sanatan Bharat ke saath ekroop hai (Sanatan is synonymous with India)".

Bhagwat was addressing a gathering at an event at the Baba Mastnath Math in Haryana's Rohtak.

"...Sanatan Dharma he Hindu rashtra hai, ye apne rashtra ke saath ekroop hai (Sanatan Dharma is Hindu rashtra, it is synonymous with the country)", he said.

"Our culture is based on Sanatan. The values of our religion are based on Sanatan," he said. Sanatan never ends and is eternal, the RSS chief said and asserted that it was present earlier, is present today and will be there in the future.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Union Minister V K Singh, Yoga guru Ramdev, Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda and his son and Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Singh Hooda, and seers from across the country were among those present at the event.

In another event in Khandla Kheri village in Hisar district where among others Ramdev was also present, Bhagwat said the whole world has followed India's rich cultural heritage.

He said the world is going through difficult circumstances and families are breaking apart. At the same time, Bhagwat said India's situation in the "Kaliyuga" is much better than other countries.

The RSS chief was addressing a gathering after inaugurating the 'Bharat Mitra Pillar' in Khandla Kheri.

The 'Bharat Mitra Pillar' has been built in the memory of the late Mitrasen Arya, father of BJP leader and former Haryana Minister Abhimanyu.

Bhagwat said that this pillar reflects the cultural heritage of India, and people, particularly youngsters, should visit to see this. They should be made aware of the rich cultural heritage of India, he said.

He said people like Mitrasen Arya strived to take society and the country forward. "To connect our new generation with values, culture and civilisation, we should follow the footsteps of Mitrasen," he said.

At the Rohtak event, while referring to strife in some parts of the world, Adityanath said that "in the entire world, if there can be a guarantee of world peace that only can be Sanatan Dharma and India, and no one else".

This is the reason that when there is "sankat" (trouble) in the world, every country is looking towards India and towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi with great hope, the chief minister said.

They believe that India can bring hope to them, and behind this hope when 140 crore Indians come together it becomes a strength for the whole world, he said.

Adityanath said that "we all know the Nath sampraday (sect) is the carrier of the country's Sanatan Dharma tradition".

Referring to the under-construction Ram temple in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya, Adityanath said what was impossible, today Bharat has made that possible.

Those who had disbelief did not want to take the name of Ram Janambhoomi even by mistake. But those who had belief in Sanatan Dharma, they believed in doing is their job and leaving the rest to God, he said in Rohtak.

Earlier on Wednesday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had unveiled a statue of Mahant Shri Chand Nath Yogi at the Baba Mastnath Math at Rohtak and also addressed a gathering.

CS for start...

buildings should be properly cleaned to make them clean and aesthetic. He asked them to install dust bins besides giving facelift to these structures including cutting of grass and whitewashing of their interiors and exteriors. He stressed on making the UT 'litter-free' by penalizing littering on streets.

While reviewing the preparations for sending of block level Amrit Kalashes to New Delhi under 'Meri Maati Mera Desh', the Chief Secretary underscored the need for making all the arrangements at District and Divisional level to receive these soil urns and sending them onwards for the building of the National monument.

He remarked that as per the guidelines of the Ministry of Culture, the soil has been collected from each rural and urban household. He also asks for giving uniform attire to all those youth volunteers going to the national capital with respective Amrit Kalashes from their blocks and ULBs.

The Chief Secretary also took note of the timely disposal of files in government offices. He observed that from the overall disposal of nearly 96% files, the number should reach 99% by month end. He called for having no pendencies beyond scheduled time durations meant for each service. He impressed upon all the officers to monitor the pending files on daily basis so that those habitual of creating undue delays are identified.

While taking review of winter preparedness the Chief Secretary urged the Divisional Administration to ensure quality power supply, ration and timely snow clearance during winters. He directed for replacement of damaged transformers in a period of 8 hours in urban areas and 24 hours in rural areas. He asked for increasing the vigil through enforcement teams to curb illegal usage.

He made out that the scheduled 8-hour cut in non-metered areas should be ensured besides taking measures for uninterrupted power supply to all the smart metered habitations where AT&C losses are as per norms. He asked for running an IEC campaign in local and social media to make people aware about the benefits of timely deposition of their electricity bills. He told that people should be made aware that borrowing Rs 31000 Cr to pay for purchasing electricity is taking toll on other people-centric measures. He made out that the UT people are intelligent enough to understand and cooperate with the administration in its efforts.

The Chief Secretary also enjoined upon the concerned district administrations to take all the measures for ensuring vibrant winters here. He asked them that the roads to all the tourist places should be cleared of snow in a timely manner so that these remain open to public all the time. He also advised them to provide these places the power supply and other amenities without any undue disruptions in the winter months.

Later on the Chief Secretary also reviewed the preparations for upcoming Navratri festival. He directed the administration to take all the measures for smooth conduct of this festival. He told them to provide the uninterrupted water, power supply to all the areas where this festival is celebrated by people. He called for taking cleanliness drives and other measures in the areas where people assemble for the festivities for all the days of this festival.

Govt orders inclusion of 'third gender' in job applications in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The government on Wednesday directed all administrative departments to modify the relevant Examination and Service rules for inclusion of a separate category of "Third Gender/any Other Category" in the application forms in recruitment to various posts in J&K.

"The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights), Act of 2019, prohibits the discrimination, denial or unfair treatment of members of Transgender community in educational establishments, employment, health institutions and public services etc," reads a circular issued by the government. The Act makes it obligatory for the Government to take appropriate steps to secure full

and effective participation of transgender persons, their inclusion in the society, to facilitate their access to welfare schemes framed by the Government and to prevent discrimination in matters relating to their employment.

"In pursuance to the provisions of the aforementioned Act, the Department of Personnel and Training, (DOPT), Ministry of Personnel Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India vide Office Memorandum No. 39028/02/2016-Estt (B) dated 20.04.2020, has issued an advisory to all Ministries and Departments in Government of India, requesting for modification of the relevant Examination Rules to provide for inclu-

sion of Transgender as a separate category of gender," the circularsaid.

DOPT has also notified Civil Services Examination Rules, 2020 on 05 February 2020, providing for inclusion of Transgender as a separate category of gender for the said exam, it noted.

"Accordingly, all Administrative departments are requested to modify the relevant Examination/Service rules, as the case may be, for inclusion of a separate category of 'Third Gender/any Other Category' in the application forms in recruitment to various posts in the UT of J&K so as to ensure that the relevant rules are in conformity with the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights), Act of 2019."

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Talat Majid joins Apni Party

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: In another blow to separatists in the Kashmir Valley, a prominent leader of banned Jamaat-e-Islami along with his supporters joined the Apni Party at its headquarters here on Thursday and said this was one of the realistic approaches being adopted by them while hoping that many more will come through.

The Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) leader, Talat Majid, who hails from the Pulwama district of South Kashmir and was a Rukn-e-Jamaat (member of Jamaat) before it was banned, made it clear that his decision was not influenced by any pressure to be a part of a mainstream political party.

"I am not under any pressure to join the mainstream... I have been advocating this change since 2014. I wanted to bring this change from the

platform of Jamaat-e-Islami. Since I did not get a chance there, I decided to look for other options," Majid told reporters after joining one of the youngest political parties in Jammu and Kashmir.

While welcoming Majid and his supporters into the party fold, Apni Party founder Altaf Bukhari said anyone who denounces terrorism and drugs, believes in the Indian constitution and the development of Jammu and Kashmir was welcome to join the party. "We will continue our efforts till every person in Jammu and Kashmir joins the Apni Party," he said.

In September this year, former separatist Syed Muzaffar Rizvi, who was the general secretary of Itihadul Muslimeen -- a Shia separatist outfit part of the Hurriyat Conference amalgam -- had joined the Apni Party.

SC to pass common order to get 7 and 9 judges' bench matters ready for hearing

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday said it will pass a common order in several nine-judge and seven-judge bench matters, including those relating to money bills and the speaker's power to disqualify MLAs, to get them ready for hearing.

A seven-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud took up six seven-judge and four nine-judges matters for consideration.

One of the seven-judge bench matters pertains to the correctness of the 2016 Nabam Rebia verdict relating to the speaker's power on disqualification of MLAs. It was pronounced by a five-judge Constitution bench.

"...The idea is to get these matters ready for hearing. We will pass a common order in all these matters in terms of the circular of August 22, 2023 that the compilation of pleadings, documents and precedents that

must be all filed within say... we will give three weeks to everyone," the CJI said.

"We will appoint nodal counsel in every matter who will then prepare a common compilation," said the bench, also comprising Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai, Surya Kant, J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra.

The bench told the advocates appearing in these matters to give the names of nodal counsel in each case.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, who is appearing in some of these matters, requested the bench to indicate the dates for hearing in advance so lawyers could prepare their case.

The CJI said he would look into the calendar of the benches for this.

The bench said the lawyers may indicate the estimated time for a matter.

Many of these matters have been pending for 20 years, it noted.

When the matter relating to money

No forward movement at 20th round of military talks between India & China

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: There was no forward movement at the latest round of India-China military talks towards resolution of the lingering standoff at the remaining friction points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

Senior military commanders of the two sides held the 20th round of talks on October 9 and 10 at Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Indian side of the LAC in the region.

The talks were cordial but there was no forward movement on resolution of the pending issues, the people cited above said. It is learnt that in the talks, the Indian side strongly pressed for resolution of the lingering issues at Depsang and Demchok. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Wednesday said the talks were held in an "open and constructive manner" for an early and mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues.

It said the two sides agreed to maintain the momentum of dialogue and negotiations through the relevant military and diplomatic mechanisms. "The two sides exchanged views in a frank, open and constructive manner for an early and mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues along the LAC in the Western Sector, in accordance with the guidance provided by the national leadership of the two countries, and building on the progress made in the last round of Corps Commanders' meeting held on August 13-14," the MEA said in a statement.

EP Deptt reclaims encroached land worth Rs 30 Cr in Narwal Pain

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Evacuee Property Department on Thursday reclaimed 15 Kanal 02 Marlas of land under Khasra No 64 situated at Narwal Pain here. This land, according to prevailing market rates, is valued at over Rs 30 crore.

According to an official handout, the Revenue authorities and the Police assisted the team of the EP Department, which successfully reclaimed the land and installed signboards around the area to inform the general public. The eviction drive to reclaim EP land from illegal occupants, encroachers and land grabbers was carried out by a team, constituted in compliance to the directives of the Custodian General of J&K, Rajinder Singh Tara and under the close supervi-



sion of Custodian Jammu, Ravinder Sharma. Led by Deputy Custodian (HQ) Jammu, Aijaz Ahmed, the team included various field inspectors from District Jammu and other officials from the EP Department. The team received assistance from revenue authorities, including the Naib Tehsildar, Girdawar and Patwari of the relevant revenue halqa. These authorities had previously identified and demarcated

the EP land. The SHO, Satwari provided the necessary police force to ensure the security of the eviction drive, which was executed smoothly and successfully. The Department also took this opportunity to inform the public that encroachments on EP land will be dealt with firmly and all necessary legal steps will be taken to counter the actions of illegal occupants, encroachers and trespassers concerning EP land.

Demining operation in Leh, 175 mines destroyed

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH/JAMMU: The Army conducted a demining operation in three areas of Leh district and destroyed 175 mines, officials said on Thursday.

This has been done on the demand of locals living along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

"On behalf of Phobrang, Yourgo, and Lukung villagers, we thank the Fire and Fury Corps for their swift action in fencing and clearing the area by successfully destroying over 175 mines", Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Santosh Sukhadave wrote on X.

He said this decisive step has positively addressed the safety concerns of villagers, strengthening the strong civil-military bond in Ladakh.

"I want to thank the Indian Army for destroying these mines planted in 1962. It used to cause losses to us," the sarpanch of Phobrang said.