

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Travelling to Pakistan...

major decision on New Delhi's part. In his address at the Sardar Patel Memorial lecture on governance, Jaishankar said "like with any neighbour, India would certainly like to have good relations with Pakistan."

"But that cannot happen by overlooking cross-border terrorism and indulging in wishful thinking. As the Sardar demonstrated, realism must be the foundation for policy," he said.

The decision to send the senior minister is seen as a display of India's commitment to the SCO.

The ties between India and Pakistan came under severe strain after India's warplanes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training camp in Balakot in Pakistan in February 2019 in response to the Pulwama terror attack.

The relations further deteriorated after India on August 5, 2019 announced the withdrawal of special powers of Jammu and Kashmir and the bifurcation of the state into two union territories.

Pakistan downgraded diplomatic ties with India after New Delhi abrogated Article 370.

India has been maintaining that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan while insisting that the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment free of terror and hostility for such engagement.

Pakistan's then foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited India in May 2023 to attend an in-person meeting of the foreign ministers of SCO nations in Goa.

It was the first visit of a Pakistani foreign minister to India in almost 12 years.

In his address, Jaishankar also delved into India's historical ties with Pakistan.

"Today, we may be tempted to speculate what Sardar Patel's approach would have been on the Pakistan-related issues that came up in the decade after his passing away," he said.

"For example, would he have extended his support to the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960? Or dismissed it like the then Prime Minister, as an issue just about a 'pailful of water' that was negligible in the context of larger international politics?"

"There was an equally serious mis-judgement of Pakistan by India. Within our system, Patel was the most forceful advocate of using all avenues of pressure on that country after the invasion of Jammu and Kashmir," Jaishankar said.

"His reluctance to take the matter to the UN itself stemmed from the belief that Pakistan was better directly dealt with, rather than in a framework that Pakistan could manipulate," he said.

BSF holds passing...

discharge their duties with great honesty and efficiently in the years to come and will bring laurels to the force and their parents. Sonam Chhiring, Commandant (Trg), welcomed the Chief Guest and other dignitaries.

Recruit Constable Boya Mahesh Kiran commanded the parade, while five recruits -- Khetry Kisan (overall first position), Dwarapudi Damodararao (overall 2nd position), Boya Mahesh Kiran (best in drill), Gangula Kranti Kumar (best firer) and Boya Attada Saibabu (best in endurance) - were awarded with trophies.

During the passing out parade, the trainees performed martial arts, 'lathi khela' of West Bengal, Sambalpuri dance of Odisha and a colourful patriotic cultural programme by the students of Common Public School, Udhampur and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Juganoo, which received resounding applause from the audience.

The captivating tunes of the BSF band captivated the audience during the parade, a spokesperson of the border guarding force said.

The event was attended by several notable figures, including Deepshikha Gurung, BWWA Head, STC BSF, Udhampur, Amod Ashok Nagpure, SSP, Udhampur, senior officials from the civil administration, officers from various CAPFs, School teachers, renowned local citizens, and the families of the recruits, all of whom cheered enthusiastically for the recruits during the parade.

Cong 'most corrupt...

how closely Congress stands with those people who do not harbour good intentions for India, he said.

"Drugs worth thousands of crores of rupees were seized in Delhi recently. A Congress leader is suspected to be the kingpin. Congress wants to contest elections from the money it gets by pushing the youth towards drugs," he said.

The Indian Youth Congress had said on October 3 that Tushar Goel, the suspected kingpin, was expelled from the organisation on October 17, 2022, for anti-party activities, soon after BJP spokesperson and MP Sudhanshu Trivedi charged the opposition party with having links with the drug dealers.

Modi alleged that Congress' thinking has been foreign from the very beginning.

"Like the British rule, this Congress family also does not consider Dalits, backward and tribals as their equals. They feel that India should be ruled by only one family. That is why they have always maintained a derogatory attitude towards the Banjara community," he said.

Interestingly, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was in Maharashtra on Saturday.

Modi accused the Congress governments of continuing the British legacy of harassing Banjaras and keeping them away from the mainstream.

"People in Telangana are still waiting for the loan waiver. In Karnataka, the Congress government stopped the irrigation schemes started by the BJP regime," he said.

He said the erstwhile Maha Vikas Aghadi government put a speed breaker in the work to uplift the Pohardevi pilgrimage centre, which began when Devendra Fadnavis was CM.

"The MVA worked with only two agendas - to stop the projects related to farmers and to commit corruption in the money of these projects. The funds sent by the Centre were being diverted away from the beneficiaries by that government," Modi said.

He said farmers in Maharashtra, especially Vidarbha, faced big hardships for many decades.

Modi hailed the Ladki Bahin Yojna - the flagship scheme of the state government - as a major initiative for women empowerment.

Addressing a gathering in Thane, Modi dubbed the Congress the "most dishonest and corrupt party in the country whose character never changes".

"One CM is involved in a land scam, one minister from that party is abusing women and a Haryana leader is caught with drugs. The party promises huge things to win polls and then loots people after coming to power," Modi said.

Citing the toilet tax imposed in Himachal Pradesh, Modi said the Congress is identified with "loot, jhoot, and kushasan" (corruption, lies and misgovernance).

He said the people of Thane and Mumbai were suffering from problems of population and traffic under Congress regimes, and there was a time when Mumbai's development had come to a halt.

The MVA also put hurdles in the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train and Atal Setu projects and stopped water supply and irrigation schemes in the state, he said.

"The MVA is the enemy of development and people must keep the opposition alliance miles away (from power). In Maharashtra, the Congress is showing its true colours. It is opposing 'Ladki Bahin Yojana' wherein women get monthly aid of Rs 1,500 and the distribution of three free LPG cylinders every year," the PM said.

Without taking the name of Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, Modi said parties that spoke of nationalism are now busy with appeasement politics.

"They oppose the Waqf Amendment Bill but stay silent on Congress insulting Veer Savarkar. When the Congress says it will bring back Article 370 in Jammu-Kashmir, these parties don't react. If the ghost of the Congress enters somebody's body, its ideology gets destroyed because of power," Modi said.

Modi attended a thanksgiving event after the Marathi language was given the classical language status.

JKHCBAJ felicitates Justice...

contributions towards the judiciary and his approachable nature. He also lauded Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan for his commitment to justice and fairness.

Sharma also presented a charter of demands on behalf of Bar Association, addressing key concerns important to the legal community. Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan, in his address, thanked the JKHCBAJ for organizing the event and assured the Bar that all genuine demands will be taken into consideration and addressed with due care. He reaffirmed his commitment towards working closely with the Bar for the betterment of judiciary.

Justice Kotiswar Singh also addressed the august gathering, sharing fond memories of his experience working with the Jammu Bar. He praised the Bar for its dedication and professionalism, stating that his time as Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir had been one of his most rewarding experiences. He complimented the office-bearers of J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu for ensuring that while Lawyers' grievances are redressed, yet the Justice Dispensation is not disturbed.

The event was organized smoothly with the efforts of Chetan Misri, Joint Secretary and Utkarsh Pathania, Treasurer, ensuring a well-coordinated function. The gathering saw the presence of other Justices of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir, along with Judges of the District Judiciary, senior advocates, and esteemed members of the Bar.

A vote of thanks was delivered by Amit Gupta, Vice President of JKHCBAJ, who expressed gratitude to the Judges and all attendees for making the event a success.

As a token of respect, mementos were presented to Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan by the JKHCBAJ team.

Lt Gen Srivastava...

completion of the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir held after a gap of 10 years.

Following the assumption of command, Lt Gen Srivastava paid his tributes at the Chinar War Memorial in the Badami Bagh Cantonment, a defence spokesperson said.

A battle-hardened soldier, Lt Gen Srivastava held numerous prestigious posts and staff appointments during his 34-year illustrious military career, the spokesperson said.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA), he has significant combat experience, particularly in areas marked by high levels of insurgency. Before this appointment, he led the Avantipora-based 'Victor Force', a crucial command overseeing counter-insurgency efforts in south Kashmir. Commissioned into an elite parachute battalion of the Special Forces on June 9, 1990, Lt Gen Srivastava has completed all the essential career courses, including the Defence Services Staff Course in Wellington, the Higher Command Course and the National Defence College in the US.

He also holds a master's degree in strategic studies and philosophy.

Recognised for his exemplary service, Lt Gen Srivastava was awarded the Sena Medal in 2011. His extensive operational experience is particularly relevant at a time when the Valley is facing rising tensions linked to infiltration from the Jammu region into South Kashmir. On assuming command, he extended his greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, reaffirming his commitment to work closely with the civil administration and the community to build a peaceful and prosperous future. "He also urged members of the society to join hands with the security forces to overcome the challenges posed by terrorism," the spokesperson said. As the mantle of leadership passes on, Chinar Corps remains a symbol of unity, resilience and hope, dedicated to securing the region, he added. The 16-month period during which Lt Gen Ghai was at the helm witnessed a strong security architecture facilitating peace and stability in the region, the spokesperson said.

His tenure saw the conduct of two incident-free Amarnath Yatras, the Parliamentary elections in May 2024, and the recent three-phase Assembly polls. The Chinar Corps also achieved numerous successes in counter-infiltration operations along the Line of Control (LoC) and in the Valley, thereby dealing a significant blow to the terror network, the spokesperson said.

The outgoing GOC will be remembered for his humane and friendly approach, he added.

Meanwhile, Lt Gen Ghai extended his greetings to the people of Kashmir and wished them the very best for a bright and promising future.

Two minor siblings...

officials said. They said they were rushed to the Public Health Centre and later shifted to Sunderbani Hospital where both the children died. The condition of Devi was stated to be "serious", the officials added.

Amit Shah to review security situation with CMs of 8 Naxal-hit states on Monday

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah will review on Monday the security situation of the Naxal-affected states with the chief ministers of eight states hit by the menace.

The chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Telangana, Odisha, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh will attend the meeting to be held here, according to an official statement.

Due to the strategy of the Narendra Modi government, the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) violence has come down by 72 per cent while there is 86 per cent decline in deaths in 2023 as compared to year 2010. The Naxals are fighting its last battle now, it said.

Five Union ministers of the ministries closely involved with providing development support to the LWE-affected states will also attend the meeting.

The deputy national security adviser and senior officers from the Centre, states and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) will also participate in the deliberations.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and guidance of the home minister, the central government is committed to completely root out the menace of the LWE by March, 2026, the statement said.

The central government is providing all possible assistance to the LWE-affected state governments in fighting the menace of Naxalism.

Shah had last chaired a review meeting with the chief ministers of the LWE-affected states on October 6, 2023.

During that meeting, the home minister had given comprehensive directions

with regard to elimination of LWE.

The year 2024, so far, has witnessed unprecedented success by the security forces in elimination of armed LWE cadres, the statement said.

So far, 202 LWE cadres have been eliminated this year and 723 LWE cadres have surrendered while 812 have been arrested. The number of LWE-affected districts have come down to just 38 in 2024, it said.

The central government has taken several steps, including impetus on road and mobile connectivity, to take developmental schemes to the remotest areas of the affected states, according to the statement.

A total of 14,400 km roads have been constructed and nearly 6,000 mobile towers have been installed in the LWE-affected areas so far, the statement said.

Terrorist hideout busted in Poonch; suspected IED found near Jammu



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A terrorist hideout was busted in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, while a suspected Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was found in Akhnour near Jammu on Saturday evening, officials said.

The hideout was busted by a joint search party of police and Rashtriya Rifles at Jhullas Behra village, leading to the recovery of two hand grenades and some ammunition, the officials said. They said both the grenades were later destroyed by the experts in a controlled explosion without

causing any damage.

In another incident, the officials said a suspected IED with a timer was found near Gharota in Akhnour area on the outskirts of Jammu. Bomb disposal squad was rushed to the scene and further details are awaited, they said.

J&K Assembly Polls: Candidates, supporters guard EVM strong rooms ahead of counting

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: Candidates and their supporters from across parties have been camping outside the EVM strong rooms in this border district even as authorities have made robust arrangements.

Counting of votes of 90 assembly segments across Jammu and Kashmir will take place on October 8.

Jammu and Kashmir went to polls in phases on September 18, September 25, and October 1.

Rajouri district's Kalakote-Sunderbani, Nowshera, Rajouri (ST), Budhal (ST), and Thanamandi (ST) seats went to polls in the second phase.

The strong rooms, where the electronic voting machines are kept, have been set up in Government Boys Higher Secondary School near Gujjar Mandi in Rajouri town.

On September 30, the District Election Officer said

that a robust three-tier security system is guarding these rooms in line with the Election Commission guidelines, dispelling some social media rumours that suggested police had been removed from the location.

The innermost perimeter (third tier) is being guarded by the Central Armed Police Forces, the second tier by armed police, and the outermost layer by district police, the officer said.

Candidates have been sent written communications, informing them to deputise their representatives at strong rooms for keeping a close watch.

Several facilities, such as rain-proof tents, have been provided for their comfort as they keep a vigil, with assistance of CCTV cameras that have been mounted for the purpose.

"We have some apprehensions and we want to protect

the mandate of the public which is sealed in EVM strong rooms," National Conference candidate from Budhal Javed Iqbal Choudhary said.

He said more than 10 teams of workers are stationed around the EVM strong rooms to keep a close vigil.

Rohit Kohli, chief election agent of Congress-NC alliance candidate from Nowshera assembly constituency, said protecting the mandate of the public is his duty.

"Nowshera is 50 kms away from Rajouri (town) and three teams of our volunteers are working in shifts to perform their duties like soldiers to protect the mandate of the public," Kohli said.

Nowshera constituency is witnessing a keen battle between BJP-J-K unit president Ravinder Raina and NC-Congress alliance candidate Surinder Choudhary. Raina had won the seat in 2014 assembly elections.

India will be among leading exporters of defence equipment in 10 years: DRDO chairman

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR: India will be among the leading exporters of defence equipment in ten years, and the imports will come down to five to ten per cent, DRDO chairman Samir V Kamat said here on Saturday.

Kamat said the country's defence imports have been decreasing, and out of the capital acquisition budget last year, nearly 90 per cent was used on indigenous systems.

Kamat was speaking at Chhatrapati Shahu College of Engineering, where he inaugurated the Defence Innovation Challenge for Excellence (DICE) organised by the Marathwada Accelerator for Growth and Incubation Council (MAGIC).

"It is true that ten years ago, we were leading importers of defence systems. But if we look at last year's figures, out of our capital acquisition budget, nearly 90 per cent was used on indigenous systems. I am confident that in ten years the imports will be negligible. A country can't make everything. So five to 10 per cent (import) will remain," he said.

India will be among the leading exporters of defence equipment in ten years, he added.

Talking to reporters after the event, Kamat said India has set a target to achieve exports worth Rs 50,000 crore by 2028 and Rs 1 lakh crore by 2035.

He said, "The spending on defence-related research should be more. However, we are not a developed country yet, and there are other priorities. We have to invest more in technology."

Director of MAGIC Prasad Kokil said applications for the innovation challenge are open till October 31, and the final round will take place in December.

Hope it will be start of better relationship between India, Pak: Farooq on EAM visit

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday expressed hope that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's upcoming visit to Islamabad for the SCO meeting would mark the start of a better relationship between India and Pakistan.

India on Friday announced that Jaishankar will travel to Pakistan to attend a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in mid-October.

It is the first time in nearly nine years that India's external affairs minister will travel to Pakistan even as the ties between the two neighbours have remained frosty over the Kashmir issue and cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

Pakistan is hosting the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting on October 15 and 16.

"I am hopeful that they will be able to talk on every issue. Economic issues are very important for all of us, the world itself. And I am sure they will talk on bilateral matters also."

"I hope they will be friendly and they will try to achieve better understanding between the two countries. My best wishes to all of them," Abdullah told reporters here.

To a question on whether there was any hope of the two neighbours resolving their differences, the NC president expressed hope the meeting would kick-start better relations among the two countries.

"I hope so. One cannot say what will happen there. But, I hope and pray that animosities will disappear and a better relationship will start between the two nations," the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said.

2 drug peddlers arrested, contraband substances recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GANDERBAL: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, police have arrested two drug peddlers in Ganderbal and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

A police party from PP Shadipora apprehended two suspicious persons during patrolling at Khan Mohallah Bund. During search, 10.2Kgs of dried mashed bhung with seeds & tops and 368 grams of Bhung Powder were recovered from their possession. They have been identified as Rizwan Ahmad Khan son of Gh Hassan Khan & Sahil Ahmad Khan son of Manzoor Ahmad Khan, both residents of Khan Mohallah.

Furthermore, during preliminary questioning, accused Rizwan Ahmad Khan confessed that he has stashed some more hashed Bhung Pathri at his home. Accordingly, in presence of Executive Magistrate 1st Class, more 2 Kgs and 796 Grams Bhung Patri was recovered from the residential house of the accused situated at Khan Mohallah. Both the accused persons have been shifted to police station where they remain in custody. Subsequently, a case vide FIR No. 258/2024 under relevant sections of law has been registered at PS Ganderbal & further investigation has been taken up.

Soldier shoots self dead in Poonch

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MENDHAR/JAMMU: An army personnel allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself with his service rifle in Poonch district on Saturday, officials said.

Uttarakhand native Sepoy Manish Bisht was on sentry duty at a post in Behrote in Balakote sector when he took the extreme step, the officials said.

They said police have started inquest proceedings to ascertain the cause behind his taking such a step.

Traffic Police crackdown in Poonch

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Traffic Police led by SO Younis Khan conducted a traffic Naka at multiple locations across Poonch district, including the Bus Stand, SK Bridge, and Idgah Chowk. During the operation, 5 to 6 vehicles were seized, and 30 to 35 vehicles were Challenged. The primary reasons for the challans included vehicles being operated without proper documentation, drivers not wearing uniforms, vehicles without number plates, and overloading violations. This action was taken to ensure strict adherence to traffic regulations and road safety norms in the district.