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Modi to unveil Kashi Vishwanath Corridor today

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

VARANASI: After inaugurating the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold an informal meeting with several chief ministers on a river cruise and witness Ganga 'aarti' and grand festivities being hosted at Varanasi ghats, a top official said on Sunday.

Varanasi District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma said Prime Minister Modi, who is the MP from the ancient city, had expressed his desire to "showcase the grandeur of Kashi" to the chief ministers.

"The PM is expected to reach Varanasi airport on Monday morning, from where a helicopter will take him to the campus of Sampurnanand Sanskrit University where a makeshift helipad has been made. He will then travel to Kal Bhairav Mandir for 'darshan' of the deity, and then travel by river route to reach the



55 HD cameras, one drone: coverage to be grand

VARANASI: The inauguration of Kashi Vishwanath Corridor project is set to be a grand ceremony, and with 55 high-definition cameras, four jimmy jibs and one huge drone, the national coverage of his event in Varanasi is also set to be "equally monumental", officials sources said.

A team of about 100 persons, from Doordarshan (DD), including 55 camerapersons, senior officials and other staff are currently camping in the holy city, to "showcase tomorrow, 'Divya Kashi, Bhavya Kashi' to the masses" back home.

"With 55 HD cameras, seven uplink satellite vans, four cellular mobile news gathering units, one RF (radio frequency) camera, four jimmy jibs, and one drone mid-air, it will be a monumental coverage of an event of this nature, and truly massive in scale," a highly-placed

ghat adjoining the corridor," he said.

The mega corridor, whose foundation stone was laid by Modi on March 8, 2019, connects the main temple with Lalita Ghat, and grand gateways and ornamental arches have been built in heritage architecture style in four directions, facing the ancient temple at its core.

"Prime Minister Modi will reach Kashi Vishwanath Dham from the ghat side, and then inaugurate the corridor. He will take a walk in the premises of the new corridor, and see the buildings erected. The event will take place in the presence of a large number of saints and seers from all parts of the country, many of whom have already arrived," the Varanasi DM said.

"It was his desire to enter the corridor from the river side, where all arrangements have been made. Rehearsal of river cruise is also

Modi's Twitter handle 'very briefly compromised', later secured: PMO

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Twitter handle was briefly hacked on Sunday, and a tweet claiming that India has "officially adopted bitcoin as legal tender" was put out from it.

The Prime Minister's Office later said the account was immediately secured after the matter was escalated to Twitter: "The

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19,370 candidates appear in ARCS exams conducted by JKPS

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) on Sunday conducted Assistant Registrar Cooperative Societies (ARCS) Examination- 2021 in one session, both at Jammu and Srinagar.

For the smooth conduct of the examination, the Commission had made elaborate four tier arrangements.

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JeM terrorist killed in encounter in Pulwama

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Pulwama district on Sunday, police said.

Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Baragam area of Awantipora in the south Kashmir district after specific inputs about the presence of terrorists there, an official said.

During the search operation, as the presence of the trapped terrorist was ascertained, he was given ample opportunities to surrender. However, he denied and fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party which retaliated, leading to an encounter, a police spokesman said.

In the ensuing encounter, the terrorist was killed and his body retrieved from the site of encounter, he said.

The spokesman identified the slain terrorist as Sameer



Ahmad Tantray, a resident of Baragam.

As per police records, Tantray was a categorised terrorist linked with proscribed terror outfit JeM and was part of groups involved in several terror crime cases, he said.

Tantray was earlier a terrorist associate and was involved in providing logistical support to active terrorists in the area, the spokesman said.

Tantray used to also paste

posters of terror outfits in Awantipora and adjoining areas to threaten law abiding citizens and keep them away from democratic activities, he said.

Incriminating materials, including arms and ammunition, were recovered from his possession and taken into case records for further investigation.

Police have registered case under relevant sections of law and investigation

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J&K reports 126 new COVID cases, 4 deaths

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday reported 126 new COVID cases, 15 from the Jammu division and 111 from the Kashmir Valley, thus taking the total number of positive cases in the Union Territory to 338871.

Officials said that four COVID related deaths were reported from the Valley.

Moreover, 176 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 48 from Jammu Division and 128 from Kashmir Division.

According to a Media

Bulletin, no new case of Mucormycosis has been reported during the past 24 hours.

On COVID vaccination, the bulletin informed that 20,499 doses of COVID vaccine have been administered in the last 24 hours bringing the cumulative number of doses administered across J&K to 1,72,71,653.

As per the bulletin, out of 338871 positive cases, 1541 are Active Positive (385 in Jammu Division and 1157 in Kashmir Division), 332835 have recovered and 4495 have died; 2189 in Jammu division and

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Efforts on to make Amarnath Yatra safe for pilgrims: LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday said continuous efforts are being made to make the annual yatra to the 3,880-metre-high holy cave shrine of Amarnath in the Himalayas comfortable, modern and safe for the devotees.

He said his administration is committed to providing world-class facilities for the pilgrims besides facilitating 'langars and bhandaras' (community kitchen service providers) during the yatra to the holy cave.

The Lt Governor was interacting with the members of various associations of langars and bhandaras, which



LG Manoj Sinha interacting with Shri Amarnath Shrine Yatra Langar & Bhandara Associations members.

serves the pilgrims during the yatra, an official spokesman said here.

The yatra takes place from the twin routes of Pahalgam in south Kashmir and Baltal in Ganderbal district of cen-

tral Kashmir in summer.

The official said as many as 20 members representing Shri Amarnath Barfani Langars Organization (SABLO) and Shri Amarnath Yatra Bhandara

Organization (SAYBO) met the Lt Governor in Delhi and discussed various aspects of the smooth conduct of the yatra.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary to the Lt Governor, Nitishwar Kumar, Additional CEO of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board Rahul Singh and Deputy CEO Vikas Anand, he said.

The holy yatra is a symbol of compassion, spirituality, service, and peace. Continuous efforts are being made to make the yatra more comfortable, modern, and safe for the pilgrims, the Lt Governor said. Sinha informed the

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Provide agenda for Delimitation Commission meeting: NC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The National Conference (NC) on Sunday asked the Delimitation Commission to provide an agenda for the December 20 meeting before the party MPs could take a decision over their participation in it. The Commission has called a meeting of its associate members in New Delhi on December 20. The Commission has five associate members who are five Lok Sabha MPs from J-K.

While the NC has three MPs, all from the Kashmir valley, the BJP has two from Jammu region.

NC Member of Parliament

from south Kashmir's Anantnag, Hasnain Masoodi, said the party has sent a written communication to the Commission, asking it to provide the relevant material so that the party MPs could decide whether to participate in the meeting or not.

We have sent a letter to the Delimitation Commission and we have asked them to make us aware of the agenda of the meeting, provide us the agenda items and provide us all the material concerning that (the agenda items), Masoodi told PTI. The letter was sent by Masoodi

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Jammu Club elects 11-member Executive Committee

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The 11-member executive committee of Jammu Club was announced on late Sunday evening after three rounds of counting of votes.

Those who have been elected include Indu Puri (1466 votes), Aditya Gupta (1375) Er Vikram Sharma (1372), Kavita Gupta (1359), Gaurav Gupta (1320), Ashok Gandotra (1287), Dr Sandeep Singh (1249), Dr Uttam Singh (1237), Er Ashwani Gupta (1212), Ashok Sharma (1165)

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Kashmir continues to record minimum temperatures below freezing point

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: There was slight improvement in the minimum temperature recorded across Kashmir, but the mercury continued to settle several degrees below the freezing point,

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 20.5°C Min: 7.7°C

Humidity

Max: 84 Min: 67

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 8.5°C Min: -3.0°C

Humidity

Max: 93 Min: 74

Sunset : 17:23 Hours

Sunrise : 07:29 Hours

PDP youth event at Mehbooba's residence disallowed

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Sunday barred the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) from holding a youth convention at its chief Mehbooba Mufti's residence on the high-profile Gupkar road here citing COVID-19 restrictions and larger security implications, including a threat of car bombs, drawing a strong reaction from her.

Police sealed all roads leading to the PDP president's 'Fairview' residence and journalists were also barred from moving towards the venue in the morning.

Noting that it was a high-

security zone and a gathering of at least 1000 people was expected, the police said that it was not advisable to allow such a large flow of people and unchecked vehicles as there are credible inputs of vehicle bound IEDs" being used to target civilians and sensitive installations.

The local administration had advised the PDP to apply for holding this convention in a more open area in view of the COVID-19 and security reasons, a police spokesman said.

The PDP chief, however, said the police's argument was ridiculous and termed it

as an excuse to "sabotage" the event.

The former chief minister of the erstwhile state of J-K charged that the government was looking for new ways to deny rights to the youth of Kashmir and to pull them away from democracy and push them on the path to violence.

In a video message posted on her party's Twitter handle after the event was barred, the PDP chief said her party will continue the struggle, peacefully and democratically, for J-K's prosperity, unity, dignity and to resolve

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Aprons with name plates mandatory in GMC Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu has issued strict instructions to its faculty members and staffers for wearing white aprons with name plates.

"In the interest of administration and better patient care, it is enjoined upon all the Faculty Members/Residents/Paramedical Staff and other staff working in the institution to adhere to proper dress code with proper display of name plate during the duty hours for improving communication with the patients/attendants

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PAGD united, will continue its struggle J&K did not accede to this India: Omar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah on Sunday said that the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) was united and will continue its struggle.

"The fight will continue. If there is a need to bring some changes in that, we will do that. There are no second thoughts that our rulers do not like the PAGD", Omar Abdullah told reporters after a party function in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, when asked by the reporters here whether the PAGD -- the amalgam of six main-

stream political parties seeking the restoration of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir which was revoked by the Centre on August 5, 2019, was united.

"There were attempts before as well to weaken the PAGD. One of our colleagues was separated from the PAGD on one pretext or the other", he said, referring to Sajad Lone-led People's Conference parting ways with the alliance earlier this year.

He, however, said the rest of the constituents of the PAGD understand these designs and will not allow them to succeed.

Omar Abdullah also condemned Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's remarks that offering 'Namaz' in open spaces will not be tolerated, saying the decision was wrong and it clearly meant that one particular religion was being targeted.

He said there is total freedom to practice one's religion in the country.

The Haryana CM's statement and his decision is totally wrong, he added.

I would have accepted it had this ban been on every religion, but by this pick and choose, it is clear

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Modi Govt committed to uphold independence of CBI: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh on Sunday reiterated that the Modi Government is committed to uphold, preserve and strengthen the independence and autonomy of CBI and all such other investigating institutions.

Speaking at the Investiture Ceremony at CBI Headquarters here, Dr Jitendra Singh said, zero-tolerance for corruption, transparency and citizen centricity are the three main Mantras that determine the administrative outlook of the government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He said, irrespective of ideological beliefs, it is the collective responsibility of all to strengthen institutions



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh being felicitated by CBI Director, Subhodh Jaiswal during Investiture Ceremony at CBI headquarters, New Delhi.

like CBI, as these institutions also contribute to strengthening the nation's resolve to achieve the ultimate goal of incorruptibility in society.

Besides the CBI Director Subhodh Jaiswal, those prominently present on the occasion included Central Vigilance Commissioner Suresh N.

Patel, Union Secretary DoPT P.K. Tripathy, Special Director CBI, Praveen Sinha, senior officials, recipients of awards for distinguished service and their family members.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, to fulfill the commitment of zero tolerance against corruption and unaccounted money, a range of initiatives have been taken

by the Modi government over the last 7 years. He said, soon after taking oath as Prime Minister on 26th May, 2014, the very first cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Modi took the decision to form a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to unearth the black money. He said, since 2014, there have been a series of reforms including the Amendment in the Prevention of Corruption Act 1988, setting up of the office of Lok Pal and instantly placing all the government decisions including the ACC decisions in public domain for enhanced transparency.

The Minister pointed out that more than 1500 laws have been abolished in the past years and various rules and regulations have been simplified.

Expressing concern over certain States withdrawing the general consent to CBI to investigate cases but nevertheless holding on the prerogative to give selective consent where it suits them,

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Duty of courts to take into account not only crime but also criminal, his state of mind: SC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: It is the duty of courts to take into consideration not only crime but also the criminal, his state of mind and his socio economic conditions, the Supreme Court has said.

A bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao said it is the duty of courts to take into consideration the probability of the accused being reformed and rehabilitated.

"In view of the settled legal position, it is our bounden duty to take into consideration the probability of the accused being reformed and rehabilitated.

"It is also our duty to take into consideration not only the crime but also the criminal, his state of mind and his socio economic conditions,"

the bench also comprising Justices B R Gavai and B R Nagarathna said.

The observations were made by the top court while converting death sentence awarded to a man, convicted for killing two of his siblings and his nephew over a property dispute, to life imprisonment for a period of 30 years.

The top court said the state (Madhya Pradesh) has not placed on record any evidence to show that there is no possibility with respect to reformation or rehabilitation of the convict.

"The appellant comes from a rural and economically poor background. There are no criminal antecedents. The appellant cannot be said to be a hardened criminal.

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