Regd. No. JK/346/2019/2021

2 teenagers die after falling into

UL storage tank

Dogra Rattan Rishi Kumar Kaushal's statue installed at Reasi; main chowk renamed

Website: www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

Air surcharge 50 paisa for Leh J&K maintains winning spree in Junior Volleyball

Despite all its efforts, Pakistan cannot take an inch of J&K land: Azad

'Talks with Pak decision should be left to BJP led Centre'



Senior Congress leader & Former J&K CM Ghulam Nabi Azad addressing a gathering at Khour on Sunday.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Pakistan cannot take an inch of Jammu and Kashmir's territory despite all its efforts, senior Congress leader and former J&K CM Ghulam Nabi Azad said on Sunday, lauding the security forces and the people of the union territory for fighting Pakistan-sponsored terrorism for the past over three decades.

National

Conference's and the PDP's persistent demand for holding dialogue with Pakistan to restore peace in Jammu and Kashmir, Azad said the decision on holding talks should be left to the BJP-led Centre.

Addressing a public meeting at Khour near the International Border in Jammu, Azad said border residents are the guardians of Indian borders and

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

"I am 24 'Carat' Congressman"

JAMMU: Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday put to rest all speculations about his possible exit from the party, calling himself a "24 Carat Congressman" and saying he was not upset with the party, but was instead working for unifying and uniting

The former chief minister has been holding public rallies in Jammu and Kashmir over the past nearly two months and was seen accompanied by his loyalists including senior party leaders and former ministers who recently resigned from their party posts in a revolt against J&K Congress president G A Mir. Talking to reporters after addressing a public meeting in the border belt of Khour on ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Grassroot democracy strengthened in J&K: Dr Jitendra

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) & Technology; Science Minister (Independent Charge) Earth MoSPMO, Sciences: Personnel, Public Grievances. Pensions. Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh on Sunday said grassroots democracy has strengthened in Jammu and Kashmir since holding of the Development Council (DDC) elections, overdue for decades, was given top priority.

A big change in terms of inclusive development was now evident at the ground level that reiterates the government's mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' and in the principle of justice for all, appeasement to none', he said.

Elections to 280 DDC seats -- 14 in each of the 20 districts -- were held in eight phases in Jammu and Kashmir from November 28 to December 19 last year.

This was proof of the importance that the



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh addressing a gathering at Basohli in Kathua district

Narendra Modi government gave to strengthening the pillars of grassroots democracy in the Union Territory, Singh said at a convention on 'Good Governance Week' organised by the Kathua district administration.

He said a new political culture has been set in the country that is based on "equality for all" without discrimination of any kind.

With this new political culture, all constitutional values and principles are being followed at every level, especially in governance, the Union minister said.

He said Prime Minister Modi took a personal interest in Shahpur Kandi Dam Project and it is only with his intervention that the work on this project resumed after 45 Asserting that India has

"more than 70 per cent of the youth population of the world", Singh said their dynamism and exuberance is required for making of the 'New India' in governance and civil services. The prime minister has

emphasised that development should not be restricted to a few places. It should be taken to far-flung areas where the development was earlier only talked about but never done, he said.

Singh said the Shahpur-Kandi project, north India's first cable-stayed bridge Atal Setu, Jammu and Kashmir's first interstate bridge at Keerian-Gandyal, the new national highway from Lakhanpur-Bani-Basohli-Doda via Chattargala Tunnel, centrally funded Government Medical College, engineering colleges among others have placed Kathua as one of the most enviable dis-

tricts of India. On the occasion, he also virtually laid the foundation of a 100-bed girls hostel under RMSA to be built at Government High School, Basoli, development projects under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana,

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Citizens to get Fard, Mutation online soon: Com Secy Revenue process of providing Fard

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The citizens in Jammu and Kashmir would get 'Fard' (revenue extract) and mutation online soon, a senior government official said on Sunday.

Commissioner Secretary, Revenue, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, said the department is in the process of making all their services available online through a single portal, installing auto-mutation process in the National Generic

Document (NGDRS), linking land records with other services,

422 Omicron cases have

been detected across 17

states and union territories

in India so far and 130 of

these people have recovered

or migrated, according to

Union health ministry data

Maharashtra has recorded

the highest number of

Omicron cases at 108, fol-

lowed by Delhi at 79,

Gujarat 43, Telangana 41,

Kerala 38, Tamil Nadu 34

With 6,987 more people

testing positive for COVID-

19 in a day, India's total

3,47,86,802, according to the data updated at 8 am.

The death toll has climbed to 4,79,682 with 162 new

The daily rise in coron-

infections remained below 15,000

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

fatalities, the data stated.

increased to

updated on Sunday.

and Karnataka 31.

caseload

Max: 90

and Mutation online. "The aim is to minimise interface and

human increase convenience to the citizens," he said.

Within a couple of months of its launch, 'Apni Zameen Apni Nigrani', the land record portal launched by the Revenue department has crossed more than four lakh

The one of its kind initiative, wherein citizens can login and see the status of Jamabandi, Girdawari,

Amid fears of third COVID wave, we need active participation of communities & healthcare workers in prevention efforts: LG

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday inaugurated the upgraded facility at paediatric cancer ward & children's play area at SMGS Hospital, Jammu.

The Lt Governor observed that Sparkle Women Club is a living example of how selfless service can make a real contribution, a profound difference in our society. Those who choose to serve the disadvantaged unconditionally are doing greater service to humanity, the Lt Governor said.

The transformation of the pediatric eancer ward has been made possible by the Sparkle Women Club, a voluntary organization dedicated to public service,



LG Manoj Sinha giving away gift to a child at SMGS Hospital.

The Lt Governor said, "We are building a strong well-developed public health care system that aims to ensure the highest possible level of health and wellbeing of people".

He appealed for the active participation of communities and healthcare workers in prevention efforts amid fears of third COVID wave.

The Lt Governor underlined that the biggest example of selfless service can be witnessed across the hospitals.

"In the last 20 months, we have seen countless true heroes, hidden behind PE kits and masks. They risked their own lives to save others", he added. "Our ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Farooq hints at fighting elections together with PAGD allies

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah, who is the chairperson of the People's Alliance forGupkar Declaration (PAGD), has hinted his party will fight the next assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir together with the constituents of the new coalition to defeat "communal forces".

Talking about the situation in Kashmir, Abdullah claimed it is worse than the 90s -- when militancy erupted in Jammu and Kashmir -

have no place in modern India and have lost faith in

the government in Delhi.

...and I am sure when the elections come, we'll sit down together again to defeat the divisive and communal forces," Abdullah, who has been a Union minister and three-time chief minister of the erstwhile state, told PTI here recently.

The PAGD is a five-party alliance comprising the National Conference (NC), Peoples Democratic Party National Conference

ISJK terrorist involved in ASI's **422 Omicron** cases in India assassination killed in Anantnag STATE TIMES NEWS NEW DELHI: As many as

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A terrorist belonging to the Islamic State Jammu and Kashmir (ISJK) outfit, who was involved in the assassination of a police officer, was killed in an encounter with security forces in Anantnag, police said on Sunday

The encounter at K Kalan, Srigufwara area of the south Kashmir district began late on Saturday night.

It was the third encounter between security forces and terrorists in south Kashmir

Terrorists hurl grenade: 2 cops injured

SRINAGAR: Two policemen were injured after terrorists hurled a grenade at a police party in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, officials said.

The incident occurred at Pulwama's Main Chowk, they said. Two police personnel were injured in the explosion. They have been hospitalised, the officials said.

on Saturday. Two terrorists

each were killed in the gunfights at Shopian and Pulwama earlier

Saturday. A police official said security forces launched a cordon and search operation in K Kalan, Srigufwara area of Anantnag following inputs about the presence of terrorists there.

The search operation turned into an encounter after the hiding terrorists fired on the forces, who retaliated, he said.

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Winter helicopter service in Ladakh from Dec 29

STATE TIMES NEWS

KARGIL (LADAKH): The winter helicopter service in Ladakh will commence on December 29, an official said on Sunday.

During winter, Ladakh generally remains cut-off from the rest of the country due to closure of the Srinagar-Leh national highway owing to heavy snowfall.

The flight will start from Leh to Kargil, and then from Kargil to Srinagar, and vice versa: Srinagar-Kargil-Leh. the official said. Online bookings for the winter rides have

Major fire breaks out at Bagad Mandi in Jammu; over 50 shops gutted

Goods worth lakhs damaged; family members of shop-owners seek compensation

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A major fire broke out at Bagad Mandi near Trikuta Nagar on Sunday night, causing damage to over 50 shops and destroying property worth lakhs of

Fire and Emergency services immediately rushed half a dozen fire tenders to douse the leaping flames in Bagad Mandi at Trikuta Nagar.

An official of the fire and emergency services said CONTD ON PAGE 9

Flames engulfed makeshift shops near Trikuta Nagar locality on Sunday night.

Delimitation Row: Dec 29, Jan 1 protests in Srinagar a blessing in disguise for Jammu

PROF HARI OM

JAMMU: On December 14, members of Gupkar gang, including its head Farooq Abdullah, number two Mehbooba Mufti, MY Tarigami and Muzzaffar Shah, met at their headquarters (Farooq Abdullah's Gupkar Road residence, Srinagar), sung the same old irritating and divisive special status song like Jinnah used to sing the Pakistani song, discussed their political future vis-à-vis India, abused the Modi Government and resolved to "reach out to Jammu to take its people on board for the (anti-India and pro-Article 370 and pro-Article 35A" campaign.

"As far as we are concerned, including PAGD and other constituents, there is a strong feeling that there will be no forward movement without representation from Jammu, or without any credible dialogue with the cross section of people including civil society in Jammu," said spokesperson of the gang CPI(M) leader M Y Tarigami after the meeting. 'Kashmir cannot march ahead without Jammu and likewise Jammu too can't

ignore Kashmir and Ladakh. We have to move together over the issue as this is for us an article of faith...We have to identify the areas where we can agree and we have every right to disagree as well. We must explore those possibilities where there are some sort of commonalities which can be abiding force for all of us to move together so that some relief is provided to the people of Jammu as well as Kashmir".

They did come to Jammu on December 21, a day after the new Delimitation Commission shared its 47-seats-for-Kashmir and 43-seats-for-Jammu proposal with all the five associate members (Lok Sabha MPs), including MoS in PMO Jitendra Singh and Jugal Kishore Sharma (BJP) and Farooq Abdullah, MA Lone and Hasnain Masoodi (NC). All the Gupkaris were seething with anger.

What did they do in Jammu? They dismissed with contempt the Justice (retired) Ranjana Prakash Desai-headed Delimitation Commission's proposal. They denounced it as biased, unfair and anti-Kashmiri Muslim. They abused the Narendra Modi Government and accused it of hatching a conspiracy after a conspiracy against Kashmiri Muslims calculated to "dis-empowering" them and installing a Hindu from Jammu as CM of the "Muslim-majority State". They charged the Modi Government with subverting the concept of federalism, Gupkar-type, nay Jinnah-type. They used all kinds of invectives and epithets against the RSS and the BJP and described them as the biggest enemies of Kashmiri and other Muslims. They pitted the non-existent Paharis in Rajouri-Poonch belt in Jammu and Baramulla-Kupwara belt in Kashmir against the Scheduled Tribes, including Gujjars and Bakarwals (Muslims) and Gadis (Hindus). They sought to put the Pathowari-speaking people in these areas on a warpath by telling them that the Delimitation Commission had ignored them and not considered their claim and proposed nine seats (10%) exclusively for the STs in the 90-member House. They made it loud and clear that they will accept the Delimitation Commission's

report only if it was based on the 2011 (fudged) census figures and that they will approach the Supreme Court of India against Delimitation Commission's proposals if it failed to consider, accommodate and appreciate their stand on delimitation in J&K. (Under the law, the recommendations of Delimitation Commission can't be challenged in any court of law.) What these Gupkaris said was self-explanatory and, hence, requires no further elucida-

But the uncouth, uncivilized, undemocratic, insensitive, provocative and essentially separatist and divisive Gupkaris didn't just stop here. They went several steps further and announced in Jammu itself that they will hold a demonstration in Srinagar on January 1, 2022 against the Delimitation Commission and the Modi Government, which proposed to increase the number of seats for Jammu from 37 to 43 and for Kashmir from 46 to 47. The JK Apni Party of Altaf Bukhari also decided to pursue the Gupkaris' line. It announced a protest in Srinagar against

the Delimitation proposal on December

What exactly did the Gupkaris and the Bukharis tell to the people of Jammu province, including Hindus, Muslims. Sikhs and Jains and about 1.5 million Hindu-Sikh refugees from Pakistan, PoJK and Kashmir itself, all victims of jihad? They in a most shameless manner told them that the CM of J&K always was a Muslim from Kashmir and this top executive office was the sole preserve of Kashmir; that the people of Jammu province have to groan under the Kashmiri yoke; that they consider their followers and cadres in Jammu province as their slaves; and that they and Kashmir were the only two factors in the UT or J&K, which the Modi Government must

And, what they said in Jammu must be taken by the people of the marginalized. ignored, discriminated against and enslaved people of Jammu province to mean a blessing in disguise. Indeed, the December 29 ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Min: 8.8°C Min: 82 Max: 5.1°C

Sunset: 17:34 Hours

Sunrise: 07:32 Hours

Min: 88