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Congress, its allies...

the reservation," he alleged.

Efforts to divide people on caste lines and deprive them of reservation were made by leaders from Jawaharlal Nehru to Rajiv Gandhi, he claimed.

There is a wave in favour of the `Mahayuti' alliance of BJP, Shiv Sena and NCP, he claimed, adding that its goal is `Viksit Bharat'.

"Hence, the BJP and its allies are chosen by the people again and again. In the Lok Sabha elections, Nanded did not vote for us. I hope you will bless me now," he said, referring to the defeat of the BJP's Pratap Chikhlikar by Congress' Vasant Chavan.

In the Haryana elections, BJP created history by winning the highest number of seats, the prime minister said, adding that the people of Maharashtra were set to repeat the history.

"Wherever I have gone in Maharashtra in the last two months, I have this feeling that whatever couldn't be done in the Lok Sabha elections will be corrected in the assembly polls," he said.

"Today, there is only one slogan on everyone's lips: BJP-Mahayuti ahe, tar gati ahe. Maharashtraachi pragati ahe (Only BJP-Mahayuti will ensure Maharashtra's speedy progress)," he added.

BJP and its allies won 17 of 48 seats in Maharashtra in the general elections.

Congress was the root cause of the troubles of farmers in Marathwada, but under the rule of the BJP and its allies several steps were taken to ease the problem of water-scarcity and drought, the PM said.

The Marathwada water grid scheme was started by the earlier BJP-led government but the Maha Vikas Aghadi regime stopped it, he claimed, adding that the Mahayuti government revived it.

"Farmers' interests are the most important priority, and they have been benefitting due to several welfare schemes and financial aid. In the last two years, Rs 80,000 crore-worth investment has come to Marathwada alone. The Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor has given a new identity to Marathwada. The rail coach factory, logistics park, Shaktipeeth Expressway have opened new avenues of employment," Modi added.

Women's empowerment was also a priority for the Mahayuti and the Union government, he said, as he listed women-centric development schemes such as PM Awas Yojana and schemes for toilets, water and electricity connections and LPG.

"Modi thinks big, as (during his tenure) never-before initiatives like making three crore women `lakshpati Didis' were taken," the prime minister said.

Congress governments were involved in several scams, but "now they have crossed all limits and broken their own record," he said, while also accusing its leaders of flaunting Constitution copies with blank pages during the ongoing campaign in Maharashtra.

"The red book is blank with not a word of Ambedkar's Constitution inside. It is an example of how much they hate Ambedkar," he said.

Modi also accused Congress of wanting to implement its own Constitution instead of the one drafted by Dr B R Ambedkar.

The first time Congress did this was during Emergency, and now it was doing the same thing by distributing blank Constitution copies, he claimed.

In a veiled swipe at former ally Uddhav Thackeray, he said Maharashtra is the land of patriotic people, and those who compromise on the nation's interest for politics and betray late Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray's legacy should be taught a lesson.

Byelection to Nanded Lok Sabha seat was necessitated by the death of Congress MP Vasant Chavan. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and BJP Rajya Sabha member Ashok Chavan were also present at the rally.

India emerging as...

traditions since ages. Reiterating the government's resolve to promote ancient Indian ideals and values, the Lt Governor observed that the Prime Minister has rekindled the sense of self-respect and 140 crore countrymen have realised the self-confidence about their own heritage.

The Lt Governor underscored the need to utilise the treasure of knowledge in Science, Mathematics, Medicine, Botany, Arts and Humanities to enrich the existing knowledge system and transform India into a knowledge economy.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a clarion call to shed the vestiges of colonial past to regain the global stature. Our ancient past was glorious and we are poised for a brighter future. We should not live in the past but use the ancient values and ideals to face the future challenges," he said.

He also emphasised the important role of educational institutions and social organizations to reconnect the youth with the cultural roots. I am confident that this conference will also provide guidance towards better teaching-learning tools for the Indian knowledge system, the Lt Governor further added.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor unveiled the Sri Saraswati Idol in the university's premises and also released several publications.


Padma Shri Prof. Vishwamurti Shastri; Prof. B.N. Tripathi, Vice Chancellor SKUAST Jammu; Prof. Rani Sadasiva Murty, Vice Chancellor, Sri Venkateswara Vedic University; Dr. Shiv Kumar Sharma, National Organizing Secretary, Vigyan Bharati; Prof. Shreedhar Mishra, Director, Central Sanskrit University; Dr. Somdev Bhavadwaj, North India Regional Head Vigyan Bharati; scholars, experts, faculty members and students from various Sanskrit Universities were present.

Terrorist killed in...

anti-terrorist operation was launched by Police and security forces. During the search operation, an exchange of fire took place."

A senior police officer told news agency PTI that one terrorist was killed in the operation. "The identity and group affiliation of the slain ultra is being ascertained," he said.

SMVDSB's Medical College...



CEO Anshul Garg addressing students.

will offer its Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) program from the Administrative Block of SMVDU, accommodating its first cohort of students from the academic session 2025-26 as announced by the Chief Executive Officer.

This strategic move ensures that academic activities can begin promptly while construction of the college's dedicated campus is underway, demonstrating the Shrine Board's commitment to expanding healthcare access and medical education in the region.

Dr. Yashpal Sharma, Executive Director extended vote of

thanks to all the esteemed dignitaries present on the occasion expressing gratitude for their time, support and encouragement.

With an intake capacity of 50 MBBS students per year (upgradable to 100 seats), SMVDIME - Medical College is designed to be a center of excellence in healthcare education and practice.

This initial phase allows the college to implement its academic programs and student services effectively, utilizing the high-quality infrastructure of SMVDU.

The Administrative Block provides ample space for lecture halls, laboratories, and administrative offices, enabling a seamless start to the academic year while the final infrastructure of SMVDIME - Medical College is being established.

The institution has brought together an exceptional team of experienced faculty members, medical professionals and administrative staff dedicated to fostering a rigorous, compassionate and innovative learning environment.

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board's leadership in establishing SMVDIME - Medical College underscores its dedication to contributing to healthcare and education infrastructure in the region.

The board envisions SMVDIME as a hub for medical excellence, producing graduates equipped with the skills, knowledge, and ethical foundation to make meaningful contributions to society.

18 candidates in...

Choudhary and Rahul Aggarwal.

According to the Returning Officer, Scrutiny of the nomination will be done on 11th of November 2024.

Army Chief reviews...

situation. (The) COAS also interacted with troops & commanded them for their high standards of professionalism & devotion to duty," Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADGPI) of the Indian Army wrote on 'X'.

Drug peddler held..

investigation set into motion.

The Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) appealed to the general public to come forward regarding any information related to drugs so that the menace could be uprooted completely from the society and the young generation saved from falling prey to it, he said.

ACB books former...

secure approvals. The investigation further uncovered evidence that Mir accepted bribes totaling Rs 4,00,000 from a sales consultant at Himalayan Motors, including Rs 1,39,000 received through e-transactions to bank accounts provided by her. These transactions and the payment of bribes were made to ensure that Himalayan Motors' vehicles were given priority in the scheme.

Following the verification, the ACB registered FIR No. 15/2024 under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act-1988 and Section 120-B of the Indian Penal Code at the Police Station ACB Baramulla.

The accused include Shabnam Arif Mir, former Assistant Director Employment and Nodal Officer for Bandipora and Kupwara; Sumeer Pandita, the then General Manager; and Junaid Bashir Beigh, the then Managing Director of Himalayan Motors.

Immediately after the FIR was filed, multiple ACB teams conducted searches at various locations in Bandipora, Kupwara, and Srinagar. The raids resulted in the seizure of incriminating documents that are expected to aid in the ongoing investigation. Authorities are currently examining the roles of additional individuals who may be implicated in the corruption scheme.

Corps Commander visits...

Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Jammu-based White Knight Corps - visited the area and reviewed the operations. A large-scale cordon-and-search operation is underway to apprehend the terrorists responsible for the killings.

"The GOC of White Knight Corps, along with commanders, visited Kishtwar and the general area of Bhart Ridge to review the operations in progress," the White Knight Corps said in a post on X.

The Army, police and other security agencies have cordoned off the area to prevent the terrorists from escaping.

Need to change...

year-round. Previously, Gulmarg was our primary ski destination, but I believe Sonamarg holds immense potential for winter tourism. We should consider Sonamarg from a winter tourism perspective and develop a comprehensive plan. This will allow us to mark areas for skiing and install ski lifts. Given Sonamarg's excellent snowbound conditions, it deserves our attention."

The Chief Minister also cautioned about delays in execution of works under CAPEX and centrally sponsored schemes, underscoring the need to expedite execution of works in all districts, including Ganderbal.

"We haven't had a particularly productive year in terms of projects' execution due to successive elections and model code of conduct being in force. To make up for lost time, we must accelerate our pace. We are behind last year's progress, and funds are at risk of lapsing if not utilized in time. I earnestly urge the Deputy Commissioner and his team to expedite works on the ground. This dry spell, though discomfoting in so many ways, however, provides an opportunity to complete ongoing projects before the wet season sets in. By the end of the financial year, let us aim to minimize the gap between approved and executed projects".

Chief Minister added, "timely submission of utilization certificates is essential for funds' release, so let's ensure allocated funds are spent effectively".

Recognizing the potential of Manasbal Lake for water sports, CM said, "Manasbal has tremendous potential for water sports, with its water quality, depth, and unique conditions. We need to explore the possibility of establishing infrastructure to develop water sports at Manasbal."

During the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal presented a detailed overview of the district's infrastructure, achievements, and ongoing initiatives across sectors. Updates were provided on key projects, including the Srinagar-Leh Highway, Z-Morh Tunnel, Zojila Tunnel, and the progress on these works.

Discussions covered various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as PMAY, PM KISAN, and solid waste management, along with specific targets in social, agricultural, employment sectors and ongoing nasha-mukt campaign.

Winter preparedness, district capex, and additional schemes of the departments were also reviewed.

The Chief Minister was apprised of development scenario of the district through a detailed presentation and district officials were instructed to achieve targets in respect of water supply schemes, PMAY housing units for poor, social sector schemes.

CM gave directions for expediting the process for grant of forest clearances which are necessary for completion of the road projects.

The district administration was asked to identify land for Eklavya Model School, achieve targets with regard to educational assistance and to ensure completion of works in new industrial estates and make allotment to eligible applicants to start their industrial units.

27 killed, 62 injured in suicide bombing at railway station in Pakistan

■ AGENCY

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI: At least 27 people, including 14 security forces, were killed and 62 others injured on Saturday in a suicide bombing at a railway station in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province, officials said.

The explosion ripped through the railway station of the provincial capital Quetta as passengers gathered on the platform before the departure of the Jaffar Express, scheduled to depart for Peshawar at 9:00 am. There were around 100 people on the platform when the blast occurred.

"So far, we have received 27 bodies and at least 62 people are injured, with some in critical condition," said Dr Wasim Baig of the Quetta Trauma Centre.

Dr Arbab Kamran Kasi, Managing Director of the Trauma Centre, warned that the death toll may increase since several wounded individuals, aged 20 to 50, remain in critical condition.

Quetta Division Commissioner Hamza Shafqaat said it was a suicide attack targeting security forces and civilians were also hit badly.

"There are around 14 members of the law enforcement agencies among the dead and dozens more among the wounded," he said.

The suicide bomber had entered the station with luggage, Shafqaat said, adding that was difficult to stop a person coming with an intention to carry out a suicide attack.

Earlier, SSP Operations Muhammad Baloch had also said that initial findings point to a possible suicide bombing.

The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), an ethnic



Baloch separatist group designated as a terrorist organisation, has claimed responsibility for the attack. The BLA alleges that the federal government exploits Balochistan's resources while neglecting the province's development. However, the federal government dismisses these allegations and claims that foreign powers are manipulating disgruntled elements to perpetrate sabotage.

"All bus stations, public spots have been put on high alert and gatherings discouraged," Shafqaat said.

Balochistan Inspector General of Police (IG) Moazzam Ansari said early investigations suggest the terrorists "targeted personnel from the Army Infantry School".

Rescue and law enforcement teams responded immediately, securing the area and transporting the injured and deceased to Civil Hospital Quetta, according to the provincial government spokesperson Shahid Rind.

An emergency was declared at the hospital where additional medical staff was summoned to deal with the injured.

The blast, which also damaged the platform's roof, was heard far and wide in various areas of the city.

BLA has stepped up attacks in the restive Balochistan province in recent months. Saturday's suicide bombing comes a week after a blast near a girl's school and a hospital in Balochistan's Mastung district killed eight people, including five children.

The terror group has also been targeting Chinese nationals working in the province and in Karachi. Last month a suicide bombing near the Karachi airport killed two Chinese engineers.

Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti condemned the attack, terming it as "a horrific act targeting innocent civilians", and ordered an immediate investigation.

He said that terrorists are increasingly aiming civilians, labourers, women, and children, and vowed that those responsible would be pursued relentlessly.

Pakistan, particularly the

Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, has seen a sharp uptick in terrorism-related incidents over the past year.

According to the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the third quarter of the ongoing year witnessed a 90 per cent surge in violence in Pakistan, the Geo News reported.

With a total of 722 people being killed, including civilians, security personnel, and outlaws, while 615 others were wounded in as many as 328 incidents recorded during the period under review, 97% of these fatalities occurred in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

Over 92% of these incidents of terror attacks and security forces' operations were recorded in the same provinces.

The total fatalities from three quarters of this year have now surpassed the total fatalities recorded for the entire 2023; the number of fatalities rose to at least 1534 in the first three quarters compared to 1523 in 2023, the report said.

DB directs DMO to appear in person for non-compliance with environmental safeguards

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A Division Bench (DB) of High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh at Jammu comprising Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice M. A. Chowdhary directed the District Mineral Officer (DMO) Jammu, Verinder Singh, to appear in person before the Court to explain his position in relation to a contempt petition on November 21, 2024.

The PIL No. 7/2014, which is related to environmental

safeguards in the mining sector, was taken up in connection with PIL No. 19/2012 and CCP(D) No. 42/2024.

The petitioners, Dewakar Sharma and others, through Advocate Parag Sharma, had filed the contempt petition, pointing out the failure of the DMO to comply with the provisions of the Government Memorandum dated 21st August 2023, which amended the S.O No. 1224(E) dated 28th March 2020. The District Mineral Officer had filed a statement of facts on

20th October 2024 based on the earlier provisions of S.O No. 1224(E) dated 28th March 2020, which had been superseded by the Office Memorandum dated 21st August 2023. The memorandum outlined specific environmental safeguards and compliance requirements for projects related to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006. However, the DMO's filing was in contradiction with the new memorandum. The new memoran-

dum mandated that project proponents must inform the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) or Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) at least two weeks before starting any mining activities.

Additionally, the SPCBs/PCCs are required to independently monitor the compliance status of environmental safeguards and take legal action against any non-compliance under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Satish Sharma pays obeisance at Baba Nagri Kangan



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GANDERBAL: Minister for Transport, FCS&CA, YS&S, IT and S&T, Satish Sharma, on Saturday paid obeisance at the revered shrine of Hazrat Mian Nizam-ud-Din Kiyani (RA) at Baba Nagri Wangath in Kangan and prayed for peace, progress and prosperity of the region.

He said that Baba ji had always worked for the deprived and marginalized sections of society to bring

them into the mainstream. He said that his efforts will continue to remain unparalleled.

The Minister also met with Member Parliament, Mian Altaf Ahmed and discussed various issues related to development of Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the vision and guidance of Mian Altaf will help present dispensation to work with more dedication for betterment of the people.

100 hour Basic Computer Course for girls concludes at ITI Reasi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

REASI: Department of Social Welfare, in collaboration with Government Industrial Training Institute Reasi organised an impressive valedictory function on successful completion of 100 hour Basic Computer Course organised for local girls under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP). The programme was attended by a large number of students. District Social Welfare Officer Sachin Sharma congratulated the girl trainees and gave away certificates to them. He emphasized the importance of education and skill development for girls for their bright future and the overall development of society. The DSWO also interacted with the trainees, motivating them to excel in the chosen field. He also encouraged the girls to take full benefit of this opportunity. Superintendent ITI Reasi, Rajesh Banotra presented the vote of thanks and stressed the significance of digital literacy in today's world. He encouraged the girls to become ambassadors of change in their communities.

J&K women's throwball team leaves for Nationals

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Women's Throwball team has left for Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh, to participate in the 45th National Throwball Championship, set to take place at the Vivek Group of Colleges from November 9 to 11, 2024. The championship is being organized by the Uttar Pradesh State Throwball Association and the Throwball

team was selected after a rigorous trial and a week-long coaching camp held in Srinagar. The contingent includes talented players such as Arsha, Wadeeka, Tashifa, Rukaiya, Kareema, Urba, Sania, Bisma, Aleema, Areesha, Hibasha, and Rameesa. The team will be guided by Coach Vilayat Hussain and Manager Shahida Parveen. Sponsorship for the



Team along with coaches before departure.

Federation of India. The team's sports kit was provided by Genius Career Consultancy, Parraypora Srinagar and The Legends School of Education. The championship is expected to be a tough competition, with teams from all over India vying for the top spot.

The J&K women's team is ready to showcase their skills and make their state proud, said Sahil Ali General Secretary of the Association.