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CM says reservation...

and how to revive co-operative societies in a new way, besides the reservations," Abdullah said.

On December 10 last year, the government constituted a Cabinet sub-committee to look into grievances raised by various sections of aspirants against the existing reservation policy in the UT. The sub-committee forwarded its report in October, and accordingly, the report and its review by the law department were completed.

"It would be wrong to comment on the minutes of the Cabinet meeting before sending them to the honourable LG. I will just say that we have tried to rationalise it as we have promised. We have also tried not to be unjust to anyone," the chief minister said.

Abdullah also noted that so much time was taken because "the issue is such that it is very easy to do politics with it".

"The Cabinet has tried to adopt a transparent and fair process. Now, the matter will go to the LG. I will not say anything more until the file reaches him. Whatever you want to believe, you can believe it. We could not have done a more detailed exercise than this.

"Every issue was seen and discussed more than once. This is the third or fourth time that the matter came to the Cabinet after the sub-committee headed by Minister Sakina Itoo submitted its report. We did our best to resolve this matter," Abdullah said.

On the stance of the estranged National Conference Lok Sabha MP, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, on the reservation issue, the chief minister said the government did not do this for anyone's satisfaction.

"This is not about an individual. This is about the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and we have fulfilled another election promise by completing this process," he said.

Abdullah added that the people, who were "taunting" the government, claiming it did not do anything about the reservation, are threatening protests if injustice is done to any section. Mehdi recently asked the National Conference-led government in the UT to resolve the reservation issue before the Winter session of Parliament ends, saying he would join the quota protests if no action was taken.

Putin to begin...

insulating bilateral trade from external pressure and exploring cooperation in small modular reactors are set to be the focus of the summit talks between Modi and Putin on Friday that are expected to be closely watched by Western capitals.

The Russian president is likely to arrive in New Delhi at around 4:30 pm on Thursday, and hours later, Modi will host him for a private dinner in reciprocation of a similar gesture extended to the Indian prime minister by the Russian leader during his visit to Moscow in July last year.

On Friday, Putin will be accorded a ceremonial welcome before the 23rd India-Russia summit. Modi will also host a working lunch for the Russian leader and his delegation at Hyderabad House, the venue for the summit. Putin will also visit Rajghat in the morning, according to people familiar with the matter.

After the summit, Putin is set to launch the new India channel of Russian state-run broadcaster RT, following which he will attend a state banquet to be hosted in his honour by President Droupadi Murmu.

The Russian leader is expected to leave India at around 9:30 pm on Friday, wrapping up his nearly 28-hour visit.

Govt aims to induct...

written question, the government aims to recruit 5,171 women in 2025-26, with the highest percentage of intake in the BSF.

The government plans to recruit 2,513 women in BSF, 1,192 in CRPF, 1,375 in ITBP and 91 in SSB in 2025-26, data showed.

"In January 2016, it was decided to reserve 33 per cent posts at the constable level for being filled up by women in CRPF to begin with and 14-15 per cent posts at the constable level in border guarding forces, i.e. BSF, SSB and ITBP," Rai said.

LG calls for...

advancing social progress".

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor called upon all the officials and social organizations to pledge to protect and promote the rights of Divyangjans.

"Inclusion of Divyangjan is the foundation of equitable development. We must work with sensitivity, awareness, and a shared resolve to ensure their dignity and meaningful participation and guarantee access to education, skills, and livelihoods," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor shared the key initiatives of the UT Administration towards providing comprehensive support for socio-economic empowerment of Divyangjans.

He stated that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, special efforts have been made to provide equal opportunities, equal rights, and a quality life to Divyangjans.

"Together, we must build a J&K where accessibility is the norm, where every Divyangjan has access to all facilities, equal employment opportunities, and the advanced technical tools needed to live a life with dignity and respect," the Lieutenant Governor said,

The Lieutenant Governor also lauded the Composite Regional Centre, Jammu for its commendable efforts in rehabilitation and empowerment of Divyangjans.

Since 2024, CRC Jammu has conducted over 35,000 clinical surveys and distributed assistive devices worth over Rs 2 crore, transforming countless lives.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor handed over the assistive devices and kits to beneficiaries and also visited stalls put up by various social service organisations. Vikram Randhava, Member of Legislative Assembly from Bahu; Prof. (Dr.) Sheikh Azaj Bashir, Director Colleges; Dr. Rohnika Sharma, Director, CRC Jammu (Samba); senior officials, Heads of educational institutions, prominent citizens, members of various social organisations, students and people in large numbers were present.

LS passes Bill...

at Rs 100 per kg. The Bill seeks to substitute the table containing the tariff rates of tobacco and tobacco products in Section IV of the Fourth Schedule to the Central Excise Act, 1944. When GST was introduced on July 1, 2017, the rates of Central Excise duties on tobacco and such products were reduced significantly to allow for the levy of compensation cess without a large impact on their tax incidence.

Compensation cess levied on tobacco and tobacco products will be discontinued once interest payment obligations and loan liabilities under the compensation cess account are completely discharged. "

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in the Lok Sabha: "In another, probably, couple of weeks the loans will be completely repaid. The Centre, therefore, wants to make sure that the excise will come back to us so that we can levy the duty".

At the time of the introduction of the GST on July 1, 2017, a compensation cess mechanism was put in place for five years till June 30, 2022, to make up for the revenue loss suffered by states on account of GST implementation.

The levy of compensation cess was later extended by four years till March 31, 2026, and the collection is being used to repay the Rs 2.69 lakh crore loan that the Centre took to compensate states for the GST revenue loss during the Covid period.

VDGs could join...

Jammu Joginder Singh.

In his address, the police chief sensitized about the constant adversarial tactics adopted by the neighbouring country to harm the security and harmony in India.

In Jammu areas, he said police and security forces face unique challenges, including drone droppings, tunnelling and riverine issues.

"In such circumstances, we take advantage of the border villagers, who have a history of standing up and participating alongside the police and security forces to combat infiltration and intrusion," he said.

The DGP said the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the smooth functioning of the VDG's have been notified in close coordination with the BSF and highlighted the need for their proper implementation on the ground to strengthen border security grid and thwart the evil design's of enemy nations.

Prabhat also urged on preventive strategies through training, coordination and community vigilance.

"Historically, people from the border areas have contributed to countering terrorism by working in synergy with the police and other forces. Without their participation, achieving optimal results against terrorism would be inconceivable," he said.

The DGP said VDG is voluntary service and does not guarantee employment but the police would not hesitate to induct them in regular force for exceptional contribution in counter-terrorism, demonstrable conspicuous gallantry, using the powers of the police establishment board.

The participants also received instructions on the periodic cleaning, safe handling and maintenance of government issued arms and ammunition, a police spokesper-

son said.

Prabhat described VDG's as the first tier of the security grid and appreciated their role in intelligence collection as well as their role during Operation Sindoor and floods. The IG Jammu highlighted the initiatives taken for streamlining of VDG functioning including assigning unique identity to each group and individual members to monitor their proper working.

Meanwhile, the DGP later visited the Border Police Post Chakrohi and Police Station R S Pura and held a security review meeting with concerned officers.

The police chief passed on-the-spot directions for streamlining manpower requirements of Border Police Posts and upgrading and strengthening the overall security grid in the border areas, the spokesperson said.

Car hits parapet...

identified as Naik Singh (53) son of Puran Singh resident of Waripattan and Mohd Yaqoob(45) son of Mohd Fazal resident of Saila Surankote.

The injured have been identified as Mohd Farooq son of Mohd Fazal resident of Saila Surankote, Driver Mohd Sageer son of Mohd Haneef resident of Digwar Poonch and Mohd Mushtaq son of Fazal Hussain resident of Kakora Manjakote. Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident, they added.

Justice Vinod Chatterji...

Neelofar Masood, and other officers from the District Administration.

The aesthetically designed structure is aimed at providing senior advocates of Bar Association Baramulla a comfortable resting space within the district court complex Baramulla for the efficient delivery of their services.

Following the inauguration, the Justice held an interaction with members of Bar Association Baramulla and representatives of other Bar Associations of the District.

The participating advocates presented several demands and concerns, to which Justice Koul assured the legal fraternity of full support from the judiciary and expressed commitment to promptly addressing the issues raised.

The Justice also held a detailed review meeting with the District Administration regarding ongoing court infrastructure projects in Baramulla and stressed the need for timely completion of the projects and expeditious transfer of land so that judicial infrastructure across the district may be strengthened at the earliest.

Later, the Justice convened a separate meeting with all Judicial Officers posted in district Baramulla and emphasized speedy and efficient disposal of cases, reduction of pendency, and adherence to timelines for disposal of priority and targeted matters. The visit of Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul concluded with the strong message of strengthening court infrastructure including coordination between Bar and Bench and ensuring better and faster delivery of justice in District Baramulla.

SSP reviews security...

over the past two years. Sharma, along with several police officers, conducted an extensive area-familiarisation tour in Kathua and visited security checkpoints at Keerian Gandyal, Bhagthali, Kharkra, Goond and Saidpur Naka.

She also visited Nagri, Mahichak, Sakta Chak, Ghatti, Juthana, Barnoti, Budhi Barwal, Logate, Chak Drab Khan, Sheller Morh, and Kathua city for familiarisation, identifying locations that require special attention.

The SSP also chaired a meeting at the Police Post Industrial Estate and heard the grievances of the locals.

Govt drops order...

default on all phones and tablets. Defending its own app, the government said it was "secure and purely meant to help citizens from bad actors in the cyber world."

The ministry added that the measure was no longer necessary as the app was gaining "wide user acceptance" on its own.

Earlier in the day, Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia indicated that the government was willing to make changes in the November 28 order but insisted that the snooping is neither possible nor will it happen with the app.

Sanchar Saathi app "se na snooping sambhav hai, no snooping hoga", he said in response to Congress leader Depender Singh Hooda's supplementary question in the Lok Sabha regarding snooping concerns related to the app.

Scindia had on Tuesday stated that users could delete the app, which becomes operational only when a user registers on it.

If a consumer has not been registered on the app, then the app will not be operational and one can also delete the app, he repeated in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

There have been around 1.5 crore app downloads already.

With the portal and the app, 26 lakh stolen handsets have been traced, 7 lakh stolen handsets have been returned to consumers, 41 lakh mobile connections have been disconnected and 6 lakh frauds have been blocked, the minister said.

In the November 28 order, his ministry directed smartphone makers to pre-install the app on all new devices and push it through updates on older ones.

The order mentioned that the pre-installed app should be "readily visible and accessible" and "functionalities are not disabled or restricted".

Following the uproar, the communications ministry had issued an explainer, clarifying that the phrase "readily visible and accessible" and "functionalities are not disabled or restricted" in order as a direction to manufacturers, not a restriction on users.

"It simply means manufacturers must not hide, cripple or pre-install a non-functional version of the app and later claim compliance. Nowhere it has been mentioned in the above clause that the Sanchar Saathi App cannot be uninstalled by the end user. It is up to the citizen if he wants to enable and register Sanchar Saathi Mobile App or uninstall," it had said.

The explainer was issued prior to the withdrawal of the order.

Main opposition party Congress had charged the BJP-led government of "brazenly snooping" on citizens with the app.

"The communications minister confidently claimed that the Sanchar Saathi app can be deleted, a statement that collapses instantly under the weight of the government's own direction, where Section 7(b) categorically states that the pre-installed app cannot be removed, nor can any of its 'functionalities be disabled or restricted'," Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera said.

AAP Govt has...

Mann-Made Disaster: Chugh said the Centre, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, released both installments of the SDRF Central share-Rs. 240.80 crore each-even ahead of schedule. This was accompanied by additional support for flood-affected farmers, including over Rs. 221 crore transferred directly to more than 11.09 lakh farmers under PM-KISAN, free wheat seed distribution worth Rs. 74 crore under PM-RKVY, and joint Centre-State assistance for Berseem seed distribution benefiting thousands of hectares, he said.

Chugh pointed out that allocations under the National Mission on Oilseeds and the horticulture mission were also made to help affected farmers rebuild their livelihoods.

Referring to the statement made in Parliament by the Union Minister of State for Home, which revealed that on April 1, 2025, the Punjab government had an opening balance of Rs. 11,947 crore in the SDRF, Chugh said it is now abundantly clear that the Mann government has misappropriated, diverted, and concealed the fund's utilisation. He said Punjabis deserve to know where the money went, and why the state government kept them in the dark.

Chugh said that despite having enormous funds in its disaster relief account and receiving continuous Central support, the Mann government chose to hide facts, distort data, and mislead Punjabis to whip up anti-Centre sentiment.

"When people needed relief, Punjab's money was locked up. Instead of using SDRF for immediate support, the AAP government spent its time building political narratives. This is criminal negligence," he said.

Chugh demanded a high-level investigation and said accountability must be fixed for this financial misconduct. "Punjab has reached a point of financial collapse. There is no development on the ground, and salaries are delayed for months. This is absolute administrative failure," he said.

He added that while the government spends crores on false publicity, advertisements, and image-building, it has done nothing for public welfare or infrastructure, leaving people frustrated and helpless. "The entire state exchequer today exists only to serve Bhagwant Mann's mentors sitting in Delhi," Chugh said.

Citing recent media reports exposing the sharp decline in Punjab's capital expenditure, Chugh said the situation reflects a near-economic emergency. In the first half of the 2025-26 financial year, capital expenditure in Punjab fell by 36 percent, crashing to just Rs. 1,760 crore, with the government managing to spend only 17 percent of its own budgeted provision. "This government has failed on every front. Instead of governance, they are busy pleasing the Thiar Gang Trio and staging political drama," he said.

Omar promises transparency...

Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Commissioner Secretary GAD M. Raju, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, Secretary School Education Ram Nivas, Deputy Commissioner Jammu Rakesh Minhas, and a large gathering of beneficiaries and family members.

In his address, the Chief Minister, who is the Minister in charge of the General

Administration Department, assured the beneficiaries that the government is determined to clear the backlog of cases under SRO-43 and RAS-2022.

"As far as the orders of SRO-43 are concerned, I assure you that we will try our best to dispose of the pending cases. We will grant relaxation in cases as per the norms and make this process as transparent as possible," the Chief Minister said.

Expressing deep empathy with families who approach the government during their most difficult hours, the Chief Minister stressed that compassionate appointments are not acts of favour but rightful entitlements under an established policy.

"On behalf of the government, our only effort is to help you in this difficult time. You should not feel that you are alone or that no one stands with you. If the government supports you in your moment of helplessness, this is not a favour-this is your right." Speaking about the long-pending cases of CPWs and their regularisation, the Chief Minister said. "For CPWs, this day carries a different meaning. As Sakina Sahiba has already mentioned, we will do our best to regularise CPW and issue orders. For those under RAS and SRO-43, I know many of you have suffered a lot to reach here. And I apologise to you for that."

Regarding delay in processing of SRO 43/ RAS cases, he said

"This should not happen. When there is a government system, it should work automatically. I assure you-we will simplify the procedure further. We will reduce the difficulties you face. Since I hold the GAD portfolio myself, I will personally ensure that bottlenecks are removed."

The Chief Minister said delivering these orders is a matter of duty, not generosity. "If we increase your problems during this difficult time, we fail in our duty. These compassionate jobs are your right, and delivering them is our responsibility. If you had to wait long, I apologise for that. But I promise we will do everything possible to make the process easier."

He urged the newly appointed beneficiaries to shoulder their responsibilities with sincerity and dedication. "A heavy responsibility has come your way, perhaps earlier than expected. Do your best to fulfil it. We will always stand with you to make your work easier. If you face any difficulty, do not hesitate to knock on my door-I am always there for you." The Chief Minister added that more regularisation orders for CPWs would soon be issued by the Education Department under the supervision of Minister for Education, Sakina Ito.

Traffic management plan...

The officer said he had directed the traffic police to exercise utmost care and responsibility to ensure that two-way traffic is not hampered by the construction and installation of signage, particularly of 'no overtaking' at vulnerable points along the 270-km road. Mughal also inspected other congestion points on the highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country.

MoRTH launches special...

including through DAMS, Rajmargyatra app and media analysis reports.

The memorandum suggested that removal of unauthorised occupations should be done accordance with the provisions of the Control of National Highways (Land and Traffic) Act, 2002, Highway Administration Rules, 2004 and SOP dated August 7, 2025, if necessary, with the help of local administration and police.

Unauthorised occupation on National Highways is a serious concern for the government and special efforts have been taken up for identification and removal of such unauthorised occupations on NHs in accordance with the provision of Control of National Highways (Land and Traffic) Act, 2000, the memorandum said.

In addition to these measures, the ministry has also created a separate module for capturing complaints regarding unauthorised occupations on Rajmargyatra App and instructed for the development of Drone Analysis Management System (DAMS) on the Data Lake Portal maintained by NHAI.

Kashmir freezes as...

officials said. The Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir recorded a low of minus 4.6 degrees Celsius, while the Gulmarg skiing resort in north Kashmir recorded minus 2.6 degrees Celsius.

The meteorological department said the weather is likely to remain dry till Wednesday, but there is a possibility of a brief spell of light snow at isolated places in the higher reaches, late on Thursday night and early Friday morning.

The Met Office said while the weather would remain generally dry on December 6-7, another brief spell of light snowfall at isolated places in the higher reaches is likely on December 8.

Police Station Thanamandi declared Best Thana in J&K, ranks 14th in India

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

THANAMANDI: Police Station Thanamandi in Rajouri district has been ranked the Best Thana in Jammu & Kashmir and secured the 14th position across India in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) annual survey.

The evaluation is based on parameters such as crime control, citizen services, community policing, infrastructure, and overall public satisfaction. The recognition highlights the station's improved policing practices and responsive public service. Officials stated that the achievement reflects the dedication of the officers and their continuous efforts to ensure safety and maintain law and order in the region. The award has been widely appreciated by local residents and authorities.

Exhibition-cum-Mela held in Surankote to promote organic farming Under HADP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SURNAKOTE: The Department of Agriculture Production & Farmers' Welfare, Surankote, organised an Exhibition-cum-Mela and Awareness Programme on



organic certification under the HADP project "Alternate Agriculture System for Sustainability," under the guidance of Chief Agriculture Officer Poonch, Yograj Singh Salathia.

SDAO Surankote, Vikas Sharma, urged farmers to adopt organic practices for better soil health, while Dr. Ajay Gupta, Head KVK Poonch, stressed crop diversification and water-efficient farming. Technical sessions by SMS-SDL Sh. Sanjeev Kumar and experts from Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and PM Surya Ghar Yojana provided hands-on guidance.

Departmental stalls and the FPO Irhan Seva Kendra showcased organic products and modern technologies. The event concluded with a vote of thanks, encouraging farmers to utilise HADP benefits through the KISAN SATHI portal. The programme saw enthusiastic participation from farmers, SHGs, progressive growers and youth, reflecting growing interest in sustainable agriculture.

10 drug peddlers held in Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Ten drug peddlers were arrested with different quantities of heroin from various parts of Jammu region on Wednesday, police said.

Besides, a "notorious" drug peddler was detained under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (PIT-NDPS Act) here, they said.

A private car was intercepted at PCP Nomain near Katra in Reasi district, leading to the arrest of four peddlers including two women and recovery of 11.22 grams heroin, a police spokesman said.

The accused were identified as Ajay Sharma, Vinay Singh, Sonia Dogra and Namita Dogra.

In Udhampur district, Ishfaq Majid, Umar Shaffiq and Mohsin Aslam Khan were arrested when police intercepted their car and recovered 53.44 grams of heroin at Tikri, the spokesman said, adding the trio were travelling from Jammu to Srinagar.

A notorious drug peddler, Sonu Sharma alias "Jabbu" was arrested along with 5.43 grams of heroin from Bishnah area of Jammu, while two more drug peddlers, Noshad and Mohd Irfan, were arrested from Thanamandi and Manjakote areas of Rajouri and 5.25 grams of heroin and 3.04 grams of heroin were recovered from them, respectively, the police said.

Dheeraj Choudhary, a resident of Kothey Chohala village of R S Pura, was booked under PIT-NDPS Act on the orders of Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, the spokesman said.

He said Choudhary, a notorious drug peddler, was lodged in the district jail at Poonch after his detention.