

**!! Continuations from Page 1 !!
Art 370 sowed...**

to terrorism in Kashmir, he said.
"The Modi government not only ended terrorism in Kashmir but also the ecosystem of terrorism," he said.
The home minister said Kashmir's development was delayed by decades and for years, there was bloodshed in Kashmir and the country had to watch it in silence.
"After the abolition of Article 370, there has been 70 per cent reduction in incidents of terrorism in Kashmir and it has proved that Article 370 fuelled the fire of terrorism. In 2018, there were 2,100 incidents of stone pelting in Kashmir but in 2024, not a single incident of stone pelting took place," he said.
The home minister said people did not want the Article even at the time when it was incorporated (in the Constitution). Even in the Constituent Assembly, the majority did not want Article 370 to be part of the Constitution. However, it became a part of it.
Fortunately, some farsighted people thought writing it as a temporary provision was necessary, he said. "But the things which are artificial and not natural don't have long life. Due to the strong will of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on August 5, 2019, Article 370 was abolished. Modi has done the work of ending one of the black chapters of the history of the post-independent India," he said.
Since then, he said, the process of development in Kashmir has started like any other part of India. The home minister said local bodies elections successfully concluded in Jammu and Kashmir following which more than 25,000 people got elected as panch, sarpanch or district council members.
"There were Lok Sabha elections and assembly elections, which were held peacefully. The highest voting record was registered this year during the polls.
"Industries are also coming. About 2.11 crore tourists have visited Jammu and Kashmir," he said. Shah said in 2024 alone, 324 shootings of films or serials have taken place in Kashmir. This was a regular trend in the 1960s and it has again started now, he added.
He said night shows are happening in theatres after 33 years. Tazia procession was taken out after 34 years and Krishna Jammashitami yatra has also been witnessed in Lal Chowk in Srinagar, he added. "All these could be seen post-Article 370 abolition - from 2019 to 2024," he said. This book, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh: Through the Ages, has proved the statement of Shyama Prasad Mookerjee that Jammu and Kashmir is not only a part of India but is also an integral part of the soul of India, he said.
Shah said the book is a historical account of continuity and integration. It has broken the myths prevalent in the country and presented history with truth and evidence, he said. "This is a great achievement," he said.

Three found dead...

Mukesh Singh, son of Kuldeep Singh, resident of Domana, Jammu and Sunny Choudhary, son of Subash Choudhary, resident of Bhawani, Teh Nowshera at present Purkhoo Jammu Who were staying in the Royal Inn Guest House ,Bhadervah opposite Maruti showroom, are not responding to the continuous knock by the hotel staff and also to the calls of their family members. On this, police party led by SHO Bhadervah reached on spot and broke open the door of the room no 103 of Royal inn guest house in which all were putting up . All were found lying unconscious in their room. On this FSL team and medical team of SDH Bhadervah was called upon immediately and were declared dead by the medical team . Police and FSL team minutely examined the spot in the presence of SSP Doda , and other Police officers and EMIC Bhadervah who were also camping on the spot.
Sensing the gravity of the situation, a special investigation team has been constituted by SSP Doda with Addl SP Bhadervah as Incharge SIT and other professional police officers to ascertain the actual cause of death and to rule out any foulplay.
On the request of the district police, a medical board has been constituted to conduct post mortem of the deceased. In this regard, inquest proceedings under section 194 BNS has been initiated vide DD no 28 dated 01/0/2025 of police station Bhadervaha. A board of doctors has been constituted to conduct the post mortem of the deceased.

Centre should be...

a confrontation. "Simply going to courts will be a fight. A fight should never be the first option, it should be the last option.
"If the SC had not spoken about the restoration of statehood, if the prime minister and home minister had not spoken about it, then we could have gone to courts. They have made promises and we have to give them a chance first," he added.
Abdullah said the Supreme Court in its judgement in December last year had also stated that the statehood should be restored as soon as possible. "One year has passed since and we think one year should be enough," he said.
He also maintained that the region's current status as a Union Territory should be viewed as a temporary arrangement and restoration of statehood was the "biggest challenge" for his government.
The chief minister dismissed rumours suggesting pressure from the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to alter the National Conference's ideology and join the alliance. "There is no pressure from the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi), Home Minister (Amit Shah) or the Raj Bhawan on us to change our ideology," he said.
The chief minister added that he has received assurances from the prime minister and home minister that the National Conference government would remain stable and that they would receive the same cooperation extended earlier to the Lieutenant Governor.
"They have stated they will respect the mandate of the people. Those spreading rumours that I will now join NDA and that I have changed my ideology, I cannot help that. I am here to work and I will work," he said at the media interaction held at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre.
The chief minister took questions on various issues confronting his two-month-old government, including the functioning of an elected government that has to share powers with the Centre's appointee - the Lieutenant Governor.
He argued that "dual centres of power are not advantageous" and that effective governance is best achieved with a single command structure.
While acknowledging some differences of opinion with the Raj Bhawan, Abdullah insisted that these disagreements are not as severe as speculated.
"Obviously, dual centres of power are not to anyone's advantage. If dual centres were effective tools of governance, you would see it everywhere," he said.
Abdullah acknowledged the difference of being a chief minister of a Union territory and a state, saying "it has been a little over two months since we came to power. It took us time to understand how the UT government works. We have been associated with the government earlier, but there is a vast difference between that form and the present form."
The Centre on August 5, 2019, abrogated Article 370 stripping J&K of its special status and divided it into two Union territories - J&K and Ladakh. While the former has a legislative assembly with limited authority, Ladakh operates without one.
Reflecting on his government's initial experiences, Abdullah described the start as "decent", stating that they have initiated processes to fulfil election promises.
He insisted that their election manifesto is not limited to a few weeks or months, but is intended for a full five-year term.
"We are bound by our election promises. We have started the process of implementing some of the promises and for other promises, we need change in the system. I hope J-K being a UT is a temporary phase," Abdullah said.
The chief minister also announced that the business rules for the government will be formulated after thorough consultations and subsequently presented to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.
Emphasising the importance of addressing public concerns, he encouraged citizens to seek resolutions wherever possible, whether at the Raj Bhawan, with local MLAs, or government officials.
Responding to questions about the Raj Bhawan's decision not to restore public holidays for the birthday of NC founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and Martyr's Day on July 13, the chief minister reiterated that such decisions cannot erase the legacy of those who made significant sacrifices for the region.
"The holidays became a big story. Ideally, we would want to have them as they are emotionally attached with people," he added.
Abdullah also said that his government was framing a policy to address the situation of hoteliers in Gulmarg whose land leases have expired after they had opted for now-disbanded Roshini scheme.
The Chief Minister hoped that Narendra Modi would not succumb to pressure from any quarters and continue the yearly tradition of sending a "chadar" to the Ajmer dargah.
"You cannot separate religion from politics. We say that there should be a separation of the church from the State, but that does not happen. Votes are being sought in the name of religion, politics is done in the name of religion. This is a reality that we should accept. (However), I hope that the prime minister does not succumb to any pressure and sends a chadar to Ajmer".
He added that the sentiments of the members of various communities are attached to the Ajmer dargah.
"It is not that just the people of a particular religion visit the Ajmer dargah. While Muslims go there, many non-Muslims also visit the dargah. The sentiments of many people are attached to it.
"Thankfully, the Supreme Court has put a stop to people trying to look for temples underneath mosques. When the court comes to an overall decision, that will be binding on everyone," he said.
Asked if the change in his dressing style over the last couple of years is to assert his Muslim identity, Abdullah said he does not wear clothes to send out wider messages.
"If there is a message going out, I am not doing it on purpose. I wear this cap because it suits me and keeps my head warm as my hairline is receding. I tried to put on a Karakal

cap but that does not suit me," he added.
Countering the BJP's narrative that the "Kashmir issue" had been resolved with the abrogation of Article 370 five years ago, Omar Abdullah pointed out that a part of erstwhile state continues to be occupied by Pakistan.
"Let us assume for a minute that this side of Kashmir issue has been resolved, but let us not forget that there is another part of Jammu and Kashmir across the line of control (Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir).
"When the BJP says that the Kashmir issue has been finally resolved, should we assume that the part across the border has also been resolved? But in reality it has not been," he said.
"So, the Kashmir issue remains whether this side of LoC or that side, we can debate about it but the issue has not been resolved. We want it to get resolved," he said.

Focus on reducing...

the Centre. On the power cuts in Kashmir, Abdullah said the government is providing more electricity supply to the people than the previous year.
"...we are supplying 1,700-1800 MW electricity, but the unrestricted load is more than that," he said. He said the sooner the power projects in J&K are completed, the sooner more electricity can be provided to the people.
"Even if their generation in winters is low, we can bank the power generated during summers. We will try to bank more electricity in the summers every year so that we utilise it in the winters," he said.
The chief minister said J&K's AT&C losses are more than 50 per cent and efforts are on to bring it down. "Other states have brought it down to 15-17 per cent. Our endeavour is to bring it down at least below 20 per cent so that we can supply more electricity to the people," he added. Asked about his poll promise of providing 200 free units of electricity, Abdullah said the scheme will be rolled out in March or April.
"What we have promised in our manifesto. That will only happen when there is (complete) metering. We measure units only when there is metering..." he said.

ACB registers case...

Bureau which revealed that in the year 2013, Chairman, Departmental Recruitment Board (DRB), Fire & Emergency Services, J&K, had issued an Advertisement Notice No. 01 of 2013 dated March 12, 2013 for the posts of Fireman/Fireman Drivers and other tradesmen posts.
"The examination was conducted by the DRB, however, in view of certain discrepancies in the selection process, Government, vide Order No.381-Home of 2016 dated July 5, 2016, terminated the whole process of selection. The recruitment process was again started in the year, 2018 in accordance with the earlier Advertisement Notice issued in the year 2013 as per directions passed by the High Court of J&K with no change/modification in the Advertisement Notice. The Government also directed to conduct recruitment through Transparent Recruitment Process (TRP) to be engaged through an open bid system. Accordingly, e-NIT No. 01 of 2018 dated April 5, 2018 was issued by Directorate of F&ES for engaging TRP agency in which Hyderabad based M/s Timing Technologies India Pvt. Ltd was selected which conducted the physical test/written examination across J&K. The resource person of M/s Timing Technologies India Pvt. Ltd was Maharaj Krishan Wali. Following allegations of mass copying etc. in the written test, the Government, vide Order No. 880-Home of 2019 dated August 1, 2019, cancelled the written examination and ordered to conduct written examination afresh. The Government, vide communication dated September 6, 2019, further directed to change the TRP Agency M/s Timing Technology India Ltd," official said.
"The probe conducted in the matter further revealed that the Directorate of Fire & Emergency Services issued e-NIT No. 01 of 2020 dated January 1, 2020 for inviting tenders from reputed vendors/firms having proven experience of conducting similar exercise atleast in two UTs/State Police/Department Para Military Forces/Fire & Emergency Service for processing and conducting of written examination under TRP. In response to said e-NIT, 06 TRP agencies participated, out of which M/s UMC Technology Pvt. Ltd Kolkata was worked out as L-1 with quoted price of Rs. 107.50 per candidate as per Financial Comparative statement finalized by Technical Committee constituted for the purpose. L-1 bidder raised some genuine queries relating to number of candidates & centres, but without assigning any reason, negotiations were made with L-2 bidder; M/s LMES IT LLP; Jammu. The Technical Committee negotiated the rates with L-2 @ Rs. 179 per candidate against the quoted rate of Rs. 185 per candidate. After getting approval from Chairman of DRB, the work order was given to ineligible agency; M/s LMES IT LLP; Jammu, on March 2, 2020 by ignoring L-1 bidder without any justification. The written examination was conducted on September 20, 2020 and the selection list of Fireman/Fireman Drivers was issued on October 3, 2020 wherein total 690 candidates, including 592 Firemen and 98 Firemen Drivers, were selected vide Order No 823 of 2020 dated October 4, 2020 of Directorate F&ES/Chairman, DRB," official said.
It further surfaced that favoritism was shown in awarding contract to L-2 Firm, M/s LMES IT LLP, which had no proven experience of conducting similar exercise as mandated in the e-NIT by sidelining L-1 bidder. Further, the bid of L-2 was accepted by the DRB knowing that L-2 was a newly formed firm in November, 2017 and Maharaj Krishan Wali (main partner with 99% share) was the same person who had earlier remained as resource person with M/s Timing Technology (P) Ltd. As per CVC guidelines /circular/order, the negotiation shall be held with L-1 only and there should be re-tendering in case L-1 bidder backs out, but the guideline/order was not complied with in this case.
During the course of probe, official said, the question papers were found beyond the comprehension of candidates who have studied upto 8th Standard which is the required minimum qualification. A manual review of the OMR sheets vis-a-vis answer keys revealed discrepancies in the selection process. Out of 690 selected candidates, 109 were found to have secured lower marks than the cutoff marks, but were selected by showing them to have secured higher marks in the final selection list than the marks actually secured by them. For instance, candidates actually securing 11, 17, 24 marks were shown to have secured 90 marks each in the final selection list. Similarly, it was found that five real brothers from district Budgam were selected and multiple such instances, besides, selection of some relatives of officials of F&ES Department, and the instances of the selected candidates belonging to the same localities have surfaced during the course of enquiry.
By acting in this manner; the then members of Departmental Recruitment Board, members of Technical Committee, Officers/Officials of F&ES Department, who remained associated with the recruitment process, being in league with each other as well as with M/S LMES IT LLP through its main partner Maharaj Krishan Wali (L-2 bidder), abused their official positions for extraneous considerations whereby they awarded work of TRP in favor of L-2 bidder by ignoring L-1 bidder in an illegal and unjustified manner; besides manipulated the selection list by preparing fake / fabricated record in order to confer undue benefits upon themselves and the beneficiaries.
The aforementioned facts constitute commission of offences punishable under sections 7, 13(1) (a) & 13 (2) of PC Act 1988 (as Amended in 2018) and 120-B, 420, 467, 468 & 471 IPC, against the members of Departmental Recruitment Board, including the Chairmen, Members of the Technical Committee, officers/officials of F&ES department, who remained associated with the recruitment process, M/S LMES IT LLP through its main partner Maharaj Krishan Wali, beneficiaries & others. Consequently, a case FIR No 01/2025 was registered in Police Station ACB Central, official said adding that further investigation in the case is going on.

FIR registered against...

recovering from their injuries. One of the staff members is undergoing treatment for facial fractures and may require reconstructive surgery, while the hotel manager remains under medical observation. Despite multiple raids, the Aggarwal brothers and Arun Choudhary remain at large. Police have gathered crucial evidence, including CCTV footage from the hotel, which has confirmed their involvement.
A senior police officer involved in the investigation said, "We are leaving no stone unturned to bring the culprits to justice. If necessary, lookout alert notices will be issued to ensure they cannot escape the law." The senior officer further said that the police department remains steadfast in its commitment to justice and integrity. "We do not bow to political influence or any external pressures, nor will we tolerate any of our officers accepting bribes to show leniency toward these perpetrators." "We have zero-tolerance policy for corruption and unlawful behaviour of Aggarwal brothers, the officer said adding, "Our clear message that justice will be served impartially, regardless of money power or influence of those involved in attack on hotel staffers."

4 IPS Officers...

Geeta Rani Verma, Deepak Purohit, and Tojo Karga.
"These officers are currently posted in various positions within the AGMUT Cadre. Their promotion to the IGP Grade is a recognition of their exceptional service and dedication.: read an order. "Furthermore, the Ministry has granted Proforma Promotion to three IPS officers who are currently serving on Central Deputation. These officers, Meghna Yadav, Saju P Kuruvilla, and Romil Baaniya, will be granted the IGP Grade (Level-14) in the Pay Matrix, effective from January 1, 2025," it added. However, their actual promotion will take effect from the date their immediate junior in the cadre assumes charge.
The Ministry also made it clear that officers who have not yet completed the mandatory MCTP Phase IV training will only be confirmed in the IGP grade after completing the training at the next available opportunity.
The announcement was made under the approval of the Competent Authority.

Ex Dy CM...

were mentioned in para 5 of the status report dated December 11, 2024 filed by the Estates Department.
The Division Bench had categorically directed that in case, the updated status report was

not filed with regard to the occupants mentioned in the paras 5 & 6 of the status report dated December 11, 2024 failing which the Commissioner/Secretary Estates Department was directed to remain present on the next date of hearing and the court had made it clear that no exemption or excuse shall be entertained by the Court.

It has been further disclosed in the Compliance Report that eviction process under Section 4 of J&K Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act,1988 has been initiated against EX-MLCs Zaffar Iqbal Manhas and Surinder Anbarbar by issuing them the notices on December 28, 2024.
In the status report, it has also been revealed that Govt. accommodation has been vacated by S.S Channi (Senior Congress Leader) and notice for payment of penal rent amounting to Rs.14,690 has been issued to him on December 20, 2024.
Further Mohammed Abbas Wani, Ex-MLA has also vacated the accommodation and notice for penal rent amounting to Rs. 28,211 upto December 20, 2024 has been issued to him. Similarly, Ex-MLC Vibodh Gupta has also vacated the accommodation and notice for penal rent amounting to Rs. 13,993 upto December 20, 2024 has been issued to him.
Today because of the paucity of time, the PIL could not be considered by the Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice M.A. Chowdhary and more over; the compliance report filed by the Estates Department had also not been scanned by the Registry and the Court directed the Registry to list the instant PIL after ensuing winter vacations on February 19, 2025.
Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed with Advocates Rahul Raina, Supriya Chouhan and M. Zulkarnain Chowdhary appeared for the petitioner whereas Sr: AAG S.S. Nanda appeared for UT of J&K (Estates Department).

Arms license scam...

Training (DoPT) conveyed that prosecution sanction against Kumar Rajeev Ranjan has been granted. This case is being adjudicated in the High Court of J&K and Ladakh. On November 25, 2024 Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court had expressed serious concern over pick and choose policy in granting prosecution sanction against bureaucrats in this scam.
shot dead by police.
The FBI said it is investigating the attack early Wednesday in the city's famed French Quarter as a terrorist act and does not believe the driver acted alone.
Investigators found multiple improvised explosive devices, including two pipe bombs that were concealed within coolers and wired for remote detonation, according to a Louisiana State Police intelligence bulletin obtained by the Associated Press.
The bulletin, relying on information gathered soon after the attack, also said surveillance footage showed three men and a woman placing one of the devices, but federal officials did not immediately confirm that detail and it wasn't clear who the individuals in the video were or what connection they may have had to the attack.
The rampage turned festive Bourbon Street into macabre mayhem. In addition to the dead, more than 30 people were injured. Pedestrians fled to safety inside nightclubs and restaurants. One man watched in horror as authorities placed a tarp over his friend's body after she was hit and thrown some 30 feet.
A college football playoff game between Georgia-Notre Dame at the nearby Superdome was postponed until Thursday. A Georgia student was critically hurt in the attack, university president Jere Morehead said. "This is not just an act of terrorism. This is evil." New Orleans Police Superintendent Anne Kirkpatrick said. The driver "defeated" safety measures in place to protect pedestrians, she said, and was "hell-bent on creating the carnage and the damage that he did." The FBI identified the driver as Shamsud-Din Jabbar, 42, a US citizen from Texas, and said it is working to determine Jabbar's potential associations and affiliations with terrorist organisations.

Driver rams New...

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Five SHO's among...

Sajid Mughal from Police Station Bakshi Nagar and posted as Incharge PCR/Media Cell, DPL Jammu; Inspector Pawan Kumar Dogra from Police Station Janipur has been posted at DPL Jammu; Inspector Sham Lal from Police Station Kanachak posted at DPL Jammu while PSI Majid Shaif has been transferred from Police Station RS Pura and posted as Incharge BPP Chakroi.

War of words breaks out between CM, party colleague
■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: A war of words broke out between Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and his party's Lok Sabha member Aga Ruhullah Mehdi on Thursday over the latter participating in an anti-reservation protest outside the former's residence here last month.
At a media interaction here, Abdullah said he expects Mehdi to hold a similar protest in Delhi for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood when the Lok Sabha is in session.
In a social media post, Mehdi took up the challenge.
"I've been informed about an urge and desire to protest for statehood in Delhi. I AM READY to participate in such a protest, and invite those prioritising statehood to organise it. I will also try to organise support from at least more than 100 Hon'ble MPs. I believe for them there is no better time than January to organise it, when India's Constitution -- the very document that enshrined our special status -- was adopted," the National Conference MP from Srinagar said in a post on X.
Mehdi sought to prioritise the fight for the restoration of Article 370 of the Constitution over everything else.
"At the same time I ought to remind that the abrogation of Article 370 was a calculated act of humiliation, and a deep wound deliberately inflicted upon us. The subsequent demotion to a Union Territory was a further attempt to impress upon us the indignity of the abrogation," he said.
Mehdi said after 2019, his political stance has been crystal clear.
"At one of my earliest public gatherings in Budgam and then at other gatherings throughout Kashmir and also in my interviews post-abrogation, I told my people that our fight must be for the restoration of 370 and the dignity it embodies for the people of Jammu and Kashmir," he added.
The influential Shia leader said the abrogation of the provisions of Article 370 was a political statement, a declaration that "our sacrifices mean nothing, and that our future is theirs to dictate".
"Given this betrayal, this calculated attempt to break our spirit and subjugate our will, I cannot, in good conscience, sidestep from the fight for our special status and settle for the hollow promise of mere statehood.
"Shouldn't our voices first rise for our honour, our identity, and the autonomy we have long been denied? I think they should, and I will keep raising mine, louder each time. The Tree Remembers," he added.
The BJP-led Centre abrogated the provisions of Article 370 in August 2019 and bifurcated the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into Union territories.
Earlier, Abdullah said he interacts with Mehdi just like he does with his other party colleagues.
"It is not that I used to send him good morning messages earlier. I interact with him like I do with my other colleagues," the chief minister said when asked if the communication between the two leaders has broken down.

Dual control on governance detrimental to interests of J&K: Sadhotra
■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Describing dual control on governance as detrimental to the interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference Additional General Secretary and Former Minister Ajay Kumar Sadhotra today said the BJP has not learnt any lesson from the history and it should remember that oppressive politics has a very short shelf life. In a statement issued here today, Sadhotra accused the BJP of hindering progress by enforcing dual control on governance, pursuing anti-people policies, and stifling development. Former Minister said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are well aware of the BJP's divisive agenda, which is designed to derail the region's progress. He also asked the BJP to read writing on the wall, as the people in this part of the country remain steadfast in their support for the National Conference's progressive election manifesto, vision and proven leadership.
"It is the National Conference's strong leadership under Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Jenab Omar Abdullah that has been instrumental in its resounding success in the Assembly Elections, sending tremors in the BJP rank and file".
Sadhotra said, asking the saffron party to stop day dreaming as it is destined for a crushing defeat in the ensuing Civic and Urban Local Bodies Elections.
Sadhotra lambasted the BJP for its lack of understanding of the Jammu and Kashmir politics that doesn't accept bullying tactics. He emphasized that the National Conference has the track record of fighting reactionary, divisive and communal forces whenever they tried to trample the glorious ethos of the state, which they have reduced to Union Territory. The National Conference has consistently demonstrated robust leadership and a clear roadmap addressing the aspirations of all regions and sub-regions of Jammu and Kashmir, he said and highlighted the party's comprehensive, election manifesto and vision that prioritizes employment generation for educated youth, skilled and unskilled, implementing actionable policies to combat unemployment and provide sustainable livelihoods.