

!! Continuations from Page 1 !!

India lodges strong...

is "unacceptable". "India has taken a serious note of the highly objectionable visit of the British High Commissioner in Islamabad, along with a UK Foreign Office official, to Pakistan occupied Kashmir on January 10," it said.

"Foreign Secretary has lodged a strong protest with the British High Commissioner in India on this infringement," the MEA said.

"The Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are, have been and shall always remain an integral part of India," it said in a statement.

UAPA, property attachment...

has brought about a huge improvement in the situation.

"We have launched a multi-pronged crackdown on terror and terror networks. Apart from neutralising terrorists, hundreds of their sympathisers, OGWs, have been arrested. We have started attaching properties of those who support terror voluntarily. This has acted as a deterrent," he told PTI during an interaction.

He said the strict implementation of the rule of law has dealt a big blow to the terror ecosystem. "Violence has drastically come down after police started to strictly implement the rule of law," the officer added.

Over the last couple of years, police have cracked down on overground workers or terror associates in Jammu and Kashmir, booking them under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Hundreds of properties, including those of militants and terror associates, worth crores of rupees have also been attached as part of the crackdown.

The officer added that the people have understood the futility of violence.

"They want to go on with their normal, routine lives and want to reap dividends of peace. We have seen the impact of the maintenance of peace. Life is going on normally, businesses are flourishing, educational institutions are running normally, and tourism has achieved new heights," he said.

The senior officer said upgrading police stations and deploying specially trained police personnel have lent a huge help to area domination exercises and keeping a watch on inimical elements.

"This has helped in maintaining peace," he added.

Crediting low recruitment of local youngsters into terror ranks as another main reason for the decline in violence, the officer said the youths of Kashmir have understood that nothing can be achieved by picking up arms.

Recently, at the annual year-end press conference of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Director General of Police R R Swain had said while 130 youngsters had joined the militant ranks in 2022, the number dropped to 20 in 2023.

On the issue of targeted killings, the senior police officer cited above said terrorists adopt this strategy to create disturbances and hamper peace.

"We have devised a counter-strategy and taken several steps, including issuing strict SOPs within the department," he said.

The officer further said while 'hybrid militants' were active in the Valley, their numbers were on the decline.

On reports of militants in Jammu and Kashmir using new technologies, he said there are countermeasures for all new technologies.

"We are capable enough to counter any such measure. If there is some new technology, security agencies also work on that and find ways to counter it," he told PTI.

The officer also said that security forces have succeeded to a large extent in stopping the infiltration of terrorists and arms and ammunition along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir valley.

"There has been less or no snowfall this time due to which there could be attempts to send more infiltrators. But we are on alert. We have maintained a strong and strict (counter-infiltration) grid," the officer said.

Attack on Army convoy...

Meanwhile, Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi reviewed the counter-infiltration grid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir this afternoon.

The Army's Northern Command chief visited the forward areas of Machil sector in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

"In the relentless pursuit of operational excellence and to review the Counter Infiltration Grid, #LtGenUpendraDwivedi, #ArmyCdrNC accompanied by #ChinarCorps Cdr and GOC #VajrDivision visited forward Battalions in #Machhal Sector," the Northern Command said in a post on 'X'.

The Army said the commander interacted with the troops and personnel of the Rashtriya Rifles, Jammu and Kashmir Police, Border Security Force and the Border Roads Organisation.

India logs 1,200...

compliance of the detailed operational guidelines for the revised surveillance strategy for COVID-19 shared with them by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The states have also been asked to regularly monitor and report district-

Lohri celebrated at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan; NC prays for peace, tranquility

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lighting of sacred fire and offering of holy Prasad, comprising five main ingredients like Til, Gajak, Gur, Mongfali, Phuliya besides Popcorn marked celebration of Lohri at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan here this evening.

Various prominent workers joined the festival and greeting each other by wishing Happy Lohri and spreading the feeling of love and happiness all around.

The entire atmosphere created a perfect ambience of Lohri with participants praying for peace and tranquility in Jammu and Kashmir.

Greeting the people, Sheikh Bashir Ahmed Provincial

Secretary Jammu hoped the festival be a harbinger of peace and prosperity in the state. He said such festivals highlight the crucial need of fostering and further strengthening the bonds of brotherhood, which is essence of all religions.

Sheikh Bashir Ahmed described the festivals as repository of rich and glorious ethos of the state, which are being celebrated from times immemorial in a spirit of amity and brotherhood.

"Let us resolve to eschew the tendencies of hate and strive for harmony in the society", the speakers added.

Prominent among those present on the occasion

included: Sheikh Bashir Ahmed Provincial Secretary Jammu, Bushan Lal Bhat Ex-MLC, Ankush Abrol Joint Secretary Jammu Province, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Dr. Vikas Sharma, Rita Gupta, Pinky Khalsa District President Jammu Urban Women Wing, Sandesh Shan, Mohd Aslam, Gurnam Singh, Som Raj Taroeh, Tejinder Singh District President Jammu Urban YNC, Nitish Gowsami, Ajay Kumar, Sanjeev Kumar, Prabhat Kaphi, Veer Ji Bhat, Hanief Malik and Mohd Hashim.

LEAD Director met Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha at Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2024

Discusses possibilities for Industries expansion in Jammu and Kashmir

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir Economic Growth and Development Dialogue (LEAD) Director, Sunil Shah, held a meeting with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, during the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in Gandhi Nagar. The meeting included the participation of key officials such as Principal Secretary Mandeep Bhandari, Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir Industries Department Vikramjit Singh, and MD of Industries Department JKTPO.

During the event, LEAD Director Sunil Shah organized a special meeting between Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha

and officials from the Gujarat Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Following discussions, it was agreed that LEAD would organize a visit, comprising 10-15 industrialists from Gujarat, to Jammu and Kashmir in the near future. The purpose of this visit is to explore opportunities for establishing new industries on a larger scale in Jammu and Kashmir.

Ajay Patel, along with other prominent entrepreneurs, had personal meetings with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha during the event. The discussions involved notable figures from companies such as Astral Company, Zydus Hospital, Shalabh Hospital, Hoco Ice Cream, Shivalik Builders,

Officials of CREDAI, Officials of GESIA, a delegation from the hotel industry, and representatives from the Meghmani Group. During this period, MoU was also signed with Welspun and Kiri Industry.

LEAD Director Sunil Shah actively participated in all these meetings alongside the Industries Department team from Jammu and Kashmir. He informed that significant industrial delegations from Gujarat would soon visit Jammu and Kashmir to explore the potential for expanding industries in the region. This collaborative effort aims to promote economic growth and development in Ladakh and Jammu Kashmir.

wise cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) from all health facilities for an early detection of a rising trend of Covid cases.

The World Health Organisation has classified JN.1 as a separate "variant of interest" given its rapidly-increasing spread, but said it poses a "low" global public health risk. The J.N.1 sub-variant of the coronavirus was previously classified as a variant of interest (VOI) as part of the BA.2.86 sub-lineages, the parent lineage that is classified as a VOI, the world body said.

GoI promotes 30...

to Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Mayusha A.M. Joint Director (News) NSD AIR, Thiruvananthapuram, M. Leela Meenatchi, Joint Director (News) RNU AIR Chennai, Sooraj R. Joint Director DPR (Def.) New Delhi, Saraswati S. Kuwalekar Joint Director (News) RNU AIR Mumbai, Sudhir Singh Joint Director (M&C) PIB New Delhi, Partha Ghosh Joint Director (News) DDK Kolkata, Abdul Hamid Joint Director (M&C) PIB Kolkata, Girish Chandra Dash Joint Director CBC RO Bhubaneswar (Addl. Charge of RO CBFC Cuttack) Praveen Kavi Joint Director (M&C) PIB New Delhi, Subhashree Mahapatra Joint Director (News) NSD AIR New Delhi, V. Balakrishna Joint Director (M&C) PIB Hyderabad, Nana Sevakram Meshram Joint Director (M&C) PIB Mumbai (under order of posting to PIB Panaji) Ratnakar Pamula Joint Director CBC RO Vijaywada, Ram Khiladi Meena Joint Director CBC Jaipur Anand Prakash Soni Joint Director (News) NSD AIR New Delhi, Anubhav Bairwa Joint Director (News) NSD AIR New Delhi, G.D. Hallikeri Joint Director (M&C) PIB Vijayawada, Kamla Verma Joint Director DPD New Delhi, Pritam Singh Joint Director (M&C) PIB Shimla and Nampibou Marinmai Joint Director (News) DDK Guwahati(Working in DDK, Aizwal with Addl. Charge of AIR, Aizwal and IIMC, Aizwal).

SDM Gulmarg appointed...

Accordingly, as part of the enquiry, the family members/NOKs of the deceased and general public are hereby informed that if they have anything to say regarding the incident and desire to depose and record their statement, they shall attend the Office of the SDM Gulmarg HQ at Tangmarg during Office Hours from 11:00 AM to 03:00 PM within a period of ten days from the issuance of this notice.

Amid border issue...

understand the importance of having good relations," he said, adding that India was involved in building roads, power transmission lines, supply of fuel, providing trade access, investing and having people spend holidays in other countries.

These are parts of how a relationship is developed, though sometimes things do not go the right way and one has to reason with people to bring it back to where it should be, the EAM pointed out.

Asked about the United Nations not being able to prevent most wars but some of its members having been successful in denying India a permanent seat in the Security Council, Jaishankar said the UN used to be relevant in the 1950s and 1960s and the five nations in the Security Council used to dominate other countries due to a wide gap between them.

What has happened in the past 30-40 years means it is no longer the case, Jaishankar said, adding the limitations of the UN are now visible and many people believe India, one of the largest economies in the world, must be there (in the Security Council as a permanent member).

He pointed out that no one expected a united outcome post the G20 meetings held last year under India's presidency but "we managed".

"Every passing year, the world feels India should be there but the world does not give things easily and generously. 'Kabhi kabhi lena padta hai' (sometimes we need to step forward and take it). We will keep moving on," the EAM said.

Asked about the large number of Indians surrendering their passports to settle abroad despite India being the fifth largest economy in the world, Jaishankar said it was a personal choice.

"In a democracy, you have to accept some individual choices because that is the nature of life. But the best answer is how we can provide more and better employment opportunities in India," he said.

Jaishankar added that one should not look at people moving abroad in the negative sense since it is a matter of pride that in sectors like hospitality, aviation, shipping etc Indians are willing to take employment to contribute.

"Because wherever they work, its is a plus point for us," he claimed.

One being asked about some of the prominent achievements of the country in foreign affairs, he said the relation with the United States of America was negative or difficult from 1947 to the next 50 years but began changing for the better under the prime ministership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

There is a difference in how USA views India today, he said.

"They recognise the importance India holds, especially in technology. The enthusiasm in American businesses for India has changed. They were never very strong earlier. The relationship with Australia has changed significantly," the EAM said.

The relationship with Gulf nations has also changed if one sees the trade, political and security confidence, he said.

"Next month we will be seeing the opening of the Swaminarayan Temple in Abu

Rajnath to lead 8th Armed Forces Veterans' Day celebrations with rally at AFS Kanpur

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh will lead the 8th Armed Forces Veterans' Day nation-wide celebrations on January 14, 2024, with an Ex-Servicemen rally at Air Force Station, Kanpur. He will also lay a wreath at the War Memorial to pay homage to the bravehearts for their supreme sacrifice and dedicated service to the Nation.

This year, the event is being celebrated by the three Services at 10 locations across the country, namely Srinagar, Pathankot, Delhi, Kanpur, Alwar, Jodhpur, Guwahati, Mumbai, Secunderabad and Kochi. The event at Secunderabad will be presided over by Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt. The event in New Delhi will be held at the Manekshaw Centre and attended by Chief of the Air Staff and Chief of the Naval Staff. During the event, the Veterans will be felicitated with a medal/souvenir/recognition certificate etc. As part of the celebrations, 'We for Veterans' Anthem, an ode to the Veterans, will also be played.

Yuva Rajput Sabha celebrates Lohri, launches New Year Calendar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Yuva Rajput Sabha (YRS) team celebrated Lohri at Maharaja Hari Singh Ji Statue Near Tawi Bikram Chowk Bridge.

On this occasion Team YRS lead by President Vikram Singh Vicky celebrated Lohri in Traditional Dogra Style and congrats and gave best wishes to whole Jammu and Kashmir and paid tribute to Maharaja Hari Singh also .

Vicky briefed that Team YRS always believes in brotherhood and Team YRS always stand for the rights and betterment of J&K and said that everyone had to celebrate our traditional festivals.

While celebrating Lohri Team YRS also launched their New Year 2024 Calendar and congratred everyone for the declaration of Holiday on 23rd September and also con-

Disrespectful: Hansal Mehta on Omar's criticism of show's filming in J&K assembly complex

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MUMBAI: Director Hansal Mehta has responded to National Conference Vice-President Omar Abdullah's criticism of filming of a show in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly complex, saying that such an "unwelcoming attitude" is the reason why India is considered an "unfriendly shooting location".

Abdullah, the former Chief

Minister of the erstwhile state of J&K, had on Friday criticised the Jammu and Kashmir administration for allowing shooting of Huma Qureshi-starrer "Maharani" inside the assembly complex and called it an "absolute shame". Mehta, the maker of critically-acclaimed series like "Scam 1992" and "Scop", replied to Abdullah's post on X, calling it "disrespectful"

and "regressive".

"Why is it a shame? How is filming of a drama demeaning democracy or the mother of democracy"? Everybody on a film set including actors, background actors(called extras' by you) are all citizens of this country and have every right to work with dignity and deserve respect and understanding- at least from somebody as educated as

yourself," the filmmaker said.

In countries around the world, filmmakers and actors are allowed to use public places, government buildings and council halls for shooting, Mehta added.

"It is because of this unwelcoming attitude that India is considered an unfriendly shooting location and we often prefer shooting abroad. I have great respect

Dhabi (in the United Arab Emirates). To me there is a profound change in the way that country is looking at us," he added.

Modi pays tribute...

Junagadh and Madhda," he said.

"Sonali Maa's entire life was dedicated to public welfare, service to the country and religion where she worked with great people like Bhagat Bapu, Vinoba Bhave, Ravi Shankar Maharaj, Kanbhai Laheri, Kalyan Sheth," he said.

She used to have a special place among the scholars of the Charan community and also changed the lives of many youths by guiding them, PM Modi said.

Highlighting her contributions to society, the PM mentioned her remarkable work towards education and de-addiction.

Sonal Mata worked to save the society from evil practices, he said.

Apart from her spiritual and social work, Sonali Ma was also a strong guardian of the unity and integrity of the country, he said, adding that she stood up against the conspiracies that were going on to break Junagadh during the time of partition.

"Shree Sonali Maa is a great symbol of the contributions of the Charan community to the country," the prime minister said.

Sacred texts like Bhagwat Puran refer to the Charan community as the direct descendants of Shree Hari, the PM said.

"The vast Charan literature is still proof of this great tradition. Be it patriotic songs or spiritual sermons, Charan literature has played an important role for centuries," he added.

Although Shree Sonali Maa never received education through traditional methods, she had a strong command over languages like Sanskrit and had a deep knowledge of the scriptures, according to him.

Sonal Mata's happiness would have known no boundaries if she came to know about the Pran Pratishtha (consecration) ceremony to be held at the Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22, he said, and urged everyone to light Shree Ram Jyoti to celebrate the occasion that day.

"The inspiration of Shree Sonali Maa gives us new energy to work towards India being a developed and self-reliant nation," he said.

Ram temple movement...

associated with his yatra, saints, leaders and kar sevaks.

Advani said he is missing two persons -- his wife Kamla and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee -- immensely.

He said Vajpayee was an integral part of his life, both political and personal, and he shared an "unbreakable and everlasting bond of mutual trust, affection and respect" with the former Prime Minister.

"The second person is my late wife Kamla, who had been the mainstay of stability and a source of unparalleled strength to me, not only during the Shri Ram Rath Yatra, but throughout my long stint in public life," he said.

Asserting that the Ranjanmabhoomi movement proved to be a major watershed in the history of post-1947 India, Advani said he felt humbled that destiny made him perform a pivotal duty in the form of the Ram Rath Yatra from Sonmath to Ayodhya in 1990.

"I believe that before any event finally occurs in reality, it takes shape and form in a person's mind. At that time, I was feeling that a befitting temple for Shri Ram in Ayodhya would indeed be a certainty one day and that it was only a matter of time," he said.

Advani's Rath Yatra was cut short following his arrest in Bihar but the popular upsurge the movement sparked propelled the BJP to the centre stage of national politics, paving the way for the party to form its first central government in the late 1990s under Vajpayee's leadership.

Light snowfall in Gurez...

degrees Celsius on Friday night, up from the previous night's minus 4 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 2 degrees. The ski resort of Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 1 degree Celsius -- up from minus 3.2 degrees Celsius on Thursday night.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 0.6 degrees Celsius -- up from minus 5.3 degrees Celsius the previous night.

The minimum temperature in Kokernag town settled at minus 1.2 degrees Celsius, while it was minus 0.3 degrees Celsius in Kupwara.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chilla-i-Kalan', a 40-day harsh winter period during which a cold wave sweeps the region and temperatures drop considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies as well as water in pipes.

The chances of snowfall are the highest during this period and most areas, particularly the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall.

'Chilla-i-Kalan' will end on January 31. However, the cold conditions will continue after that with a 20-day 'Chilla-i-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day 'Chilla-i-Bachha' (baby cold).

DSS celebrates Lohri as mark of communal harmony

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Dogra Sadar Sabha (DSS) celebrated Lohri at Dogra Bhawan in the DSS complex with full gaiety and spirit of traditional inter-communal brotherhood for which the Dogras and their Dogriyat is known, various prominent persons joined the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the President DSS and former minister Th. Gulchain Singh Charak narrated the story of the famous folk lore

of "Dulla Bhatti" as to how this brave man from Muslim community saved the honour of a Hindu girl and cared for her as his own daughter.

He told that all the festivals in our diverse country are related to seasons and agriculture also and are celebrated together jointly by all communities without distinction of class or creed.

President DSS also explained that an allied event initiated by the DSS bringing to the forefront the dis-

tinguished ladies from the Dogra region naming the event as "Dhiyaan Dogren Diyan, Ek Malati" is also being celebrated every year wherein distinguished Dogra women achievers are honoured at the Sabha Bhawan.

Prominent among those who joined the celebrations were Prem Sagar Gupta (Gen Secretary), Dr Ashok Gupta, Ravi Singh, Rajesh Sharma, Vidya Sagar Sharma, Rajinder Gupta and Deepak Khanna.

FFMA reorganizes office bearers

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A significant development, Freedom Fighter Memorial Association (FFMA) today reorganized office bearers to make important decisions about the association's leadership.

The new team include Ved Gandotra (Patron), Rajiv Mahajan (Chairman), R.C Puri (Vice Chairman), Prof. S.S. Balwal (President), Th. Karnail Chand (Working

President), Pritam Sharma (Senior Vice President), J.J Singh (General Secretary), Kamal Sharma (Vice President), Garu Ram (Vice President), Rajinder Mittal (Advisor), Nirmal Kishore (Organising Secretary), Parbhat Kapahi (Secretary), Prof. R.P Sharma, Seva Ram Rathore, Adarsh Sharma (Executive Members). Th. Karnail Chand shall also hold the post of Financial Secretary.