

**03 Dr Jitendra presents 'Indian of the Year' Award to Team ISRO**

**03 Former CISF chief Sheel Vardhan Singh appointed UPSC member**

**10 Shivam Dube shines on comeback to script comfortable win for India**

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## Situation in Rajouri-Poonch matter of concern; Army enhancing deployment: Gen Pande

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: The situation in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri-Poonch region is a matter of "concern" and enhancing deployment of troops, boosting intelligence apparatus and reaching out to local people are part of measures being initiated to contain terrorist activities in the area, Chief of Army Staff Gen Manoj Pande said on Thursday.

At a press conference, he also said he has conveyed an unambiguous message to the soldiers and commanders that there will be "zero tolerance" to human rights violations and they must operate in a professional manner.

Three civilians were killed



Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande addressing media at New Delhi.

in Poonch last month allegedly during questioning by the Army in connection with an ambush of Army personnel by militants. Four Army soldiers were killed in the ambush.

"The situation in Poonch-Rajouri has been an issue of

concern to us," Gen Pande said.

It is learnt that the terrorists operating in the Rajouri-Poonch area are very well-trained in carrying out terror attacks and ambushes.

The Army Chief said his force is focusing on strength-

ening the human intelligence which includes synergising the Army's efforts with other agencies, adding having support of the locals is also "extremely crucial" in anti-terror operations.

"We have already taken follow up action," he said.

The Chief of Army Staff said the Army is also looking at strengthening the ability to use technology to gather intelligence.

"We have enhanced our deployment and also reoriented some of the units," he said.

At the same time he said the troops have been told to operate professionally. "My guidance to soldiers

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## Forest fires in Kulgam, Poonch

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR/POONCH: Forest fires broke out at two places in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district on Thursday, officials said.

The fire was brought under control by the personnel and machinery of the Forest Department and the Fire and Emergency Services, they said.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Kulgam, Syed Waseem Gull, said the fire incidents were reported from Pranhil and Chimber areas of the south Kashmir district in the evening.

Gull said mopping exercises have also been conducted to avoid the recurrence of the fire.

The officer appealed to the people to not take inflammable material near

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## Centre directs J&K admin to seize assets of Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, Muslim League-JK

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: The Centre on Thursday directed the Jammu and Kashmir administration to seize all assets and freeze bank accounts and finances belonging to the pro-Pakistan separatist amalgam Tehreek-e-Hurriyat and Muslim League Jammu Kashmir headed by separatist Masarat Alam.

Both the organisations were recently banned by the government.

Tehreek-e-Hurriyat was founded by late separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani.

Issuing two identical notifications, the Union Home Ministry said the Muslim

League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction) was declared unlawful outfit on December 27, 2023 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and the Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, Jammu and Kashmir (TeH) was banned on December 31, 2023 under the same law.

"Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 42 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, the central government hereby directs that all powers exercisable by it under section 7 and section 8 of the said Act shall be exercised also by the state governments and the Union Territory administration in relation to the above said

unlawful association," the notification read.

The Section 7 of the UAPA is related to power to prohibit the use of funds of an unlawful association and the Section 8 is related to power to notify places used for the purpose of an unlawful association.

While declaring the TeH outlawed for five years, the home ministry had said it was fomenting terrorism and spreading anti-India propaganda in the Union Territory.

The objective of the TeH is to separate Jammu and Kashmir from India and establish Islamic rule in Jammu and Kashmir, it said.

The group was

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## Farooq Abdullah skips ED appearance

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI: National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah did not appear before the Enforcement Directorate on Thursday for questioning in a money laundering case, official sources said.

The 86-year-old politician was called by the central agency at its Srinagar office in connection with an ED investigation into alleged irregularities in the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

"I am not going today,"

Abdullah told PTI over the phone from his residence. He did not give any reasons before hanging up.

It was not immediately known if the agency issued him a fresh date.

The MP from Srinagar Lok Sabha seat was charge-sheeted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the JKCA case in 2022.

The case relates to siphoning off the funds of the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association by way of transfer to various

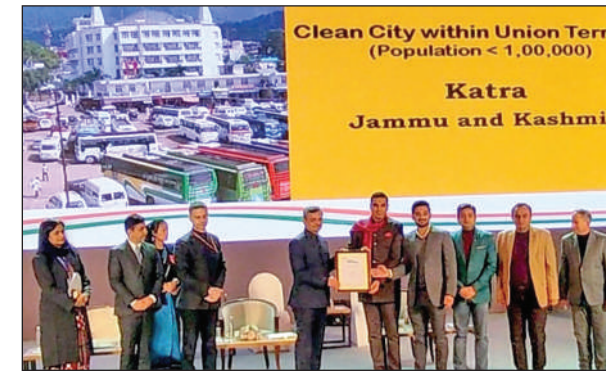
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## Katra earns recognition as 'Best Clean City within UT'

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
KATRA: In a significant milestone, Katra has been honoured as the "Best Clean City within Union Territory" with population <1, 00,000, showcasing its commitment to environmental sustainability and community well being.

The Holy Town was conferred the honour at Swachh Survekshan 2023 awards ceremony held on Thursday at Bharat Mandapam, Convention Center in New Delhi.

This prestigious accolade is a testament to the tire-



Puneet Sharma, Director, ULB, Jammu receiving award.

less efforts put in to maintain highest standards of cleanliness, implementing

effective waste management practices and fostering a sense of civic respon-

sibility among its residents.

Key highlights contributing to this achievement include innovative waste disposal initiatives and a sustained community awareness campaign.

The award was received by Puneet Sharma, Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu alongwith Rajat Abrol, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Committee, Katra and Nitin Sharma, Sanitary Inspector, Municipal Committee, Katra.

## 4 Tiffin IEDs, two dozen AK rifle bullets recovered in Rajouri

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
RAJOURI: The CRPF on Thursday recovered four improvised explosive devices (IEDs) fitted in tiffin boxes and about two dozen bullets of AK series assault rifles in Rajouri district, official sources said.

A cordon and search operation (CASO) was launched by the paramilitary force on the basis of inputs generated by the intelligence wing of the force deployed in the Jammu region, they said.

Troops of the C company of the 237th battalion of the

Central Reserve Police Force along with local police undertook the operation in the Hayatpura-Manjakot area of the said district.

The four IEDs concealed in tiffin boxes, 23 live bullets of AK assault rifles, a wireless set and a tape recorder were recovered, the sources said.

The search operation has been widened and adjoining areas are being searched as the Poonch-Rajouri region has seen a spurt in terrorist activities by Pakistani terrorists over the last

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## Kashmir continues to reel under sub-zero temperatures

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: There was no respite from the intense cold wave in Kashmir as the valley continued to reel under sub-zero temperatures with no improvement in the weather conditions over the next few days, officials said here on Wednesday.

A dry and snowless winter in Kashmir has resulted in freezing nights and warmer than usual days as Srinagar's day temperatures were over eight degrees above the normal for this time of the year, they said.

Jammu, the winter capital of the union territory, has been colder than Srinagar for the past couple of days, recording a high of 9 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, which was nine degrees below the normal.

Jammu is currently under a cover of dense fog which has resulted in colder days.

Srinagar city

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## NABARD unveils Credit Potential of Rs 37,446.04 Cr for J&K's priority sectors

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: In a significant stride towards fostering inclusive growth and rural development, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Jammu and Kashmir, has projected an estimated credit potential of Rs. 37,446.04 crore under the priority sector for the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir for 2024-25.

This was announced during

the UT Credit Seminar hosted by NABARD here on Thursday. The UT focus paper was launched in the seminar.

The event was attended by Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Baldev Prakash, MD, J&K Bank, Dr. B.N. Tripathi, VC -SKUAST, Jammu, Sandeep Mittal, General Manager, RBI, Ajay Kumar Jha, General Manager, SBI and officers of

line departments and other distinguished dignitaries.

Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, while addressing the event, commended NABARD in finalizing the Union Territory's focus paper for 2024-25 and highlighted suggestions in the presentations, as given by NABARD. He urged upon all stakeholders to synergize their endeavors for collectively realizing the credit potential outlined in the UT Focus

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## Woman drug peddler held with heroin

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
KATHUA: An alleged woman drug peddler was arrested after heroin was recovered from her possession in Kathua district on Thursday, police said.

The woman has been identified as Darshana Devi, the wife of Kamal Dev of Chak Drab Khan, they said.

A team noticed a lady moving under suspicious circumstances in the Kukey Chek area following which she was directed to stop for checking purposes, police said.

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## COVID subvariant JN.1: 827 cases reported so far

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: A total of 827 cases of COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been reported from 12 states till now, official sources said on Thursday.

They said 250 cases have been reported from Maharashtra, 199 from Karnataka, 155 from Kerala, 49 from Goa, 36 from Gujarat, 30 from Andhra Pradesh, 30 from Rajasthan, 26 each from Tamil Nadu and Telangana, 22 from Delhi, three from

Odisha, and one from Haryana.


Even though the number of cases is rising and the JN.1 sub-variant has been detected in the country, there is no cause of immediate concern as the majority of those infected are opting for home-based treatment, indicating mild illness, officials said.

The Centre has asked the states and Union territories to maintain a constant vigil amid an uptick in the number of Covid cases

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## Charandeep takes over as Labour Commissioner J&K

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Charandeep Singh assumed office as Labour Commissioner J&K, here on Thursday. The officer was accorded a warm welcome by the officers and officials of the department. After assuming the charge, he took a brief introductory meeting with the officers and officials of the department. Later, he also attended a review meeting with the Administrative Secretary to the Government Labour & Employment Department.



**WEATHER**

**Temperature (Jammu)**  
Max: 8.6°C Min: 4.7°C

**Humidity**  
Max: 100 Min: 86

**Temperature (Srinagar)**  
Max: 13.0°C Min: -5.0°C

**Humidity**  
Max: 98 Min: 63

Sunset : --:-- Hours  
Sunrise : --:-- Hours



LG Manoj Sinha chairing meeting with senior officers, DCs & SSPs of Jammu Division.

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday directed the District Administrations in the Jammu Division to ensure saturation of schemes in all border villages and to connect youth of all Panchayats to self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Chairing a meeting with the senior officers, Deputy Commissioners, SSPs and discussed various issues concerning development and security in Jammu Division, the Lt Governor also instructed the officials to prepare regular outcome reports of Block Divas,

Thana Divas and other Jan-Abhiyan programmes. Quality disposal of grievances and effective delivery of public services should be the priority of the administration at all levels, he said.

The meeting emphasized the need for a comprehensive strategy for crackdown

against drug smugglers, drug hot-spots and cross border smuggling.

The Lt Governor also took appraisal of the status of the key infrastructure projects and the steps taken by the District Administrations to facilitate industries, saturation of government schemes, implementation of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme and promotion of tourism.

The meeting was attended by Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; R K Goyal, Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department; R R Swain, DGP, other senior officers, Administrative Secretaries, DIGs, Deputy Commissioners and SSPs.

Reviews development, security scenario in Jammu Div

## LG calls for ensuring saturation of schemes in all border villages

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday flagged off the exposure visit of the batch of 98 Students of Secondary and Senior Secondary from Government schools of J&K UT to IIT Kanpur.

He interacted with the students and extended his good wishes for the 5-day visit which will include a 3-day stay at IIT Kanpur and also the visit to Regional Science City Lucknow.

The visit will provide an opportunity to students to learn about the latest technologies like robotics, IT arena, Artificial Intelligence etc and research being conducted by IIT Kanpur. Students can also explore various career opportunities available in the field of Engineering and Technology.

Under the exposure visit, a MoU has been signed with IIT Kanpur by Samagra Shiksha, J&K under the aegis of School Education Department.

On their return, the students will also visit India Gate, Rashtrapati Bhavan, Red Fort and other historical places at New Delhi. Dr. Piyush Singla, Secretary to Government, School Education Department and senior officers of Samagra Shiksha were also present.



LG Manoj Sinha flagging off exposure visit of J&K students.