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J&K villages witnessing...

the rich and the poor, capital and labour," the Lt Governor said. Charkha was used as a significant tool by Bapu in the fight against British Rule. It is a symbol of Swadeshi movement, self-reliance and economic freedom, he said. Paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, the Lt Governor said the ideals of Bapu are for all humanity.

"I hope our officers, inspired by Bapu's ideas and ideals, will continue to work dedicatedly for the dignity of every citizen in the society, for equality, social justice, and for a developed and self-reliant Jammu Kashmir," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor reiterated the commitment of the UT Administration to develop the villages as the centre of socio-economic growth and transform the lives of the rural population.

The Lt Governor congratulated the Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB) for the installation of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi and Charkha. He also called for collective efforts by all the stakeholders for promotion of Swadeshi products. There is a need to promote city-based Self Help Groups engaged in Khadi, which has become a new fashion statement for youth, he said.

Dr Hina Shafi Bhat, Vice Chairperson, KVIB; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; R K Goyal, Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Administrative Secretaries and senior officers of UT and Police administration also paid their tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

Efforts being made...

The Lt Governor extended his greetings to the people on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti and the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.

Sinha recalled the eternal values of Mahatma Gandhi, which has been inspiring generations across the world and the power of truth, ahimsa, satyagraha, simple living is guiding entire humanity on the path of peace and brotherhood.

"Bapu's thoughts are powerful instrument for prosperity, dignity and empowerment of people. His timeless ideals are the only effective instrument to tackle the challenges confronting the world," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor applauded the inspirational journey undertaken by more than 27,000 students during Shanti Yatra to pay homage to Bapu and his ideas and ideals.

Bapu's life teaches us that spirit of dedication and purity of means, can not only ensure independence but the society can also be made prosperous, the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor urged every section of the society, especially the youth to imbibe wisdom from the valued teachings of the Father of the Nation and strive to build a peaceful, inclusive and equitable society.

Each and every precious word of Bapu acts as an institution. What you will learn from his philosophy of life is not available anywhere else. Only the precious treasure of Bapu's ideals will be able to guide you in nation building and it will empower you to protect the social interests, he said.

The lifelong campaigns of Puja Bapu and his philosophy of truth, non-violence, selfless service, sacrifice, love and tolerance must continue to guide all the citizens to achieve the golden future of Jammu Kashmir, the Lt Governor added.

The Lt Governor also commended the artists and students for depicting the life of Mahatma Gandhi through their enthralling performances.

At the UT-level event, the Lt Governor honored the eminent Gandhians from across the country for their extraordinary contribution in promoting the teachings and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.

He also interacted with the participants of the Shanti Yatra and felicitated the students who have excelled in various competitions organized as a part of Gandhi Jayanti celebration.

On the occasion, the Gandhians including Padma Shri SP Varma; Ramesh Bhaiya; Laxmi Das; Dr Ranjana Mukhopadhyay, and Ashok Kapoor threw light on the life-long campaigns of Mahatma Gandhi.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lt Governor; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, School Education; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Administrative Secretaries; senior officials; heads of educational institutions; students, teachers, youth and prominent citizens were present. Educational Institutions from across the UT also joined through virtual mode.

Opposition dividing society...

and divided society on caste lines. They are committing this sin even now," asserted Modi, hitting out at the opposition.

He maintained that anti-BJP parties do not like the fact that the country is nowadays being praised at global forums.

"When the entire world is praising the country and sees their future in India, there are those who indulge in politics and are unable to see anything except their chair...they do not like India being praised the world over. These anti-development people are trying to prove that nothing has happened in the nation and they have pain in their stomach (over India's praise)," he said.

"They have only one thing in their mind -- hatred against the nation and its policies. In hate they forget the country's achievements," the PM added.

Modi accused the opposition parties of being "anti-development".

"They are averse to development taking place in the country. They are haters of development," he added.

Referring to India's growing profile at the international stage, the PM said the country has now become the world's fifth-largest economy and "We want to take it to No. 3 in our next term."

The BJP's top poll campaigner said one vote of people for double-engine government will take Madhya Pradesh and the country towards development and prosperity.

"The Congress (when in power) has done no good to MP. They can't do development of MP. They don't have a vision and road map of development," he maintained.

He said the BJP, in power in Bhopal since 2003 barring 15 months in 2018-2020, has pulled MP out of the 'BIMARU' (laggard) category and positioned it among the 10 developed states of the country.

"The double-engine government wants to take MP among the three top states. Your one vote will help achieve this goal," Modi said.

The PM said in the opposition-ruled states, crime and corruption are rampant, while infrastructure development and growth in different fields are key features of BJP rule.

He said earlier the poor got just four walls in the name of houses, but things have changed under his government.

"Now, they are getting toilets and other amenities in their homes under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana," Modi stated.

"Nearly 2.25 lakh families will enter into their new homes before Dussehra, Dhanteras, and Diwali this year," he added.

Besides, the houses built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana are being registered in the name of the female member of the family, said Modi.

J&K Police fights...

the section of the society which are not heard be it a poor shopkeeper, a low ranking government employee, a lawyer or a journalist," he added.

Swain said the J&K Police will stand by all those who want to earn an honest livelihood by abiding by laws.

"This is our message on Gandhi Jayanti. Gandhi was for non-violence but that state of non-violence can be achieved only by protecting the non-violent people from the violent," he said. "So we would like to make a distinction between those who are wedded to violence because of ulterior motives, those are the ones we are fighting. And this fight is for the people," he added.

8 BJP leaders...

fail to abide by it, the same may lead to their expulsion.

In response to notice issued to them, they have submitted their unconditional apology for their conduct and have also given undertaking not to repeat such conduct in future and not to indulge in anti party activities or conduct of indiscipline.

Being satisfied with apology and keeping in view their past standing and contribution to the party , the Disciplinary Committee has decided to close Proceedings against them with direction to them to be bound by their undertaking failing which strict action will be taken . Committee has recommended to President to issue directions to close the proceedings.

LG attends Sanskriti...

peace, prosperity and happiness in society," the Lt Governor said.

Since ancient times, Karnataka has been the center of literature, architecture, music, dance and many folk traditions, customs and festivals. The oldest form of Yakshagana was first mentioned in Chandraprabha Purana. This world famous theater art has also been described in the Mallinath Purana of Nagehandra, the Lt Governor observed.

"J&K UT is witnessing an unprecedented revival of vibrant culture. The aim of

such cultural event is to introduce the new generation to the great heritage of the country," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor appreciated the artists who performed the famous traditional folk dance form of Karnataka.

He said the objective of all the art forms and folk tradition is to create a bridge between different cultures and languages, weave them into one thread and to connect the society and the country. Every language, every instrument, every dance style has one message of unity, he added.

I am hopeful of seeing the artists from Karnataka performing Yakshagana during the upcoming Navratra Festival at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, the Lt Governor added.

Yakshagana and the Kannada and Tulu folk Lore classical fusion by the artists received a standing ovation from the audience.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr Hina Shafi Bhat, Vice Chairperson, J&K KVIB; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; H. Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary PDD; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary Tourism Department; Sh Bharat Singh Manhas, Secretary JKAACL, senior officers and eminent personalities from diverse fields were present.

CRPF holds cultural...

Dolly, a tourist from Delhi, said as she watched the rehearsal of women motorcyclists who will be flagged off on an expedition to Kevadia in Gujarat tomorrow.

A group of CRPF women also practised self-defence techniques in hand-to-hand combat at the newly-refurbished public area around the iconic clock tower, locally known as Ghanta Ghar'.

Dolly said it was a very good initiative and should be taken forward to empower women.

"They are being trained well in Karate... it builds confidence in us. We talk about women and men being equal, which is visible here in J-K," she said.

Another tourist from Delhi, Mukesh Jain said he never expected to see such a programme at Lal Chowk.

"This is for the first time I am here at Lal Chowk and witnessing this... I never thought I could see this here," he added.

Ayushi Jain said it was a great experience for her on her first visit to Kashmir.

"Good thing here is to see that the army has given chances to girls they are performing very well and a great example of women empowerment," she said

Srinagar CRPF Inspector General Ajay Yadav said Kashmir was undergoing transformation.

"This is new Kashmir, badalta Kashmir, peaceful Kashmir. No doubt, this is a new beginning heralding a new era," he said.

Yadav said 150 women warriors, part of a motorcycle expedition, will be flagged off from Srinagar, Kanyakumari and Shillong simultaneously on Tuesday.

"You have seen the rehearsals and tomorrow the women's bike expedition will start from Srinagar and culminate at Kevadia, Ektanagar (Gujarat) on October 31," he said.

Yadav said while 50 women will start from Srinagar, an equal number will start from Shillong and Kanyakumari to travel more than 10,000 km to reach Kevaida on October 31.

All parties will...

Now, at least there is unanimity, and it was passed in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The government and all the parties, which did not stick to their rigidity and supported the bill this time, deserve to be congratulated for it," he added.

On the "delay" in holding assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, the former chief minister said polls were the essence of democracy and have to be held, even though these have been delayed.

"It is unthinkable that there will be no elections. If there are no elections, there will be no democracy. "And the elections are not only due but overdue, especially the assembly elections. Parliament elections are held on time, there has been no difficulty but it has been a long time since assembly polls were held," he said.

‘Gandhi was an...

"His life was not easy. He was cornered from all sides for speaking truth. But he didn't care since he was having no personal interests. Even till his last breath he fought and believed in the system of equality and justice which made him the father of nation," the former J&K Chief Minister said.

Among others present on the occasion were Taj Mohiuddin Treasurer, Vice Chairman G.M.Saroori, Padma Shri S.P.Verma, Mohd Amin Bhatt Provincial President, Salman Nizami Chief Spokesperson, Haji Musadiq, Shafiq Shabnam, Khalid Tufail, Amir Bhatt Dist President, Arif Maqbool, Mushtaq Khanday, AAmir Rasool, Umar Kakroo and others.

912 gifts, mementos...

Monday and will end on October 31, officials said. Some of the items have been displayed at the National Gallery of Modern Arts (NGMA) here as part of an exhibition.

This is the fifth edition of the series of auctions, the first of which was held in January 2019, the Culture Ministry said in a statement.

Modi also shared some pictures from the exhibition on social media site X and said these are a "testament to the rich culture, tradition and artistic heritage of India".

"Starting today, an exhibition at NGMA will display a wide range of gifts and mementoes given to me over the recent past. Presented to me during various programmes and events across India, they are a testament to the rich culture, tradition and artistic heritage of India," the prime minister posted.

"Like always, these items will be auctioned and the proceeds will support the Namami Gange initiative," he added.

Union Minister of State for Culture Meenakashi Lekhi visited the NGMA on Monday and announced the fifth round of e-auction of PM mementoes. Later, she told PTI that the items at the auction range from objects valued at Rs 100 to a painting by Paresh Maity worth Rs 64 lakh.

"In the last four editions, over 7,000 items have been put on e-auction, and this time there are 912 items for the e-auction," Lekhi was quoted as saying in a statement issued by the Culture Ministry.

Some of these items, including traditional angavastrams, shawls, headgear and ceremonial swords, are conventionally gifted as symbols of honour and reverence, the statement said.

"The standout artefacts of this e-auction encompass replicas of architectural wonders like the Modhera Sun Temple and Vijay Stambh of Chittorgarh. Noteworthy pieces such as Chamba rumal, Pattachitra, Dhokra Amart, Gond art, and Madhubani art reflect the enduring and profound cultural essence, encapsulating both tangible and intangible facets of our diverse communities," it added.

She added that Namami Gange is a flagship initiative of the Union government to preserve and restore the Ganga and enhance its delicate ecosystem. The proceeds of this auction will contribute to this noble cause, "reinforcing our unwavering commitment to safeguarding this invaluable national asset," Lekhi said.

The minister added that the varied collection of mementoes available for e-auction showcases an array of traditional art forms, offering a dynamic spectrum that includes paintings, intricate sculptures, indigenous handicrafts, and enchanting folk and tribal artefacts.

"Auction of mementoes and gifts presented to the prime minister on various occasions is live now. Request everyone to participate in the e-auction and contribute towards Namami Gange project," she posted on X.

Campaigning ends for...

Feroz Ahmad Khan completed its five-year term on October 1.

A total of 95,388 voters including 46,762 women are eligible to exercise their franchise from 8 am to 4 pm on Wednesday to decide the electoral fate of 85 candidates in 26 seats of the 30-member Hill Council, according to election officials.

Four councillors with voting rights are being nominated by the administration.

The National Conference and Congress have announced a pre-poll alliance but have put up 17 and 22 candidates, respectively. Both parties said the arrangement has been restricted to areas where there is a tough contest with the BJP.

BJP, which won one seat in the last election and later took its tally to three with the joining of two PDP councillors, has fielded 17 candidates this time.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is trying its luck from four seats while 25 independents are also in the fray, the officials said.

Electronic voting machines (EVMs) are being used for the first time for the council elections.

According to election officials, out of 278 polling stations being set up across the district, 114 are hypersensitive and 99 sensitive. Additional companies of the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) have already been deployed and are performing their duties to ensure peaceful polling.

In an official order issued on Sunday, election authority and Deputy Commissioner Shrikant Balasaheb Suse directed a total prohibition on holding public meetings and processions during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of the poll.

Suse also banned exit polls in the district till the conclusion of the poll and warned of action as per law against anyone contravening the directions.

The elections to LAHDC-Kargil was rescheduled from September 10 to October 4 on the directions of the Supreme Court which took serious note of the UT administration denying the "plough" symbol to National Conference candidates.

Holding that the National Conference is entitled to its symbol, the Supreme Court dismissed the Ladakh administration's plea on the issue and also imposed a cost of Rs 1 lakh on it.

Though the extended campaigning in the district remained a low-key affair, National Conference vice president and former chief minister Omar Abdullah addressed two election rallies at Drass and Kargil.

"We (the NC and the Congress) are fighting together to send a strong message to the people in the country that what happened on August 5, 2019, was undemocratic and based on injustice.

"With people's support, we are going to win the polls and they (BJP) are panicking," Omar had said.

Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, during his nine-day trip to Ladakh in August, also addressed a public meeting in Kargil. The party's campaigning was mostly done by local leaders of the party from Ladakh.

Union Minister Meenakshi Lekhi campaigned for the BJP candidates and called upon the people of Kargil to vote the BJP to power for the all-round development of the district.

BJP Lok Sabha MP from Ladakh Jamyang Tsering Namgyal also widely campaigned for the party candidates, seeking votes on the focused development of the region by the central government.

Lt Governor inaugurates week-long 'GI Mahotsav' at Srinagar



LG Manoj Sinha inaugurating week-long GI Mahotsav at Srinagar on Monday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated the week-long 'GI Mahotsav' at Kashmir Haat, Srinagar on Monday.

In his address, the Lt Governor congratulated Agriculture Production Department for providing an excellent platform for farmers, craftspeople, artisans, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders from across the country to showcase their products and share best practices for commercialization of GI-tagged products.

"Geographical Indications aim to protect and promote products originating in a specific geographical area. GI Tag is a treasure that can give a fillip to J&K economy and it can boost export of protected products," the Lt Governor said.

He said the several GI Tags for local products from J&K like Bhaderwah Rajmash, Ramban Sulai Honey, Rajouri Chikri Wood Craft, Mushqubdi Rice, Basohli Painting and Kashmir Saffron will protect them from counterfeiters and unfair competition and increase the sales value of these products.

At the inaugural event, the Lt Governor highlighted the efforts of the UT Administration, under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to promote unique characteristics of Agriculture, food and handmade products of the UT of J&K.

"GIs of J&K products will be a game-changer for the rural economy and high quality of these products will benefit the entire community of producers," the Lt Governor said.

He called for effective campaign to popularize GIs to transform the rural economy. More than 504 GIs of India reflect ancient cultural values and diversity of products that our Agriculture and handicraft, handloom sector has to offer, the Lt Governor said. By protecting and promoting these products through Brand Positioning and Innovative marketing strategy we can boost exports and also receive higher values in the global market, he added.

The Lt Governor impressed upon the producers, Farmers & trade associations and administration to work together on strengthening the product, communication and distribution network to bridge the gap between producer and consumer.

We also have to pay attention to quality, product specifications and regulations to protect the interest of small-marginal farmers and small handicrafts units, he added. Som Prakash, Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor for organising the GI Mahotsav on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti.

He reiterated the commitment of Central Government to promote the local products of Jammu Kashmir and provide them platforms at domestic and global markets. On the occasion, the Lt Governor distributed GI certificates for J&K's products and also released a publication on agriculture sector of the UT.

The Lt Governor visited the stalls displaying the unique and niche GI-tagged products from across the country. More than 100 stalls of GI products from Jammu Kashmir and different parts of the country are put up at Kashmir Haat Exhibition Ground. Padma Shri Dr Rajnikant, General Secretary Human Welfare Association; Aftab Malik, Chairman, DDC Srinagar; Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Vikranjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce; Vice Chancellors of various Universities; HoDs, officers of UT administration, large number of farmers, craftspeople and artisans were present on the occasion.

SF personnel attend 'Sholay' screening at Himalayan Film Fest

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: Over 55 personnel of the Indian Armed Forces were special guests at the screening of the Hindi cinema classic "Sholay" on the third day of The Himalayan Film Festival here.

The screening of the Ramesh Sippy directorial on Sunday evening at the Sindhu Sanskriti Kendra was attended by security personnel from the CISF unit KIBR Airport Leh and the Indian Air Force .

While some audience members sang along to songs such as "Ye Dosti", picturised on Dharmendra and Amitabh Bachchan, from the 1975 multistarrer; others made Instagram reels of their favourite actors delivering their favourite dialogues.

Yogesh, who serves in the Indian Air Force's northern base rank, said his favourite actor from "Sholay" is Bachchan. But what takes the cake for him is the part where Amjad Khan's Gabbar Singh has Dharmendra's Veeru in chains and Hema Malini's Basanti is dancing to "Jab tak hai jaan".

"I wasn't even born when the film was released. But my parents told me they had bunked school to watch this film. My father received quite a beating at home for missing classes and going to the theatre. Today, I understood what he must have felt while watching the film on the big screen," Yogesh told PTI.

ASI Ramesh Kumar from the CISF said he first watched the film about eight years ago. "I love Gabbar Singh, the villain's character the most, but my favourite actor is Amitabh Bachchan. I also like his film 'Zanjeer'," he added.

For Corporal Mahesh of the Indian Air Force, Dharmendra is the obvious choice as his favourite actor because they both hail from Punjab. "I have watched the films many times on TV. My favourite part is when Dharmendra does all that drama standing on top of the water tank. He is my favourite as we both come from Punjab. His acting is all natural," he said.