

03 Jammu Newspapers Editors Guild celebrates 73rd Republic Day, unfurls Tricolour

09 Bike-lifters' gang busted; four arrested, 11 stolen bikes recovered

10 JK Public School Kunjwani celebrates Republic Day

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LG lashes at those misleading people with 'imaginary' issues like demographic change



LG Manoj Sinha addressing during 73rd Republic Day celebrations at MA Stadium, Jammu on Wednesday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has slammed those inciting people by spreading "rumours" about "imaginary issues" like demographic changes in the union territory and said land reservation has been done on the pattern of mountainous states.

Addressing the Republic Day function here, the Lt Governor said that the government will continue to

march ahead with the "mantra of 4P - peace, progress, prosperity and people first" and urged all to take the pledge of eradicating terrorism and terror ecosystem perpetuated by the neighbouring country.

"Some people are inciting public by spreading rumours about demographic changes in Jammu and Kashmir:

"There is a section in the society which has always been misleading the people

about imaginary issues like demographic change, and on this pretext, the most hard-working and needy class of people had been alienated in their own land and were deprived of using it as per their wishes or requirements," Sinha said.

He said that peace in Jammu and Kashmir is a prerequisite for a vibrant tourism sector, which of late has set new employment and revenue generation records.

"The government is committed to building a strong Jammu and Kashmir and we will continue to march ahead with the mantra of 4P - peace, progress, prosperity and people first.

"We are determined to ensure every single citizen of UT enjoys a prosperous and peaceful life," he said.

Braving inclement weather, contingents of police and paramilitary forces

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Amit Shah compliments JK Police's valour, commitment

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday complimented the Jammu and Kashmir Police for its valour and commitment and said its dedication has been reflected as it got the largest share of 115 gallantry awards announced on the occasion of Republic Day.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police has been in forefront in fighting the Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in the sensitive union territory for more than three decades now.

"J&K Police has been the spearhead of India's fight against terrorism. It is a matter of immense pride to the entire nation, that the @JmuKmrPolice has won the largest share, 115, of the gallantry awards today on Republic Day. This reflects their valour and commitment," Shah tweeted.

Congratulating the Jammu and Kashmir Police, he said on this momentous achievement, he salutes their

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COVID curbs extended till Feb 28: MHA

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Union Home Ministry on Thursday extended the existing COVID-19 containment measures till February 28 in view of the wave of infections, driven by the Omicron variant, still raging and 407 districts reporting a positivity rate of over 10 per cent.

In a communication to all states and Union territories, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said active cases have increased to over 22 lakh even though a majority of the patients are recovering fast and a low percentage of cases are in hospitals.

"It is still a matter of concern that 407 districts in 34 states and Union Territories are reporting a positivity rate of more than 10 per cent.

"Therefore, looking at the current trends of Covid, there is a need to exercise caution and vigilance," Bhalla said in the letter to the chief secretaries, while extending the existing restrictions till February 28.

4,959 fresh cases, 7 deaths in J&K

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday recorded 4,959 fresh cases of coronavirus, taking the infected number of persons to 4,19,131 while seven deaths due to the virus were reported in the past 24 hours, officials said.

There are 46,657 active cases in the Union Territory, while the number of recovered patients was 3,68,432, the officials said.

Out of the fresh cases, 1,394 were from the Jammu division and 3,565 from the Kashmir division of the UT, the officials said.

The officials said Srinagar district recorded the highest 841 cases followed by 784 cases in Baramulla district.

The death toll in the union territory due to the pandemic was 4,642 as seven fresh deaths were reported in the past 24 hours.

The officials said, there were 51 confirmed cases of Mucormycosis (black fungus) in the Union Territory as no fresh case was reported since last evening.

Meanwhile, Ladakh has reported 179 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the tally to 25,215 while the active cases in the union territory climbed to 1,308,

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He reiterated that given the current situation all the states and Union Territories must observe all precautions and not let their guard down.

He said based on the normative framework, mentioned in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

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'Mischievous propaganda', Azad



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: A day after he was awarded the Padma Bhushan, former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and Congress veteran Ghulam Nabi Azad on Wednesday sought to scotch speculation about his future political plans.

Reports had claimed that he had changed his Twitter

profile, but Azad, who has been critical of his party leadership and is the lone Congress leader to be awarded this year under the Modi dispensation, denied it.

"Some mischievous propaganda being circulated by some people to create confusion. Nothing has been removed or added to my Twitter profile. The profile is as it was earlier," Azad said on Twitter.

Azad's Twitter profile has nothing written on it and there is no reference to the Congress party.

In the age of social media, the Twitter profiles of leaders are keenly watched as many tend to change them before formally switching parties.

Unveils 'Charkha' at Srinagar Airport Efforts on to expand reach of Khadi, rural crafts to international market: LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday virtually unveiled a Charkha (Spinning Wheel) at the Srinagar International Airport.

The Charkha measuring 8.6 ft by 4.3 ft and weighing 71 kg has been installed by the Jammu and Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB).

Speaking on the occasion, the Lt Governor said that Charkha symbolizes Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Self-Reliance and its installation at Srinagar Airport on

Republic Day is a befitting tribute to Bapu and to all the great freedom fighters of India.

"Charkha was made a symbol of economic self-reliance by Bapu in 1918 and became an important part of Swadeshi and Indian Independence movement like Non-violence, Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience", he added.

Terming the occasion as historic, the Lt Governor said that the Charkha at Srinagar airport will inspire us to encourage greater public participation in the devel-

opment framework of the UT and to meet the needs of the people by optimally utilizing our social capital and other resources.

"Today, when our country is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mohatsav and moving steadily towards the fourth industrial revolution, I believe Charkha will serve as a symbol of Atma Nirbhar Bharat campaign of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and will inspire the citizens of the UT and all countrymen to work towards building a self-reliant J&K, and a self-reliant India", the

Lt Governor remarked.

The Lt Governor observed that J&K is making great strides in fulfilling the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of AtmaNirbhar Bharat and keeping with this spirit, continuous efforts are being made for the revival and conservation of Khadi, Rural Arts & Crafts, besides expanding their reach to the international market.

Hon'ble Prime Minister's slogan - 'Khadi for Nation, Khadi for Fashion'- has gained greater popularity and now international

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Army unfurls tallest national flag in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Army on Wednesday dedicated to people a 150-feet-high flagpole in Shopian district to mark the Republic Day celebrations, a defence spokesman said.

He said it will be the tallest flagpole in the union territory.

"On the occasion of the 73rd Republic Day, the Chinार Corps in collaboration with Punit Balan Group installed a 150-feet-high mast National Flag in the historic town of Shopian," the spokesman said.

He said installing the highest flagpole ushered in a new

milestone in the history of south Kashmir.

The second tallest flagpole is also located in Shopian district, the spokesman added.

"The foundation stone was laid on 18 October 2021 at Army Goodwill School, Balapur in a colorful event and the flagpole was dedicated to the people of Shopian by Lt Gen D P Pandey, GOC Chinार Corps," he said.

The inauguration ceremony commenced with the unfurling of the national flag by the GOC Chinार Corps and the singing of the national anthem by the students of Army Goodwill

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JKP ASI Babu Ram awarded Ashok Chakra posthumously

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Wife of slain Jammu and Kashmir police officer Babu Ram was awarded India's highest peacetime gallantry award



Ashok Chakra on 73rd Republic Day.

Assistant Sub Inspector Babu Ram was part of an anti-terrorist operation that took place in Srinagar on August 29, 2020.

On that day, three terrorists fired upon the joint force of police and the CRPF at Srinagar and fled the spot to take shelter in a place nearby. Immediately, a

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Traffic restored on J&K highway after clearance of landslide in Ramban Cold wave intensifies in Kashmir

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN/JAMMU: The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was reopened on Thursday for vehicular traffic after remaining closed for a day due to landslides in Ramban district, sources said.

The 270-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with rest of the country, was blocked by a landslide at Panthiyal area in Ramban district Thursday morning, they said.

As a result, hundreds of vehicles were stranded at dif-

ferent points of the highway, they said.

On Wednesday, the highway was closed at Duggi area due to the landslide, which was also cleared, the officials said.

Meanwhile, the minimum temperature across Kashmir plunged below the freezing point with the tourist resorts of Gulmarg and Pahalgam reeling under extreme cold, officials said.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 1.3 degrees Celsius down from

1.3 degrees Celsius the previous night, they said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 10 degrees Celsius slightly up from minus 10.4 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Pahalgam, which also serves as the base camp for the annual Amarnath yatra, recorded a low of minus 10.9 degrees Celsius down from the previous night's minus 5.6 degrees Celsius, they said.

The officials said Qazigund recorded a minimum

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32 JKAS officers transferred

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The government on Thursday transferred 32 Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officers and one Project Officer.

According to order issued by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Principal Secretary, General Administration Department, Syed Yasir Farooq, JKAS, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Anantnag has been transferred and posted as Deputy Secretary, Home Department; Shavi, JKAS, Deputy District Election Officer, Udhampur as Deputy

Director, Handlooms, Jammu; Mohd Idrees, Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Doda as Deputy Director, District Employment and Counselling Centre, Doda; Towfeeq Ahmad Gazi, JKAS, BDO, Lar, Ganderbal as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Beerwah. He shall also hold the additional charge of the post of Sub-Registrar, Beerwah, till further orders.

Sanjeev Sharma, JKAS, Field Officer in the Directorate of Rural Sanitation, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Deputy Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department; Sunaina Saini, JKAS, DPO, Udhampur as

Deputy Director, Hospitality and Protocol (Stores); Peerzada Farhat Ahmad, JKAS, DSWO, Anantnag as Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Pulwama; Arun Kumar Badyal, JKAS, BDO, Mughal Maidan, Kishtwar, as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Gandoh. He shall also hold the additional charge of the post of Sub-Registrar, Gandoh, till further orders.

Syed Nadeem Iqbal Andrabi, JKAS, BDO, Dadsara, Pulwama has been transferred and posted as Deputy Director, Rural Sanitation, Kashmir; Akhil

Sadotra, JKAS, BDO, Marh

as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Akhnour. He shall also hold the additional charge of the post of Sub-Registrar, Akhnour, till further orders. Mumtaz Ahmad Pir, JKAS, BDO, Tujjar Sharief, Baramulla has been transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Baramulla; Reyaz Ahmad Shah, JKAS, BDO, Pulwama as Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Anantnag, vice Nissar Ahmad Malik, JKAS who shall report to the General Administration Department.

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Neither 'Azad' nor 'Ghulam', Padma Bhushan goes to true nationalist



J A M M U : Congress leader Jairam Ramesh has struck again; this time against his 'very own' Ghulam Nabi Azad, the recipient of this year's Padma Bhushan award. Ramesh's innuendo is not only shameful but also reflects the dirty mindset of the whatsoever little leadership is left in the Congress. Belittling and undermining the national award by making an indirect reference while reacting to the refusal of former West Bengal Chief Minister and CPI(M) leader Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee to get the coveted award tweeting, "Right thing to do. He wants to be Azad [free] not Ghulam [slave]", Jairam Ramesh has shown shallowness of his thoughts by calling someone Azad for refusing a national honour and

Ghulam for accepting it.

True, the outburst of a senior Congress leader and the loyalist of Sonia Gandhi and her children Rahul and Priyanka Vadra has hurt many senior party leaders but the stoic silence by Gandhis' themselves speak their approval to such undignified thought process. The remark-ironically for the Congressmen-has proved counter-productive as many reputed leaders have come openly in support of Ghulam Nabi Azad. This has indeed enhanced his stature as a patriotic national leader. In the words of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, a former Congress leader who joined the BJP in 2016, "... This is a well-deserved recognition for the distinguished politician, gentleman & a staunch nationalist..."

Ghulam Nabi Azad is among very few Congress leaders who has worked as a Union Minister and remained close aide of Prime



Minister-Indira Gandhi, Rajeev Gandhi, P. V Narsimha Rao and Manmohan Singh. He rose to the position of Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha due to his enviable political and nationalistic cre-

dentials. His stature is certainly shadowing the Gandhis, least to speak of their factotums in the Congress-Jairam Ramesh included. Recognition of Azad's stature has come from cutting across the

party lines. This got a huge expression during a tearful adieu by none other than the most popular Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi when Azad retired as Member of Rajya Sabha. Addressing Azad as a 'true friend', Modi said that the Congress leader has set high standards as a Member of Parliament (MP) and as the Leader of the Opposition. "Power comes and goes but (only a few know) how to digest it...therefore like a friend, I respect him on the basis of the things he has done over these years," Modi said while wiping his tears and saluting Azad. Modi said he believes that Azad's concern for his country won't let him sit and whatever responsibilities he takes in the future would be beneficial for the nation. "At a personal level, I would request him to not believe that he is not in the House. My door is always open for all of you. I will always expect and value your

inputs," he said. "I will not let you become weak," the Prime Minister told Azad as he closed his comments. In a tweet, the Prime Minister paid a befitting tribute to the Leader of the Opposition, "Ghulam Nabi Azad has distinguished himself in Parliament. He not only worries about his Party but also has a similar passion towards the smooth running of the House and India's development".

The heart burn among the Gandhi loyalists is understandable, as the first family of the Congress has failed to make any mark in the Indian politics post Modi emergence. The mother, son and daughter are struggling to keep their flock together but the excursion of the senior leaders transcending the party barriers is continuing. On the contrary, the G-23 of the Congress is galvanising around Ghulam Nabi Azad for his overwhelming acceptance in the cadre

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