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Union Budget: Rs...

kilometres (km) during 2022-23 and the national ropeway development programme will be taken up in the public-private partnership (PPP) mode.

She also said contracts for the implementation of multimodal logistics parks at four locations through the PPP mode will be awarded in 2022-23.

The finance minister said Rs 20,000 crore will be mobilised through innovative ways of financing to complement the public resources.

"PM Gati Shakti Master Plan for Expressways will be formulated in 2022-23 to facilitate the faster movement of people and goods.

"The national highways network will be expanded by 25,000 km in 2022-23," she added.

The minister said that as a preferred ecologically sustainable alternative to conventional roads in difficult hilly areas, the National Ropeways Development Programme will be taken up on the PPP mode.

She added that the aim is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism.

Sitharaman said contracts for eight ropeway projects for a length of 60 km will be awarded in 2022-23.

Commenting on the Union Budget 2022-23, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said this year's Budget has given the highest priority for the development of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and farmers.

Gadkari also said the Budget has also given priority to the infrastructure sector.

He noted that the National Ropeways Development Programme will benefit North East, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir.

The Union Budget 2022-23 has provided an enhanced outlay of Rs 1.99 lakh crore for the highways sector.

An allocation of Rs 1.18 lakh crore was made for the highways sector for 2020-21, which was revised to Rs 1.31 lakh crore.

The International Road Federation (IRF) in a statement welcomed the stepped-up investment on highways and infrastructure projects in the Union Budget for the year 2022-23.

IRF also welcomed the thrust of the Budget on seven growth engines of PM Gati Shakti, including roads, railways, airports, ports, mass transport, waterways and logistics.

Sitharaman presents Budget...

and Rajya Sabha. Most of the members, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, were seen wearing face masks. However, members had crowded the Lok Sabha chamber, while hardly a handful of others, including union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Piyush Goyal, were seen seated in the Rajya Sabha chamber.

Members from the treasury benches greeted Modi as he entered the Lok Sabha chamber with chants of 'Jai Shri Ram', 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', and 'Har, Har Mahadev'. A BJP member was heard asking about Rahul Gandhi.

Gandhi, a Lok Sabha member from Wayanad was seated in his usual seat in the second row, engrossed all the time in his tablet PC.

Trinamool member Saugata Roy and DMK member Dayanidhi Maran were heard criticising the allocation made for setting up an international arbitration centre at GIIFT city. "Is this Union Budget or Gujarat Budget? This is good only for Gujarat," Roy and Maran were heard as saying.

The duo also demanded greater allocation for states from the GST collections when the finance minister mentioned gross GST collection of Rs 1.40 lakh crore for January 2022.

Opposition members demanded allocation of 5G spectrum to BSNL, when Sitharaman mention that the government planned to auction 5G spectrum in the next financial year.

Congress members protested the announcements related to strategic sale of Air India and Neelanchal Ispat Nigam Limited and the planned IPO of Life Insurance Corporation.

"It is a sell-off of institutions," Congress member T N Prathapan was heard saying. Several members were dismayed at the non-availability of the hard copies of the Budget Speech of the Finance Minister. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said the speech copies would be available after the presentation of the Budget.

Power Minister R K Singh was seen ensuring that Sitharaman had her supply of lemonade, which she sipped at regular intervals, during her address.

Fresh snowfall, rains likely in Kashmir

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The minimum temperature at some places in Kashmir improved and settled above the freezing point owing to cloud cover as the Meteorological Department forecast fairly widespread to widespread rain or snow over three days from Wednesday, officials said on Tuesday.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a low of 1.8 degrees Celsius over three degrees up from minus 1.6 degrees Celsius the previous night, they said.

The famous ski-resort of Gulmarg, in north Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 9 degrees Celsius down from minus 6.6 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, which also serves as the base camp for the annual Amarnath yatra, recorded a low of minus 6.2 degrees Celsius down from minus 4.8 degrees Celsius the previous night, they said.

The officials said Qazigund recorded the minimum of minus 0.3 degree Celsius up from the previous night's minus 2.8 degree Celsius.

The nearby south Kashmir town of Kokernag recorded a low of minus 2.6 degrees Celsius. The minimum in Kupwara in north Kashmir settled at a low of 0.3 degrees Celsius. The MeT Office has said there is a possibility of rain or snow at fairly widespread for two days from Wednesday and at scattered places on Friday.

Kashmir is currently under the influence of a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurd' (small cold) which began on Monday after the Chilla-i-Kalan -- the 40-day harshest winter period -- ended. Chilla-i-Kalan, which had begun on December 21 last year -- is a period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies including the famous Dal Lake here as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

Highlights of Budget...

Rs 50,000 Crore to total cover of Rs 5 lakh er

"Raising and Accelerating MSME performance (RAMP) programme with outlay of Rs 6,000 crore to be rolled out for MSMEs

"Rs 60,000 crore allocated to cover 3.8 crore households in 2022-23 under `Har Ghar, Nal se Jal'

"Rs 48,000 crore allocated for completion of 80 lakh houses in 2022-23 under PM Awas Yojana

"Additional allocation of Rs 19,500 crore for Production Linked Incentive for manufacture of high efficiency solar modules to meet the goal of 280 GW of installed solar power by 2030

"Initial allocation of Rs 1,500 crore made to enable livelihood activities for youth and women under the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East Region (PM-DevINE)

"SEZ Act to be replaced with new legislation to enable States to become partners in Development of Enterprise and Service Hubs'

"Defence: 68% of capital procurement budget earmarked for domestic industry in 2022-23, up from 58% in 2021-22

"Defence R&D to be opened up for industry, startups and academia with 25% of defence R&D budget earmarked

"Scheduled Commercial Banks to set up 75 Digital Banking Units (DBUs) in 75 districts

"100 per cent of 1.5 lakh post offices to come on core banking system

"e-Passports with embedded chip, futuristic technology to be rolled out

"Battery swapping policy to be brought out for setting up charging stations at scale in urban areas for promotion of electric mobility

"Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE) to be established for speedy winding-up of companies

"Scheme for design-led manufacturing to be launched to build a strong ecosystem for 5G as part of the PLI scheme

"Data Centres and Energy Storage Systems to be given infrastructure status

"RBI to introduce digital rupee in FY23 to boost digital economy, better currency management.

Union budget is...

Castes and Scheduled Tribes wanting to take up agro-forestry would also help farmers. He said the budget has set up a revolutionary chapter for Anganwadi workers whereby two lakh of them would be rewarded as Saksham workers. The budget for agriculture has been increased to Rs 1.32 lakh crores in which Rs 27 lakh crores have been earmarked for farming.

More than 80 lakh poor families would be getting pucca shelter, Rs 3.80 crores have been earmarked for Nal See Jal programme. All such plans would go long way to take the country to new heights.

Four doctors suspended...

Health Services, Kashmir, said in an order.

The doctors are Hilal Ahmad, Gulzar Ahmad, Alfer Nafie and Mohammad Ashraf.

The Director of Health Services, Kashmir also constituted a four-member committee to inquire into the incident. The committee has been asked to submit its report within two days.

Earlier, taking serious note of the alleged medical negligence leading to the death of Mohammad Hussain Hafiz, an employee of municipal committee Pulwama, Deputy Commissioner Baseer Ul Haq Choudhary ordered the constitution of an inquiry committee for investigating the matter.

Hafiz reportedly died of cardiac arrest in the District Hospital on January 31.

While taking cognisance of the matter, Choudhary said the inquiry will ascertain the veracity of medical negligence on the part of doctors and staff on duty.

He said a three-member committee has been constituted in this regard which will submit its report in three days.

The deputy commissioner said in case of medical negligence, the law will take its course.

Time to free...

of birth which needs to be investigated and dealt with according to law. In fact the matter should have been handed over to the Vigilance Organisation or Anti Corruption, which has a proper mechanism to deal with such offences, if it really wishes.

informed police which rushed the spot and shifted the body to morgue. The deceased was identified as Liaqat Ali, son of Shareef Ali, resident of Dhami, Nagrota. During investigation it was found that Liaqat went out from his house a day before but didn't return back.

45 bovines rescued

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Tuesday foiled several bovine smuggling bids by rescuing 45 bovines.

As per details, Roun Domail Poolice during Naka in the area intercepted a Tata Sumo without registration number and during checking found it laden with 6 bovines, which were rescued. However, driver of the vehicle managed to escape from the spot. Manwal Police also rescued 35 bovines from two trucks (JK03J-3738, JK02AG-6632) & a jeep without registration number at Jadda Naka. The bovines were rescued and vehicles were seized. The smugglers managed to escape from spot.

In another action, Sruinsar Police also rescued 4 bovines from two vehicles (JK02CS-4131 & JK02B-5221). Both drivers were arrested and cases under relevant sections of law were registered against them.

10 vagabonds arrested

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Tuesday arrested ten vagabonds from Bus stand area.

As per details, a police team during patrolling in Bus-stand area found some youth creating public nuisance. They were arrested and presented before the Magistrate.

Car carrying contraband met with accident; poppy straw, Charas recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN: A car carrying contraband met with an accident near Ramban and during checking poppy straw and Charas was recovered from it.

As per details, a car and a truck collided head-on near Hotle Mepal in Banihal due to which driver of car got injured. On receiving information, police rushed to the spot and during evacuation of car driver, found 900 gm Charas and 8 Kg poppy straw from vehicle. The injured driver was identified as Mohd Rafiq, resident of Lower Munda.

Unidentified persons throw acid on 24-year-old girl

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Unknown persons threw acid on a 24-year-old girl in Safakadal area on Tuesday evening. As per details, a girl (name withheld), resident of Eid Gah was attacked at Usmani Colony Wantpora and was evacuated from site to SMHS Hospital for treatment.

Theft case solved, stolen property of school worth lakhs recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: Working out a case of theft registered at Gandoh police station, Police on Tuesday arrested accused and recovered stolen property worth lakhs of rupees from them, stolen from a Government school.

Police said that based on a written complaint lodged by Principal Government Higher Secondary School Gowari, Gandoh that some unknown thieves decamped with some articles from school valuing lakhs, FIR No. 05/2022 under sections 457/380 of IPC was registered at Police Station Gandoh and a special police team was constituted at Police Station Gandoh for arresting thieves. During investigation, the team conducted raids at several suspected locations for search of thieves and after hectic efforts, succeeded to intercept and arrest two accused namely Ishrat Ali, son of Noor Mohd Malik and Muneer Ahmed Wani, son of Abdul Rasheed, both residents of Hilore Gandoh and on their disclosure stolen items were also recovered, including three solar plates of 6x3 dimension, three TFT Screens, two Inverter Batteries of 150 Amp, a speaker with Bass Tube, a web-camera, a Kettle, a solar converter; a UPS, two CPUs, three Keypads and two computer Mouse valuing in lakhs. The investigation of the case is under progress and more recoveries are expected, said police. It is worthwhile to mention here that aforesaid accused have also confessed their theft at Middle School Dudwar Gandoh against which FIR No. 80/2019 under sections 457/380 of RPC was registered in Police Station Gandoh. SSP Doda Abdul Qayoom has appreciated the efforts of Police team comprising SDPO Gandoh Sahzada Kabir Matoo, SHO Gandoh Vikram Singh, PSI Anil Sharma, Incharge Police Post Changa.

The retirement of an officer is nothing new in Jammu and Kashmir, the state of affairs in which is murkier than the Dal Lake. If a thorough review of the antecedents of the officials is undertaken, many skeletons will fall from the cupboard. They are the parasites who have sucked the blood of common people by fleecing the exchequer. They commit all types of frauds during their normal or extended service careers. In the instant case, the government should undertake an audit of his working during the past nearly a year and identify the beneficiaries, if any, of the decision taken by him, as he was holding a pivotal assignment in the Industries and Commerce Department-an important agency for the implementation of the ambitious start-up programme.

Jammu and Kashmir is currently under the spell of Lt Governor's Rule and there is no political interference in the administration as such. The incumbent in the Raj Bhavan, is expected to rise to the occasion and undertake a massive exercise to identify, name and shame the rogue elements, who have been indulging in all sorts of omissions and commissions over the years. By doing so, the Lieutenant Governor will not only free the 'Aam Aadmi' of Jammu and Kashmir from the shackles of the white colored sharks but also earn the good will of the people in general.

Police officer injured...

was coming back from mosque after prayers in his native place Amishijipora area of #Shopian, the Kashmir Zone Police said in a tweet.

Ahmad is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Srinagar, police said.

The area, where the incident took place, has been cordoned off by security forces to nab the attackers, they said, adding a case has been registered and investigation started.

Lt Gen Dwivedi...

upon superannuation of Lt Gen Yogesh Kumar Joshi, a Kargil war hero who hanged his boosts on Monday after serving at various strategic postings in the Indian army during his distinguished career spanning 40 years.

Lt General Upendra Dwivedi was deputy chief of the army staff prior to being appointed as the Army Commander, Northern Command.

On assuming the charge of the Northern Command, the General Officer paid homage to the brave hearts of Northern Command and laid the wreath at the Dhruva War Memorial, Jammu-based Army PRO Lt Col Devender Anand said.

Later, he conveyed his greetings to all ranks and expressed his commitment to take forward the excellent work by his predecessors and all ranks of the Northern Command.

Earlier, the Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADGPI) of the Indian Army tweeted, 'Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi assumed the command of #NorthernCommand today (Tuesday). In a solemn ceremony, #ArmyCommander paid tribute to #bravehearts at #DhruvaWarMemorial #Udhampur.

The defence spokesman said Lt Gen Dwivedi was commissioned into the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles Regiment and in a career spanning over 37 years, served across a wide spectrum of terrain and operational profiles.

He tenanted a number of important command, staff and instructional appointments making immense contributions to the organization, Lt Col Anand said.

He said Lt Gen Dwivedi is an alumnus of Sainik School, Rewa, National Defence Academy, and Indian Military Academy.

He graduated from the Defence Service Staff College, attended Higher Command Course at Army War College and the National Defence College equivalent course at United State Army War College, the spokesman said.

He said the General Officer commanded his battalion in the Kashmir Valley, Assam Rifles sector along the Indo-Myanmar border, Inspectorate General Assam Rifles (IGAR, East).

Later, the General Officer commanded the Rising Star Corps based at Yol.

He has served as staff officer in an Armoured Brigade, Directorate General of Military Operations, Military Secretary Branch and at Divisional and Corps Headquarters, he said.

The spokesman said the General Officer has had instructional tenures at the Indian Military Academy and Army War College.

He also had two overseas tenures in Somalia and Seychelles, Lt Col Anand said, adding he served in the Directorate General of Infantry in different capacities including Director General of Infantry and fast-tracked procurement cases of weapons leading to significant and visible capability enhancement for the Army.

BSF trains people to keep vigil on drone intrusions along Indo-Pak border

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Living along a 198-kilometre long borderline with Pakistan, people have become a force multiplier for the BSF by keeping a hawk's eye on the drone activities from Pakistan.

The BSF has trained people by conducting over 140 drone awareness programmes (DAFs) on various aspects of drone activities along the Indo-Pak border.

As one drives into the border hamlets in R S Pura, Aknoor and Arnia sector along International Border, various flex boards have come up in hamlets to spread awareness among the population about the drone activities.

"We keep an eye on drone activities on the border. We have been made aware about the drone activities from across the border for dropping weapons, explosives and narcotics on this side for use of terrorists," Suchetgarh resident Dayan Singh said.

Apart from BSF's manual vigilance and technological surveillance, people have now become the third eye on the border on Pakistan-backed drone activities.

Another villager and former ex-serviceman Suram Chand says that people living in hamlets along IB are now the third eye on the border apart from BSF's twin eyes of manual vigilance and equipment surveillance. The BSF conducted 144 drone awareness programs in over 170 hamlets and schools in border areas of Jammu, Samba and Kathua district in the past, DIG BSF S P S Sandhu said.

Drone awareness programmes were launched along IB last year by the Border Security Force following the increase in drone activities from across the border, the BSF officer said.

Drone activities from Pakistan have become a real cause of concern in border areas as many drone droppings have been reported, the DIG BSF said.

"Live demonstrations were shown on dropping of consignments by drone", he said.

BSF officials said that various flex boards were also displayed in villages and schools to spread awareness and enhance coordination and understanding among the border population to foil and report any suspicious drone activities in border areas.

GPS-fitted drones capable of lifting 10 kg of weight flew in from Pakistan dozens of times to airdrop several caches of arms, ammunition and narcotics, which were seized by the BSF and the police along IB in the Jammu frontier in 2021. BSF troops also reached out to the border population and held 86 village coordination meetings (VCMs). "Around 86 village coordination meetings with public representatives and villagers were also conducted by the BSF during the period for better coordination to resolve problems of the border population," the DIG said.

COVID-19: Active cases come down to 1,087 in Ladakh

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: The active cases in Ladakh decreased to 1,087 as 250 coronavirus patients have been cured and discharged on Monday while the Union Territory has reported 125 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the tally to 25,994, officials said.

The UT has recorded 224 covid-related deaths -- 165 in Leh and 59 in Kargil -- since the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, they said. There was no death reported from the Union Territory on Monday, they said. As many as 250 patients were cured and discharged from hospitals in Ladakh. Of these, 129 were discharged in Leh and 121 in Kargil, while the total number of cured patients is 24,710, they said. Of the total 125 fresh cases, 68 were reported from Leh district and 57 from Kargil district, they said. The total number of COVID-19 active cases in Ladakh has gone down to 1,087, including 747 in Leh and 340 in Kargil district.

