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STATE TIMES

THE BOLD VOICE OF J&K

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J.K. PUBLIC SCHOOL
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SOWING SKILLS
SHAPING INDIA

03 Fight against Diabetes a national responsibility, requires collective effort: Dr Jitendra

03 JA drugs growth has been poor: Only PM Modi has been promoting JA but others in Govt have been idling

05 Govt committed towards inclusive infra development: Dy CM

Website : www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

Terror strike in Ganderbal; Doctor, 6 labourers killed, 5 injured

Union Home Minister, LG, CM condemn; conveys condolences

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: A doctor and six migrant labourers were killed when terrorists struck a tunnel-construction site on the Srinagar-Leh national highway in Ganderbal district on Sunday.

The unidentified terrorists carried out the attack when the labourers and other staff working on the tunnel project at Gund in Ganderbal had returned to their camp late in the evening, the officials said.

They said the terrorists -- believed to be at least two -- opened indiscriminate fire on the group of labourers that included both locals and non-locals.

While two labourers died on the spot, four others and the doctor succumbed to their injuries subsequently, the officials said, adding that five people are undergoing treatment for injuries.

The deceased have been



identified as Dr Shahnawaz, Faheem Nazir, Kaleem, Mohammad Hanif, Shashi Abrol, Anil Shukla and

Terrorists involved in attack won't be spared: Shah

Gurmeet Singh. Security forces have cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to track down the attackers, they said.

"Top security officials, including Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, V K Birdi, have reached the spot to assess the situation. Meanwhile, Chief Minister

the injured make a full recovery as the more seriously injured are being referred to SKIMS, Srinagar," he said in a post on X.

Abdullah condemned the attack, which came barely four days after he was sworn in as the chief minister of the Union Territory.

"Very sad news of a dastardly and cowardly attack on non-local labourers at Gagangir in Sonamarg region. These people were working on a key infrastructure project in the area. 2 have been killed and 2-3 more have been injured in this militant attack. I strongly condemn this attack on unarmed innocent people and send my condolences to their loved ones," he said in another post on the microblogging platform.

Union Home Minister condemned attack. "The

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Record tourists' arrival testimony to peace, progress, prosperity in J&K: LG

Jammu Marathon to be organized soon



LG Manoj Sinha addressing gathering after felicitating winners of Kashmir Marathon.

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday said the record tourists' arrival in the last few years stands as a testimony to the peace, progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Felicitating the winners of Kashmir Marathon, a first-ever International Marathon, the Lieutenant Governor said: "Prime Minister's decisive leadership and restoration of peace and normalcy in J&K has ensured people can enjoy international cricket matches, Formula-4 race and feel proud by hosting global event like G20 Summit and International Yoga Day."

The Lt Governor also announced that very soon Jammu Marathon will be organized on similar scale as Kashmir Marathon.

More than 1700 runners from across the country

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Pak's ISI, terror groups attempt to exploit online platforms for recruitment efforts in J&K

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: In a concerning shift in tactics, Pakistan's intelligence agency and terror groups are trying to ramp up recruitment efforts in Jammu and Kashmir through digital platforms, as direct interactions become increasingly difficult due to heightened security measures, officials said on Sunday.

These groups are now primarily using social media platforms and messaging apps such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Telegram to target vulnerable youth, according to an

official.

"They are using fake profiles and Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) to evade detection.

Once identified, these individuals are drawn into private groups where they are exposed to manipulative content, including fabricated videos depicting atrocities allegedly committed by security forces, the officials said.

This strategy is employed by handlers linked to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to incite hatred and foster a narrative conducive to recruitment. In a troubling development,

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Flags off first ever International athletic event

Hope Kashmir Marathon becomes one of top events in world: Omar

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Sunday expressed hope that the Kashmir Marathon would become an annual event and earn recognition comparable to prestigious marathons around the world.

Completing his 21-kilometer half marathon, which he had flagged off earlier in the morning from Polo View, Srinagar, the Chief Minister said: "I hope that the Kashmir Marathon will be organised every year and gain recognition, like the well-known marathons



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah flagging-off Kashmir Marathon-2024 on Sunday.

around the world."

He extended his congratulations to all the participants who completed their races, adding that he himself hadn't expected to finish the half marathon.

The Chief Minister also expressed his gratitude to the organizers, stakeholders, and the people of Srinagar for their support.

"I thank the administration for their excellent

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Two FIRs registered after scuffle between groups over bovine 'smuggling'

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Two FIRs have been registered after a scuffle between rival groups over alleged bovine smuggling here, police said on Sunday and urged communities to rely on verified information instead of rumours on social media.

A minor clash was reported when some cow vigilantes allegedly intercepted bovine smugglers belonging to another community at Sohanjana village in the outskirts of Jammu during the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday, officials said.

A group of people support-

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ing cow vigilantes staged a demonstration on Sunday and threatened to intensify their agitation if stern action was not taken against the "smugglers".

Senior police officers rushed to the scene and tried to persuade the protesters, assuring that police have already registered two cases and further investigation is on, the officials said.

Dismissing the rumours circulated on the social media about the incident as "misleading", police said the officers acted swiftly and effectively, and there was no significant threat to

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Gangster moved to another jail after video surfaces from inside

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Gangster Arun Choudhary alias "Abu Jatt" was shifted to another prison after a video of him making a statement from inside the jail surfaced on social media, an officer said on Sunday.

In the video, Choudhary, a murder accused, purportedly claimed that he bribed the jail officials to get access to a mobile phone.

A native of Khour Deonian village of R S Pura in Jammu district, the hardcore criminal, with three of his associates, was arrested after an encounter in Punjab early this year for his alleged involvement in the killing of Samba resident Akshay Sharma on December 25, 2023.

"A cognizance has been taken of the viral video of Choudhary to ascertain when it was shot and shared on social media ... an FIR has also been lodged and an investigation is on," Jail Superintendent Kathua Koushal Kumar said. He said the jail is under

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Prayed to God for solution to Ayodhya dispute: CJI

STATE TIMES NEWS
PUNE: Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud on Sunday said he had prayed to God for a solution to the Ram Jammabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute and asserted God will find a way if one has faith.

He was addressing residents of his native Kanhersar village in Khed taluka where he was felicitated.

"Very often we have cases (to adjudicate) but we don't arrive at a solution. Something similar happened

during the Ayodhya (Ram Jammabhoomi-Babri Masjid "Believe me, if you have faith, God will always find a way."

On November 9, 2019, a five-judge bench of the Supreme Court headed by then Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi settled a fraction issue that went back more than a century by paving the way for the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

The bench also ruled that a mosque will come up on an alternative five-acre plot in Ayodhya itself.

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Two killed as vehicle falls in gorge

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Two persons were killed and three others critically injured when a load carrier skidded off the road and rolled down into a deep gorge in the Doda district, police officials said on Sunday.

The accident took place near the Battara village in hilly Gandoh area around midnight on Saturday, the officials said.

They said five persons were critically injured in the accident and sent to hospital, where Shakeel Ahmed (20) and Mohammad Sayam (18) succumbed to injuries.

Newly elected J&K MLAs to take oath in Srinagar today

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: The newly elected MLAs of Jammu and Kashmir will be administered the oath of office in the Legislative Assembly here on Monday, ending a six-year-long legislative hiatus.

Pro tem Speaker Mubarak Gul will administer the oath to the MLAs, who include 51 first-time members. The ceremony is scheduled to take place at 2 pm.

The National Conference (NC) emerged as the single largest party in the assembly polls held in September and October.

The oldest political party of

Jammu and Kashmir has formed the government with external support from Congress, which has six MLAs. Five independent MLAs, one MLA from the AAP and the CPI(M) have also extended their support.

The BJP with 29 seats is the second-largest party -- its best-ever performance in the state.

BJP MLA from Kishtwar, Shagun Parihar is the youngest legislator at 29, while NC's veteran and MLA from Charar-e-Sharief, Abdul Rahim Rather, the oldest at 80.

Rather and party colleague

Ali Mohammad Sagar (MLA Khanyar) are the only two people to have been elected to the assembly for a record seven terms.

While Sagar has been a member of the Legislative Assembly since 1983, Rather started his long stint as a legislator in 1977. However, the former finance minister lost the 2014 assembly elections.

There are three women MLAs in the house including Parihar, MLA of DH Pora Sakina Masood Itoo and MLA of Habba Kadal Shameema Firdous, both from NC.

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 24.8°C Min: 13.2°C

Humidity
Max: 71 Min: 69

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 6.8°C Min: 2.8°C

Humidity
Max: 94 Min: 83

Sunset : 17:27 Hours
Sunrise : 07:23 Hours

BJP's three main assignments in J&K

ANCHOR
DOST KHAN

JAMMU: Omar Abdullah made two points in his speech during his first visit to Jammu after becoming Chief Minister: the "narazagi" - annoyance with adverse impact on economy with discontinuation of Durbar Move, smart meters, power and water shortage didn't get reflected in the voting pattern of the people of the region. Second, he held out an unqualified assurance that his government will work for all irrespective of their voting preferences.

He is absolutely right in assessing the mood of the Jammu voters in the post-October 8 scenario. Jammu voters were motivated toward voting in one particular direction - they voted for BJP in huge numbers. The party won 29 seats and Jammu voters gave it the pride of scoring highest voting percentage in the Assembly polls.

On the second count, he has done some-

thing - accommodating three faces from Jammu region, granting the post of Deputy Chief Minister to Surinder Choudhary, a Hindu, but rest of the statement that he would be devoting equal attention to the people of the region will be known in coming weeks and months.

In his both assertions, BJP is a common factor. The BJP has done pretty well in Jammu region. Its 29 seats in the 90-member Assembly is just one seat short of occupying one-third of seats in the House. This is substantial strength. In 2014 when the party had won 25 out of 37 seats, it was much shorter of one-third strength of the House. - That is four seats short. The number should have been 29 that time, which was not there. This speaks volumes of the progress that BJP made during the past 10 years, despite suffering from a tag of having allied with PDP, which the party later dubbed as pro-militants, and secessionist.

The magic wand was handed over by the Centre. The abrogation of Article 370 liberated Jammu heartland - the name ascribed to the plains from where BJP

scored more than 90 percent of seats - liberated Jammu from a compulsory arch of being part of the same geography and population that sat separately in the Indian union. Jammu, because of its nationalist beliefs and courtesies always sat in seclusion. It suffered because of that as it was perceived and dealt with as a poor cousin. To be fair, it is also a fact that Jammu was bypassed when it came to giving doles and other benefits to Jammu and Kashmir. All the Central governments, irrespective of their respective party flags were keener to look at the Valley. There was a peculiar situation in which Kashmir did deserve attention and care, but it was done at the cost of the people of Jammu and Ladakh in the former state. After J&K and Ladakh became union territories, not much of the difference has been made to Jammu. But the abrogation of Article 370 indeed gave boost to the Indian nationalism which Jammu always embodied. That delivered

a critical victory to the region and its psyche.

BJP which had hoped to be in power after the elections has to reconcile to the role of opposition for the time being. It got a good number of seats in the region, but could not open account in the Kashmir valley despite showing a remarkable improvement in its vote share as compared to the previous election. This outcome imposes greater responsibility on the saffron party. There are three tasks which it should address without any delay.

First, it should prepare to play a role of an effective and constructive opposition. The opposition is not to criticize the government always nor it means repeating the election-time rhetoric. It demands thorough understanding of the issues facing the UT and discussing and delivering on them. It is a national party, and it has to act accordingly. It has to choose its vocabulary and also demonstrate by its actions that it means business and that too serious one. It must do everything from the national perspective.

Second, the voters in Jammu voted for it

to get their day-to-day issues addressed. They were not having access to the bureaucratic system. Now the party legislators have to become a bridge between them and the government without compromising on the prestige and honor of the voters. There is a mix of youth and experience, ideal to become vibrant voice within and outside the Assembly. They should not hesitate to talk about the issues from drains, street lights to the major problems of unemployment and drug abuse. Jammu is a border region - five of its districts have border with Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir. BJP has to become voice of the nation. It has been assigned the duty of guardian of the national interest. It must ensure that no red line is crossed by anyone on this score.

Third: An outreach to the Valley is necessary. It should give the Valley a feeling that though the voters there have not given even a single seat to the party, still the party would take them on board on all issues. As such, BJP has greater responsibility than even the government in Jammu and Kashmir of today.

NEWS ANALYSIS

