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**Unity needed for...**

and 'Nation-First'. Every section of society should work together to make the country self-reliant with undivided loyalty," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the people, especially the youth to rededicate themselves to the ideals of Mahamana and Atal Bihari Vajpayee and strive to build a progressive society and work unitedly to realise the vision of Viksit Bharat.

"We do not have to live in the past but we must take inspiration from history to build a brighter future," he said.

He highlighted that the Youth have a very important role to play in taking public services to the grassroots levels. To achieve this, we need to start shaping a new framework for Jan-Bhagidari and use new technologies for transparency and accountability at all levels, he added.

"Unity is our greatest strength. Young generation must unite the society with determination. I want to see every hand working like a skilled sculptor to create a beautiful, victorious and prosperous India. I want to see a sense of responsibility, steadfastness towards duties and steely determination in every youth towards nation-building," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that our cultural ideals and values should be paramount for the new political and economic system.

"Today is the opportunity for us to build a brighter tomorrow for the country and to ensure that societal attitude is changed towards responsibilities. Whole of Government Approach should be adopted to achieve socio-economic goals," the Lieutenant Governor observed.

**HIGHLIGHTS...**

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**Railways successfully conducts...**

Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh announced in November that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to inaugurate the Vande Bharat train connecting Kashmir to New Delhi on the USBRL in January.

With the expected commissioning of train services in phases, the Railways has completed 255 kilometres of the 272-kilometre USBRL project, leaving only a small stretch between Katra and Reasi to be completed by December.

**Pakistani airstrikes kill...**

the northwest. The TTP - a separate group but also a close ally of the Afghan Taliban - also shared photos, alleging they were of children killed during the Pakistani operation.

The strikes came hours after Mohammad Sadiq, Pakistan's special representative for Afghanistan, travelled to Kabul to discuss a range of issues.

Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry in Kabul summoned the Pakistani envoy and lodged a strong protest over the strikes by Pakistan's army. In a statement, it said while a representative of the civilian government of Pakistan was busy in talks with the Afghan officials, the strikes were carried out by the Pakistani army to "ereate mistrust in the relations between the two countries".

It said Kabul "will not accept the violation of the country's territory under any circumstances, and the country is ready to defend its independence and territory" and "such irresponsible actions will definitely have consequences".

Meanwhile, residents in the area told an AP reporter over the phone that at least 13 people were left dead, adding that the death toll could be higher. They also said the wounded were transported to a local hospital.

Pakistan has not commented on the latest strikes. However, the Pakistani military said Wednesday that security forces killed 13 insurgents in an intelligence-based operation in South Waziristan, a district located along eastern Afghanistan's Paktika province.

Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi praised "Pakistan's brave security force" in a statement for thwarting "the nefarious designs" of "terrorists". He didn't mention the Pakistani air strikes inside Afghanistan.

The Taliban Defence Ministry denounced the attacks on Tuesday and promised retaliation.

On Wednesday, the situation along the shared border seemed to be business as usual.

However, security analysts say the TTP could launch retaliatory attacks in Pakistan.

Pakistan has seen innumerable militant attacks in the past two decades but there has been an uptick in recent months. The latest was this weekend when at least 16 Pakistani soldiers were killed when the TTP attacked a checkpoint in the country's northwest.

Pakistani officials have accused the Taliban of not doing enough to combat militant activity across the border, a charge the Afghan Taliban government denies, saying it does not allow anyone to carry out attacks against any country.

North and South Waziristan are former strongholds of Pakistani Taliban, who have fled to Afghanistan.

Tensions were at an all-high in March when Pakistan said intelligence-based strikes took place in the border regions inside Afghanistan.

**CM conducts surprise...**

fire incident in 2022 that reduced the hospital's original capacity of 200 beds.

He directed the executing agencies to ensure its swift operationalization by January 2025 to enhance patient care and to dedicate the facility to public service.

The Chief Minister also inspected the 500-bedded Children's Hospital in Bemina, where he interacted with patients, attendants, and hospital staff.

During his visit, attendants from far-flung areas raised concerns about the lack of a Sarai (inn) for their stay.

He immediately directed the concerned authorities to construct a Sarai to accommodate attendants and alleviate their difficulties.

The hospital staff highlighted the challenges of expanding super-specialty facilities due to express space constraints.

The Chief Minister assured them that the issue would be addressed on priority.

He also promised to resolve the shortage of medical staff, including doctors and paramedics, not only at this hospital but across healthcare facilities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Furthermore, the Chief Minister instructed hospital authorities to ensure the timely availability of medicines and other essential facilities for patients.

During the inspections, the Chief Minister reiterated his government's commitment to improving healthcare infrastructure ensuring better facilities for the public and addressing manpower shortages in health institutions across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister was accompanied during his visits by Minister of Health Sakeena Itoo, Medical Superintendent of the Children's Hospital, senior faculty members and other concerned officials.

**5 doctors suspended...**

Ward when the woman was under treatment.

The show-cause notices were issued to two doctors -- one from the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology and another from the Department of Surgery -- along with eight other staff members. They have been directed to provide explanations to the Principal of GMC Rajouri regarding the alleged negligence, they added.

The incident has drawn criticism from political leaders. Budhal MLA Javed Iqbal Choudhary expressed concern over the woman's death, while former Rajouri MLA Choudhary Qamar Hussain held a press conference on Tuesday, demanding accountability.

Before she died, the woman had suffered a tragic loss, losing three of her children to a mysterious illness just last week.

The GMC Rajouri administration has assured that a thorough investigation is underway, and appropriate action will be taken based on the findings.

**Drug peddler arrested...**

An FIR has been registered at Nagrota Police Station. The tanker has also been seized, the officials said.

**CRPF doing commendable...**

Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central Industrial Security Force

The CRPF chief apprised the home minister about the various welfare schemes being implemented for the families of martyred jawans of the force, including compassionate appointments in the CRPF.

Shah emphasised the importance of promoting Hindi in the daily functioning of the force to strengthen linguistic unity.

Along with emphasising the use of more and more 'Shri Ann' (Millets) for better health of the soldiers, the home minister also called upon the soldiers to extract the benefits of Ayurveda and participate in 'Prakriti Parikshan Abhiyan' to get health insights as per individual's Prakriti, fostering well-being and better health.

The visit of the home minister underlines the government's recognition of the CRPF's commitment to national security and its multifaceted contribution to nation-building, the statement said.

Several senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs, including Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, were present at the meeting.

**Intense cold wave...**

Currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan', the harshest winter period of 40 days that started on December 21, the Kashmir valley is experiencing below-normal maximum as well as minimum temperatures for this time of the season, the officials said.

The fall in the mercury has led to the freezing of water supply lines even as a thin layer of ice covered the surface of several water bodies, including the Dal Lake.

The city was colder than Gulmarg, a tourist resort town known for skiing activities in north Kashmir, where the mercury settled at a low of minus 6.6 degrees Celsius, up from minus 7.4 degrees Celsius the previous night, the department added.

Pahalgam, the base camp for the annual Amarnath Yatra in south Kashmir, registered a minimum temperature of minus 8.4 degrees Celsius, down from the previous night's minus 7.8 degrees Celsius, it said.

Qazigund, the gateway town to Kashmir, logged a minimum temperature of minus 6.6 degrees Celsius, while Konibal, a hamlet in the Pampore area, was the coldest recorded place in the valley at minus 9.5 degrees Celsius, it said.

Kupwara, in north Kashmir, registered a low of minus 6.4 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in south Kashmir, was at minus 5.4 degrees Celsius.

There is a possibility of light snowfall over the higher reaches towards the later afternoon on December 27 till the forenoon the next day, the Met Office said.

While the weather would stay mainly dry on December 29, 30, and 31, light snowfall is possible in the isolated higher reaches on New Year's Eve, and light snowfall could take place at isolated scattered places in Kashmir from January 1-4.

During the 40 days of Chillai-Kalan, the chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum and the temperature drops considerably.

It ends on January 30 next year, but the cold wave continues even after that in the valley. The 40 days are followed by a 20-day 'Chillai-Khurid' (small cold) and a 10-day 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

**Christmas celebrated with...**

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Jammu, Anand Jain, also extended his warm greetings to the people of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and all ranks of the Jammu and Kashmir Police on the auspicious occasion of Christmas.

In his message, Jain expressed hope that this sacred festival would usher in an era of peace, prosperity, and harmony across the Union Territory.

Anand Jain reaffirmed the Jammu and Kashmir Police's commitment to maintaining peace and ensuring the safety and security of the people. He encouraged the police fraternity to continue working with dedication and compassion in the service of society.

The ADGP concluded his message by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

**Man tries to...**

with some individuals back home in Bagpat, it said.

Police said Jitendra arrived in Delhi on a train on Wednesday morning. His half-burnt backpack and some other belongings were seized from the spot.

A police officer said the man's family members have been contacted and further investigations were on.

**Leaders of political parties in Kashmir pay tributes to Vajpayee**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

SRINAGAR: As the country remembers former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his centenary birth anniversary, leaders of political parties in Kashmir on Wednesday lauded the BJP stalwart's humanistic approach to conflict resolution over a military solution.

Former chief minister and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said she misses the former prime minister.

"I miss him! For the first time, I saw a leader besides Jawaharlal Nehru or Indira Gandhi who had an emotional connect with Kashmir. He was a leader, and that too from BJP, who tried to cater to the humanitarian view of the Kashmir issue," she said.

Separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who was one of the key Hurriyat Conference leaders to engage in a dialogue with the Vajpayee government, credited the former prime minister with opening "a new chapter of hope in Kashmir".

AICC general secretary Ghulam Ahmad Mir said Vajpayee did not allow his Sangh Parivar ideology to reflect in public service.

"Of all the leaders post the freedom struggle, Atal Bihari Vajpayee proved his mettle in politics with his competence. Despite his association with a party of a different agenda, he never let it reflect in public service. The entire country knows that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had said that he has so much potential that one day, he will become the prime minister of the country," Mir said.

The Mirwaiz lauded Vajpayee for his vision and "humanistic approach", emphasizing dialogue over military solutions.

"It was his vision that when talks were initiated with the Hurriyat, he declared that the government of India would engage in the ambit of humanity,

Kashmiriyat, and democracy, accommodating our viewpoint in the process," the Hurriyat chairman said.

The Mirwaiz lamented the abandonment of Vajpayee's policies, saying "his political legacy still carries a window of opportunity, but the present regime has buried it, instead adopting the hard-line approach of dealing with Kashmir through force and disempowerment."

The PDP president recalled Vajpayee's bold move of reaching out to Pakistan, saying "he walked the talk".

"He tried to reach out to Pakistan, which is seen as the biggest enemy at this point in time. He even tried to reach out to the separatists in J&K which happened for the first time," she said.

Mufti claimed that it was a conversation between her late father Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and Vajpayee that led to the opening of Line of Control routes between Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

"I remember my father telling him, 'Why don't you start a dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue?' His answer was, 'Mufti ji what do I do, they want Kashmir'. My father then asked him why don't we make the borders irrelevant so that both Kashmiris come together and see what's on the other side... He was the one who initiated the opening of Muzaffarabad road, Rawlakot road," she added.

The PDP president said for the first time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, there was a prime minister who tried to find a solution to the Kashmir issue.

"That had never happened before. I think Kashmiris also remember those days and as far as development is concerned, he never said no to anything," she said.

Mufti said this was one of the reasons that her father joined hands with the BJP after the 2014 assembly elections

in Jammu and Kashmir. "I think there's no one like Vajpayee," she added.

Mufti said Vajpayee shunned his right-wing image after his election as prime minister.

"He was a different political leader. Despite the fact that he came from BJP or Sangh Parivar, once he became the PM, he behaved like the PM of the whole of India, the PM of Kashmiris, which doesn't happen very often. Today, we have PM Modi. He has such a huge mandate but he's not able to come out of that BJP mould," she said.

Mehbooba said despite obstacles like the Kargil War, the attack on Parliament and other things happening, "he still went ahead with his peace process".

"He was a man of commitment and conviction, which unfortunately today's politicians lack. They lack that insight, they lack that vision which Vajpayee had," she said.

Mir recalled Vajpayee's defeat in the 1984 Lok Sabha election from his hometown Gwalior, saying "everyone facilitated his election to Rajya Sabha" two years later.

"When Rajiv Gandhi came after Indira Gandhi's era, he took 425 seats. Vajpayee had lost that time. Rajiv Gandhi remarked that without Vajpayee, Parliament looked incomplete," Mir added.

The AICC general secretary claimed that with reference to Jammu and Kashmir, Vajpayee adopted the Congress approach.

"When you connect him with Jammu and Kashmir, I think as a prime minister, he adopted the same method as was adopted by the Congress party. He ran an engagement process with angry people and listened to their views. He chose that path," he added.

**Arunish Chawla named Revenue Secy, Manipur CS Vineet Joshi to be Higher Edu Secy**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

NEW DELHI: Senior bureaucrat Arunish Chawla has been appointed the revenue secretary as part of a top-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre on Wednesday.

Chawla, a 1992 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Bihar cadre, is currently the pharmaceuticals secretary. He has been appointed secretary, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, according to a personnel ministry order.

The post of revenue secretary fell vacant after incumbent Sanjay Malhotra was appointed the governor of the Reserve Bank of India earlier this month.

Chawla will continue to hold the additional charge of secretary, Ministry of Culture till the appointment of a regular incumbent, it said.

Amit Agrawal, chief executive officer of Unique Identification Authority of India, will be the new pharmaceuticals secretary in place of Chawla.

Manipur chief secretary Vineet Joshi has been appointed as the higher education secretary. A 1992 batch IAS officer, Joshi was appointed Manipur chief secretary in May last year. He was then serving as the additional secretary in the Department of Higher Education under the Education Ministry.

Textiles secretary Rachna Shah has

been appointed secretary of the Department of Personnel and Training, the order said.

Senior IAS officer Sanjay Sethi, who is currently serving in his cadre state Maharashtra, will be the new secretary of the National Commission for Minorities. He will succeed Neelam Shammi Rao, who has been appointed as the textiles secretary in place of Shah.

Neerja Sekhar, currently the special secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, will be the director general of the National Productivity Council under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, the order said.

**Madhuparamhans lays foundation of Akhnoor Ashram**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

AKHNOOR: Sadguru of Sahib Bandagi Madhuparamhans Maharaj laid the foundation of Akhnoor Ashram. Today, on the auspicious occasion of the 32nd Foundation Day, a huge Satsang and Bhandara were organized. Delighting the congregation with the Amrit Shower of discourses, Sahib Ji said that there is great power in request. Sahib himself is telling Dharamdas that I cannot resist hearing the request. You should pray every day.

Scientists also believe that the word that comes out of your mouth never ends. As long as the universe exists, that word will remain. That is why scientists are on a quest. They are searching for the teachings of Vasudev Shri Krishna in the Gita. They have also discovered some verses. But they are not able to prove it, because they do not have a copy of



Vasudev Krishna's voice.

There is proof of this. When Osama Bin Laden said something in a hospital in Peshawar, American scientists captured it. By the time they reached there, Osama had fled. The reason for this was that they had a copy of Osama bin Laden's voice. They had installed such devices that they would catch him speaking in any corner of the world.

When the words coming out of a person's mouth are not destroyed, then it is a

churn the poet Rahim, Kabir Sahib will come out from within.

Aarti means the prayer of the oppressed. O Lord, I have fallen in Maya. I cannot escape by my own strength. You only be merciful and show mercy and free your servant. Such are the prayers. O Lord, there is no one as forgiving as you and no one as devious as me. There are millions of disasters on the way. I myself will not be able to come to you. Please have mercy.

You see for yourself that after getting the name, your fear of death is over. You are confident that I will cross over. Just like food is necessary for the body, similarly Sumiran is necessary for the purification of the heart. Japa, Tapasya, Sanyam, Sadhna all come under Sumiran. Whatever you are thinking apart from the name, is all the game of time.

**Atal will continue to guide countrymen on path of national service till eternity: MLA Billawar**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

BILLAWAR: BJP Billawar Unit under the leadership of MLA Billawar Satish Kumar Sharma on Wednesday celebrated the 100th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee as Good Governance Day reflecting Vajpayee's enduring legacy and commitment to transparent and accountable governance. The commemoration began at BJP head office with party members paying floral tributes to former Prime Minister Vajpayee.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA said Atal ji made cultural nationalism a work



culture and always kept the country's security and public welfare paramount. He made the BJP popular with the masses with his purity and self-restraint in political life. Like the Pole Star, Atal ji will continue to guide the countrymen on the path of

national service till eternity," he said. "Revered Atal Ji gave new heights to the tradition of integrity and service in Indian politics. His contribution to establishing the country as a global superpower is unforgettable," MLA said. He further

described Vajpayee's life as "an inspiration" and extended greetings on 'Good Governance Day,' stating that the day reflects Vajpayee's dedication to all-round national development.

MLA in paying tributes, referred Vajpayee as "a pillar of independent Indian politics." "Atal ji set new standards in both politics and diplomacy, working throughout his life with the resolve to build a strong and prosperous India," he said, adding, "His significant contribution to India's progress cannot be appreciated enough. Today, on his 100th birth anniversary, I pay my humble tribute to him." Vajpayee,

remembered as a statesman and visionary leader, served as India's Prime Minister three times and played a pivotal role in shaping modern India. His leadership continues to inspire millions across the country, added MLA.

Satish said Union Govt under PM Modi has been working very dedicatedly to bring about all-round development of the people of J&K belonging to every section of the society." He highlighted the contributions to India's development by Vajpayee which emphasized his visionary initiatives, including the Golden Quadrilateral project, advancements in information technology, and

efforts to strengthen India's global standing. "Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a statesman whose leadership continues to inspire the nation and his dedication to good governance and development has set a benchmark for all of us," Satish said.