!! Continuations from Page 1!! Youth responsible for...

Youth Festival, the Lieutenant Governor said the glorious event prepares our youth to assume future challenges and responsibilities towards the nation with patriotic feel-

"Jammu Kashmir occupies an important place on the national cultural map. The outh festival will provide an opportunity to make our rich cultural legacy popular and enrich cultural consciousness of the society," the Lieutenant Governor said.

At UT level, the event brings youth from different districts and different backgrounds to mingle and learn from each other. This helps in developing better understanding and appreciation of different cultures and talents, he said.

During the interactive session, the youth spoke about different themes in which they are representing J&K and also shared the role of younger generation of Jammu Kashmir in realising the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary, Youth Services and Sports Department; Rajinder Singh Tara, Director General, Youth Services and Sports; Jitendra Mishra, Nodal officer, participating youth and officials accompanying the Contingent for National Youth Festival were present.

Canals being closed...

Executive Engineers have been directed to ensure completion of all these works well before the scheduled opening of the canals.

Modi to inaugurate...

infrastructure asset to be inaugurated in the coming days will be a game changer for the expansion of tourism.

"J&K, especially central Kashmir, looks forward to the inauguration of a vital piece of infrastructure in the coming days. This asset will be a game changer for the expansion of winter tourism in the valley," Abdullah posted on X.

Heavy snowfall around the Gund area of Kangan forces the closure of Srinagar-Sonamarg during the winter months. With the opening of the Z-Morh tunnel, the Srinagar-Sonamarg stretch of the road will be an all-weather road and also boost winter tourism in Sonamarg area, officials said.

The Srinagar-Leh road will be open around the year once the work on the Zojilla tunnel is completed. The work on the prestigious Z-Morh tunnel project began in May 2015 and was completed last year.

Besides reducing the travel time, the tunnel will replace the treacherous track of road which is avalanche prone as well. The soft opening of the tunnel was done in February 2024.

Tirupati: Six devotees...

everybody pushing ahead led to this stampede and reports are emerging that six perons died," Naidu told a vernacular news channel.

Hundreds of devotees turned up from across the country for the 10-day Vaikunta Owara Darshanam commencing from January 10.

"A few devotees dying in a stampede near Vishnu Nivasam in Tirupati while trying or Vaikuna Dwara Darsanam has grieved me intensely," said Chief Minister N

Chandrababu Naidu in a post on 'X'. According to the TTD Chairman, Naidu conducted a teleconference and expressed lissatisfaction over the temple employees and said such an incident was unfortunate.

There is some suspicion that it happened due to (the temple) administration, he said and added that the CM is coming to Tirupati on Thursday to comfort the injured per-

"The CM directed us that these kinds of incidents should not recur", he said.

"Taking this as a lesson, it is incumbent upon all of us to avert these kinds of incidents in the future," said Naidu, adding the CM will announce ex-gratia on Thursday. Terming the stampede as unfortunate, TTD board member Bhanu Prakash sought the forgiveness of Srivari (Lord Venkateswara Swamy) devotees over the incident. There was some lacuna and stringent action will be taken but lost lives cannot be brought back, he said. Videos of police personnel administering CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) on a couple of woman devotees and injured persons being shifted in ambulances went viral.

Three-day orientation...
Dr. Satayapal Singh, former Members Lok Sabha. The subjects to be discussed and deliberated during the programme included Legislative Processes, Budgetary Process, Executive Accountability through Questions, Committee System and Information Support to Legislators, Do's and Don'ts for an Effective Legislator and a session on NEVA. The insights gained through these lectures will provide the newly elected members with a deep understanding of working of the legislature and the responsibility they carry as elected representatives. The lectures will also be co-hosted by Senior Officers of the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

This programme is expected to enhance the capacity of MLAs to significantly contribute to policy formulation and ensure its effective implementation for greater good of the Union Territory.

Govt regularises 38...
the recommendations of Departmental Promotion Committee/J&K Public Service

Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring department, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary said that this decision comes as a part of the government's continued efforts to streamline the administrative structure and ensure that experienced officials are recognized for their contributions. He added that this step will further strengthen the department and enable it to deliver better services and play a crucial role in policy naking through data-driven incights

He also wished the officers for successful tenure in their new capacity and advised them to contribute significantly in their enhanced roles and responsibilities.

I&K: Speedy trial...

be analysed before a decision was taken on the start of direct train serv ces to Kashmir.

"The trial run at 110 kilometres per hour on the 180-degree rising grade in such a challenging geography from Katra to Banihal has written a new chapter in the history of the Railways. The trial run was smooth and filled us with a sense of fulfilment and the credit for it goes to our engineers who have done such great work," the CRS

The trial train left Katra station at



CRS Dinesh Chand Deshwal briefing media.

10:30 am and reached Banihal station within one-and-a-half hours. The train left for Katra on its return journey at 2 pm and reached its destination at 3:30 pm.

This was the final speed trial run on the trek.

Deshwal, who reached Katra on a two-day statutory inspection of the newly completed railway line, said the Centre would take the final decision on the start of services between Kashmir and the rest of the country.

"I am not in a position to talk about it (start of services). The statutory inspection will be completed by this evening and all the gathered data analysed in accordance with guidelines of the Northern Railway," he said.

The CRS said the inspection and the trial run on the trek had been satisfactory so far. "Our infrastructure is outstanding and very soon a fair decision will be taken based on our report," he added.

On reaching Katra, Deshwal said the speed trial run on the falling gradient from

Banihal to Katra was also satisfactory. "It was fully successful on both sides...the train also passed through T-30 (tunnel-30) at a speed of 110 kmph. This tunnel posed some challenges during the construction process but the engineers overcame the technical solutions and made the track alignment precisely fit for this speed," he said.

Last month, Rail Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced the completion of the Reasi-Katra section, an important development for connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country after nearly three decades of work.

On January 4, a successful trial run of an electric train was conducted on the Katra-Banihal section. The Railways have conducted six trial runs over the past month on various segments of the track, including the two major milestones of the Anji Khad and Chenab bridges

Of the total 272-kilometre Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, 209 kilometres were commissioned in phases.

Officials said the dream project to link Kashmir by train was started in 1997 and missed several deadlines due to geological, topographical and meteorological chal-

Admin cracks down...

consequences to follow. "This drive is part of the Kathua district administration's ongoing efforts to reclaim

public land and address illegal activities that undermine the rule of law," the spokesperson said

The administration reiterated its commitment to ensuring that assets obtained through unlawful means are thoroughly investigated and those involved in illicit activities face strict legal action Deputy Commissioner Dr Rakesh Minhas, accompanied by the sub-divisional mag-

istrate (SDM) of Hiranagar and Tehsildar Marheen, visited the site of the encroach-

Dr Minhas emphasized the administration's zero-tolerance policy towards land grabbing and illegal accumulation of wealth.

He urged the encroachers to ensure transparency by providing clear information on the sources of income used for the constructions. He also warned that individuals involved in criminal activities, including drug and bovine smuggling, would face firm

The administration called upon the citizens of Kathua to support this initiative, encouraging them to assist the authorities in addressing illegal encroachments and

UP Govt will...

the Samajwadi Party (SP) and its leaders, alleging that they failed to uphold the principles of (socialist leader) Dr Ram Manohar Lohia.

He reminded that Dr Lohia had once said, "If you want to understand India, study the traditions of Ram, Krishna and Shiva. Those who claim to follow the ideals of Lohia never truly understood his words.

Addressing the dispute over religious sites in Sambhal, the chief minister pointed out that the Puranas mention Sambhal as the birthplace of Kalki, the tenth incarnation of Lord Shri Hari Vishnu.

He condemned attempts to encroach religious sites by damaging them, stating, "Our government took decisive action based on the court's order and sent a clear message

Highlighting the development of Ayodhya, he said, "We have transformed Ayodhya into a centre of development and heritage. Those who once opposed Ayodhya's progress have no moral authority to visit the city now."

On religious conversion and "ghar wapsi", he said, "If someone genuinely wishes to return to their original faith from the heart, they should be welcomed. This reflects a conscious respect for religion and tradition.

Discussing national and Hindu unity, Adityanath emphasised that Sanatan Dharma has always held the highest position, asserting that Hindu unity and national unity go hand in hand.

"History bears witness that division has always led to weakness, unity has made us invincible. That is why I have always maintained Batenge to katenge, ek rahenge to

nek rahenge' (Divided we fall, united we thrive)," he said. Criticising the opposition, Yogi accused certain groups of attempting to divide the society along caste and religious lines, calling them forces conspiring to weaken the

He asserted that the people of the country have grown more aware and are no longer susceptible to such divisive tactics.

He emphasised the profound significance of the Maha Kumbh during the event and explained that after the 'Devasura Sangram' (the battle between gods and demons), drops of nectar fell at four sacred locations - Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain and Nashik. The Maha Kumbh at these sites has served as a platform for shaping India's knowl-

edge, ideology and social direction throughout history, he said. The Maha Kumbh is more than just a religious gathering and it symbolises India's spiritual heritage and national unity, he added.

Adityanah highlighted that during the Maha Kumbh, sages from across India will gather to reflect on the social and political conditions of their times, making the event not just a reverence for tradition but also essential for preserving cultural wisdom for future generations

He lauded the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said, "Organising Maha Kumbh represents a remarkable confluence of India's heritage and development." Reflecting on the 2019 Prayagraj Kumbh, he highlighted how modern technology, efficient management and cultural traditions were seamlessly integrated

"We will strive to achieve the same harmony in the upcoming Maha Kumbh," he assured. He emphasised that the UP government, in collaboration with the Centre, has taken numerous measures to ensure that the Maha Kumbh is both grand and meticulously organised. "This event is drawing not just the citizens of India but also people from around the globe," he said, describing Maha Kumbh as a golden opportunity to showcase the country's rich cultural heritage on an international stage.

"This event transcends caste, creed and gender barriers. Maha Kumbh will serve as a powerful reflection of the progress India has made over the past decade under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"It stands as a living testament to India's prosperity, rich heritage and spiritual tradition," Adityanath said. He said certain individuals, "who thrive on foreign leftovers", are trying to tarnish the nation's image and accused them of exploiting caste divisions for political gains. He, however, affirmed that the people of India have become more aware and will not fall prey to such divisive tactics. "Today, it is not the citizens of Uttar Pradesh but the mafia and criminals who are running away from the state," he added.

Special ICU ward...

ICU ward to handle any eventuality. God forbid if a pandemic occurs, we are ready, Dr Hamid Zargar, Medical Superintendent of Gandhinagar Government Hospital, told PTI. "The centrally-heated ward has eight beds supported by ventilators and 24x7 oxygen supply," he added. Doctors have assured the public that there is no need to panic, emphasising that HMPV is not a new pathogen and it is not causing a widespread outbreak. "It is a mild upper respiratory disease. Six cases have been detected o far (in the country), but there is no need to panic." Zarvar said. To enhance readiness, the administration has convened meetings to review the situation and ensure that adequate facilities are in place. "Our oxygen plant with a capacity of 22,000 LPM is fully functional," Zargar said. "In addition to the special ward, our hospital has 100 oxygen-supported beds, along with sufficient concentrators and various types of cylinders," he added. First identified in 2001 but known to circulate since the 1970s, human metapneumovirus is a common respiratory virus that causes mild cold-like symptoms. Health experts have highlighted its potential impact on children and older adults, urging vigilance for the warning signs. While a few HMPV cases have been reported from Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat, health experts maintain the situation remains under control, calling for calm and awareness among the public.

8 SHOs, seven...

Inspector Naveen Angral has been transferred from Police Station RS Pura and posted at DPL Jammu and Inspector Tariq Ahmed has been transferred from Police Station Akhnoor and posted at DPL Jammu (Further attached with PC Jammu).

As per separate order, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Reasi, Paramvir Singh transferred Inspector Khayati Maan Khajuria from Police Station Reasi and posted as SHO Katra, Inspector Chaman Gorka from Police Station Katra and posted to DPL Reasi, Inspector Jeet Singh from DSB Reasi and posted as SHO Chassana, Inspector Ranjeet Singh from Police Station Chassana and posted as SHO Reasi, Inspector Rakesh Bamba from Police Station Ransoo and posted to DPL Reasi, Inspector Sohan Singh Bandral from Police Station Bhawan and posted as SHO Pouni, Inspector Sumit Sharma, from Police Station Pouni and posted to DPL Reasi, Inspector Narinder Paul Singh from DPL Reasi and posted as SHO Bhawan, PSI Lalit Sharma has been transferred from Police Post Jvotipuram and posted as SHO Ransoo, PSI Raiat Sahani from Police Station Katra and posted as Incharge Police Post Talwara, PSI Hiteshwar Singh, from Police Post Banganga and posted as I/O Police Station Katra, PSI Jarnail Singh from Police Post Kakryal and posted as Incharge Police Post Dera Baba, PSI Raghav Chalotra from Police Post Dera Baba and posted as Incharge Police Post Banganga, PSI Rajat Magotra from Police Station Katra posted as Incharge Police Post Kakryal, PSI Mayank Jamwal from Police Station Ransoo posted as Incharge Police Post Thanole, PSI Happy Hans from Police Post Talwara posted as Incharge Police Post Tote Sarhi and PSI Jasbir Singh has been transferred from Police Station Arnas and posted as Incharge Police Post Jyotipuram.

FIR against social media page admin for public mischief

STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: An FIR was registered against the administrator of a social media page for allegedly defaming several individuals by sharing "fabricated and malicious" content about their lives in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, police said on Wednesday.

The action was initiated against the "Bhaderwah Confession Page" Instagram account administrator following several complaints from victims, who alleged that the page had used their names to spread false stories, causing significant damage to their personal lives, a police spokesperson said.

The FIR was registered at Bhaderwah police station under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Information Technology Act against the accused, he said. The police are actively investigating the case to identify and apprehend the accused involved in defamation, intimidation and public mischief, he added. "Anyone found involved in such activities will not be spared," the spokesperson said and urged the public to refrain from following such pages that thrived on creating controversies and harming the reputation of individuals.

CS discusses employees issues with Administrative Heads

Advocates for making their career progression smooth, hassle-free STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Wednesday convened a meeting with the Administrative Secretaries to take stock of promotions and compassionate appointments made in favour of employees working for the UT government.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took note of the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) meetings held by the departments both at adminis trative and HoD level for the Gazetted and Non-Gazetted posts.

He impressed upon the departments to conduct DPCs on regular basis for the employees deserves career progression while performing their assigned tasks. He asked about the employees placed on higher grades in OPG mode and their subsequent promotions on regular basis. He also impressed

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chairing a meeting.

upon the ARI & Trainings Department to conclude finalisation of Recruitment Rules of different departments currently under updation. He urged them to make this updation a time bound exercise.

Dulloo further noted that few departments are plagued with adhoc promotions that needs to be fixed. He directed for constituting a committee of senior officers including from GAD and Finance to look into the issue to settle it forever. He advised them to examine the matter related to identification of the non-gazetted vacancies for recruitment in the education department.

Regarding the compassionate appointments in favour of the kin of deceased employees under SRO-43 and newly christened Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme (RAS), the Chief Secretary underscored the need of further accelerating the process. He directed the concerned to put the cases before the designated committees for their clearances and issuance of orders in favour of the applicants. He also enjoined upon them to complete the appointment of remaining eligible candidates under SRO-43 at an earliest.

Commissioner Secretary, GAD, M.Raju, while providing relevant details in the meeting, revealed that there are around 1151 cases of RAS pending, out of which, 507 cases received in 2022 and 2023 had been forwarded to the departments for their appointment. He further made out that there are just 175 SRO-43 cases pending in different departments most of which are going to be settled in a month

About the promotions made by different departments, the meeting was apprised that at the HoD level 76 DPCs were convened in the year 2024 in addition to 14 at Administrative/PSC level for filling of gazetted vacancies.

Moreover, the meeting was informed that 929 non-gazetted and 231 gazetted employees were placed in OPG on higher posts demanding regularisation through DPCs at the appropriate level. It was added that 4825 non-gazetted and 272 gazetted vacancies are currently available under promotion quota in various govern ment departments of the UT.

The Chief Secretary also took stock of the action initiated against employees through Regular Departmental Actions (RDAs) recommended by GAD/ACB for their misconduct or indulging in malpractices. He maintained that the actions taken against the employees should be exemplary and proportionate to their misdeeds. He also asked them to furnish the details of actions taken by the depart ments against such employees. He advocated such actions should act as deterrent for others to repeat these offences

Regarding the status of RDAs by the Departments, M Raju informed the meeting that out of the total of 900 RDA cases, 468 are currently active with 351 closed after taking different actions by the concerned departments. It was also revealed that 81 cases are also pending in GAD for their final note to be appended on the

Two youth injured in attack by pistol-wielding assailants STATÉ TIMES NÉWS

JAMMU: Two youths were injured in an attack here by two pistol-wielding assailants over some old rivalry, a police official said on Wednesday.

Jasraj Singh (22) of Trikuta Nagar and Chand Wazir (20) of Babliana were allegedly attacked by Jaspreet Singh and Amandeep Singh at Gadigarh in Satwari area late Tuesday, the official said.

He said the accused also opened fire on the victims from a country-made pistol during the assault, resulting in bullet injuries to Jasraj while Wazir had stab

Both injured persons were hospitalised, the official said, adding police have regis tered a case in the matter. They said a hunt is on to arrest the culprits who fled the scene before a police party reached the scene.

He said Jaspreet had also attacked the victims earlier and was recently released

MHA asks states to take steps for reducing overcrowding in prisons

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Centre has asked all states to ensure that an undertrial prisoner arrested for an offence for which the punishment of death or life imprisonment has not been specified should be released if he or she has already undergone detention for half of the maximum prison term specified for that offence, thus reducing overcrowding in jails.

In a communication to chief secretaries and directors general of prisons of all states, the ministry of home affairs said the prison authorities should approach the court concerned for release of such eligible prisoners under the provisions of the Section 479 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS).

The Section 479 of the BNSS states that when a person has, during the period of investigation, inquiry or trial of an offence under any law (not being an offence for which the punishment of death or life imprisonment has been specified as one of the punishments under that law) undergone detention for a period extending up to one-half of the maximum period of imprisonment specified for that offence under that law, he shall be released by the court on bail.

"In case of first-time offenders, such prisoners shall be released on bond by the court, if they have undergone detention for a period extending up to one-third of the maximum period of imprisonment for that offence. Further, Section 479 (3) of the BNSS casts a specific responsibility on the Superintendent of the Prison to make an application to the concerned court for release of aforementioned undertrial prisoners on bail/bond," the communication said.

The ministry said it had issued an advisory to the states and union territories on the issue on October 16, 2024 and had requested them to provide the benefit of the provisions of Section 479 of BNSS to all eligible prisoners and have their bail applications filed in the court accordingly.

It said on the occasion of Constitution Day i.e. November 26, 2024, the home ministry had launched a special campaign under which all the states and union territories were requested... to identify eligible prisoners under the provisions of the Section 479 of BNSS and move their applications to the concerned courts for their release on bail/bond.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had also sent a letter to chief ministers of all states and Union territories in this regard. The states and Union territories had actively participated in this exercise and had furnished the details of the number of prisoners who benefitted from the provisions of Section 479 of BNSS up to November 26, 2024.

However, the ministry has conveyed to the states that it was not a one-time exercise and the states and Union territories need to take advantage of the pro visions of Section 479 of BNSS and provide the benefit of the same to all eligible prisoners on a continuous basis.

"The states and UTs are requested to provide details, as in the attached proforma, for the period November 27, 2024 to December 31, 2024, on urgent basis, where after a monthly report, even a NIL report, is to be provided to this ministry in the prescribed proforma, starting from January 1, 2025," the communication said. The home minister said the provisions of Section 479 of BNSS can go a long way in mitigating the situation of long detention faced by under

trial prisoners and can also address the issue of overcrowding in prisons. "It is, therefore, expected that all states and UTs will cooperate in the matter and will advise the concerned prison authorities for taking necessary action in the matter and to furnish the desired information to MHA in a timely manner,