

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Advani gets Bharat...

fought to get democracy out of one party's grasp and guided everyone. He challenged dynasty politics and connected India's democracy to all-inclusive and nationalist ideologies," he said.

Modi had earlier said on X, "One of the most respected statesmen of our times, his contribution to the development of India is monumental. His is a life that started from working at the grassroots to serving the nation as our Deputy Prime Minister," Modi said on X.

His decades-long service in public life has been marked by an unwavering commitment to transparency and integrity, setting an exemplary standard in political ethics, the prime minister said.

Advani has made unparalleled efforts towards furthering national unity and cultural resurgence, he said.

"The conferring of the Bharat Ratna on him is a very emotional moment for me. I will always consider it my privilege that I got countless opportunities to interact with him and learn from him," he said.

Modi spoke to Advani, who is credited with crafting the party's rise through the 90s when it came to power for the first time with Atal Bihari Vajpayee heading coalition governments, and congratulated him.

Advani's parliamentary interventions have always been exemplary and full of rich insights, Modi said.

Soon after the prime minister's announcement, a communication from the Rashtrapati Bhavan said the President has been pleased to award the Bharat Ratna to Advani.

Last month, the government had named late Karpoori Thakur, a socialist stalwart and former Bihar chief minister, for the highest honour.

The Bharat Ratna for both Thakur and Advani in the same year highlights the BJP's nod to the politics of 'Mandal' (social justice) as well as 'Kamandala' (Hindutva).

Incidentally, Advani's 'Rath Yatra' in 1990 was seen as the BJP's attempt to use 'Kamandala' to counter socialist parties' politics of 'Mandal' after the government headed by V P Singh announced to implement the Mandal commission report recommending reservation for the Other Backward Classes in government jobs.

If the recognition for Thakur years after he passed away in 1988 was seen by many political experts as part of the BJP's push to deepen its roots among the economically backward classes (EBC), a category from which he came from, the honour for Advani is being seen as an ode to his instrumental role in shaping the party's core ideology which has come to dominate the country's polity under Modi.

Former BJP president Murli Manohar Joshi, a contemporary of Advani, went to his residence to congratulate him and expressed happiness at the honour.

The Bharat Ratna will be bestowed on Advani in a year of the Ram temple's consecration, which marks a triumphant closure for the BJP of an issue which was thrust into popular consciousness by the veteran leader through his 'Ram Rath Yatra' in 1990.

Home Minister Amit Shah said he has been dedicated to serving the country and its people selflessly through his life, adding that he tirelessly works for issues related to the nation, culture and people.

Words cannot describe his contribution to the party and its ideology, Shah said.

Expressing his joy, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Advani symbolised probity, dedication and strong resolve in politics.

In his long public life, the contribution he made in different capacities to the country's development and nation-building is unforgettable and inspiring, he said.

Advani's contemporary and former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was bestowed the same honour in 2015. Advani is the 50th person to receive this.

Jammu-Srinagar NH...

twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu region with south Kashmir's Shopian district are still blocked due to heavy snowfall.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson of the Meteorological department forecast wet weather till Sunday evening and advised travellers to follow official advisories before starting their journey.

In its weather update, the MeT department predicted the possibility of light to moderate snow or rain at many places on Saturday, the possibility of light to moderate snow or rain at most places with chances of heavy snowfall over isolated higher reaches on Sunday.

"Middle and higher reaches of the north, north-western and central parts (of Kashmir) may receive 7-10 inches of snow, lower reaches and plains may receive 3-6 inches, while plains of central Kashmir may receive rain with 1-2 inches of snow," the spokesperson said.

"Middle and higher reaches of south Kashmir may receive 12-15 inches of snow, while lower reaches and plains may receive 6-9 inches. Plains of Jammu division may receive light to moderate rain with thunder/lightning," the spokesperson said.

He said light to moderate snow over higher reaches of Pirpanjal Range and Chenab Valley with heavy snowfall over isolated higher reaches of Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts of Jammu region are expected till Sunday night.

Fresh snowfall blankets...

warnings in hilly and mountainous areas of Kashmir while motorists have been advised to drive carefully in view of slippery roads, the officials said.

Meanwhile, there was respite from intense cold conditions last night but the minimum temperature stayed several degrees below the normal for this time of the year.

Gulmarg skiing resort in north Kashmir recorded a low of minus 10.6 degrees Celsius, up by 1.4 degrees from the previous night's minus 12.0 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, which serves as the base camp for the annual Amarnath yatra, recorded a low of minus 8.3 degrees Celsius, up from minus 11.9 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Kokernag and Qazigund towns in south Kashmir both recorded a low of minus 5.4 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 1.7 degrees Celsius.

On Friday, the mercury had nosedived across Kashmir with unofficial data suggesting that Larnoo town in south Kashmir Anantnag district had recorded minus 17.1 degrees Celsius followed by Sonamarg resort on the Srinagar-Leh highway which recorded a low of minus 15.1 degrees Celsius.

Although 'Chilla-i-Kalan' -- the 40-day harshest winter period -- ended earlier this week, the cold wave has continued in Kashmir.

The valley is currently going through a 20-day-long 'Chilla-i-Khurd' (small cold) which shall be followed by a 10-day 'Chilla-i-Bachha' (baby cold).

Rajnath Singh commissions...

countries. He reiterated India's determination to maintain freedom of navigation, trade and commerce among different countries, along with stopping illegal and unregulated fishing in the Indian Ocean.

"INS Sandhayak will further strengthen India's role as a superpower in the Indo-Pacific region and help the Indian Navy in maintaining peace and security," said Singh in an official release.

According to the defence minister, the country is marching ahead on the path of development with a more than ever strong Navy, providing security in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific region as the first responder.

INS Sandhayak was built at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata. This project was steered by the Warship Design Bureau of the Indian Navy.

It has a displacement of 3,400 tons and a length of 110 metres with a beam of 16 m, equipped with state-of-the-art hydrographic equipment, including deep sea and shallow water multibeam echo sounders, autonomous underwater vehicles and others. Side scan sonar, data acquisition and processing system, remotely operated vehicle, data acquisition and processing system and other advanced features are also a part of INS Sandhayak, which contains 80 per cent indigenous content.

DM Jammu orders...

to the Land Revenue Act. Further investigation revealed that a portion of the purchased land, measuring 34 Kanal 06 Marlas, had been escheated to the State under the Agrarian Reform Act, 1976, through Mutation No. 24.

The District Magistrate highlighted two key violations viz The escheatment of the purchased land to the State & The illegal issuance of the Fard by revenue officials, violating provisions of the Land Revenue Act.'

As a result, the District Magistrate ordered the nullification of Mutation No. 42 dated October 3, 2005, specifically concerning the portion escheated to the State.

The Tehsildar Pargwal was directed to implement the order in revenue records promptly and submit an action taken report within 2 days. Additionally, the delinquent officials responsible for the illegal Fard issuance are to be identified for further necessary action.

Portfolios allocated in...

general administration and "all other portfolios not allocated to anyone else". State BJP chief Samrat Choudhary, who has become a Deputy Chief Minister, has got finance, a portfolio that his party has always held whenever it has shared power with the JD(U) supremo. Earlier, when Kumar was running a government with the 'Mahagathbandhan', comprising Congress, RJD, the health, finance department was held by the JD(U).

Besides finance, Choudhary has been given health, another portfolio that the BJP has held whenever it shares power in Bihar. Besides, he has been given commercial tax, urban development and housing, sports, panchayati raj, animal husbandry and fisheries and law.

Choudhary's party colleague Vijay Kumar Sinha, who is also a Deputy CM, has been given agriculture, road construction, revenue and land reforms, mining and geology, sugarcane, labour resources, art, culture and youth affairs, minor water resources and public health engineering department, the notification said.

Senior BJP leader Prem Kumar, who is only the third BJP leader to have been inducted into the nine-member cabinet formed last Sunday, has got cooperatives, OBC and Extremely Backward Classes Welfare, disaster management, tourism and environment and climate change.

JD(U) leader Vijay Kumar Chaudhary has retained parliamentary affairs, besides getting water resources, transport, building construction, education and information and public resources department.

Veteran JD(U) leader Bijendra Yadav, whom Kumar often credits for transforming the power sector in the state, has retained the department, besides getting excise and prohibition, planning and development, rural works and minority welfare.

JD(U) leader Shrawan Kumar has retained rural welfare besides getting social welfare and food and consumer affairs.

Santosh Kumar Suman of the Hindustani Awam Morcha has got SC and ST welfare and Information Technology.

Independent MLA Sumit Kumar Singh, who has remained loyal towards the CM during his numerous switchovers in the last four years, has retained science, technology and technical education.

Imran Khan, wife...

was pronounced by Senior Civil Judge Qudratullah, a day after the hearing of the case was conducted inside the Adiala Jail premises at Rawalpindi for 14 hours on Friday. The judge also slapped fines of Rs 5,00,000 each on the couple.

Both Khan and Bushra were present in the courtroom when the verdict was announced.

Earlier this week, Khan was sentenced to 10 years in the cipher (leaking of state secrets) case and 14 years in the Toshakhana corruption case. Bibi was also sentenced in this case for a similar term.

Arrested on August 5 last year, when he was found guilty in the Toshakhana corruption case filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Khan has since been imprisoned - first in the Attock Jail and later shifted to the Adiala Jail.

Khan told court reporters that the case against him was created to "humiliate and disgrace" both him and his 49-year-old spouse, Bushra Bibi.

"This marks the first instance in history where a case related to Iddat has been initiated," Dawn.com quoted Khan as saying and added that he said, it was also the first time that someone was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment in a Toshakhana corruption case.

Speaking to the media, Bushra said that Maneka, her ex-husband, verbally divorced her in April 2017, and the divorce dated November 2017 that has been presented by him before the court is "fake".

"[My] iddat period had culminated by January 1, 2018, followed by the official announcement of the marriage in February 2018 with Imran Khan," the former first lady stressed.

On Friday, the cross-examination of the four prosecution witnesses was completed, while Khan and Bushra submitted a joint statement, answering 13 questions. The court rejected the defence's request to produce additional witnesses. A plea of acquittal and jurisdictional pleas were also rejected.

The marriage with Khan was solemnised on January 1, 2018, and Bibi reportedly exercised a lot of influence on the former premier during his days in office.

She was supposedly a faith healer and the cricketer-turned-politician used to visit her for spiritual solace before the two developed a liking that ended in their marriage.

Khan is facing more than 100 cases since 2022 when he was ousted from power. He was arrested on August 5 when he was found guilty in the Toshakhana corruption case filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan. Since then he has been imprisoned - first in the Attock Jail and later shifted to the Adiala Jail.

Soon after today's judgment, PTI top leader Gohar Khan said that Judge Qudratullah had not issued the written judgment, which, "once issued would be challenged in the high court."

"This is another effort to keep the party out of elections," he said.

Khan's party has been robbed of the iconic election symbol of the cricket bat, his and his party colleagues' nomination papers have been rejected and at least one of his party leaders has been killed in the poll-related violence.

A post on the party's official handle showed Gohar Khan speaking to the media where he said, "Imran Khan's message to the nation: If I have to stay here for a thousand years, I will stay, I will not make a deal under any circumstances - The nation should come out on February 8 and pay its dues. No exit from stations."

The official X handle of PTI also posted an elaborate reaction almost immediately after the verdict was announced.

"The people will take revenge for every injustice done to the brave leader of the nation and every injustice done to him on February 8," it said.

Need to make...

"This includes making our systems more flexible and adaptable," he said. Citing ancient Indian beliefs, he said justice is at the root of independent self-governance and without justice the very existence of nation is not possible.

Noting the presence of a large number of delegates from African countries, he said India has a special relation with the African Union. "We are proud that the African Union became part of the G20 during India's presidency," he said.

The prime minister said legal education is a key instrument in justice delivery and pitched for having more women in law schools so that there presence rises in the legal system.

The world needs young legal minds who have diverse exposure, he said, adding that legal education needs to adapt to changing time and technology.

Referring to modernisation of laws to make them in sync with present-day realities, Modi said three new legislations have replaced more than 100-year-old colonial criminal laws in India.

Earlier, the focus was on punishment and penal aspects. Now, the focus is on ensuring justice. "Therefore, citizens have a sense of assurance rather than fear," he said.

India, Modi noted, has used technology as a tool to reduce litigations which eases burden on the justice delivery system.

In the last few years, India has used drones to map places and provide clear property cards to rural people, thereby reducing disputes and possible litigations.

Digitalisation has also helped many courts in India take proceedings online. This has helped people access justice even from far-away locations, he said.

The theme of the conference is "Cross-Border Challenges in Justice Delivery".

The conference will deliberate on important issues pertaining to law and justice like judicial transition and the ethical dimensions of legal practice, executive accountability, and revisiting modern-day legal education, among others.

Bovine smuggler arrested...

since January 30 when a warrant of arrest under PSA was issued against him by Divisional Commissioner Jammu, a police officer said.

He said Ali is a notorious bovine smuggler who was named in five FIRs registered at different police stations of Jammu district.

The PSA is an administrative law that allows detention without charge or trial for up to two years in some cases.

Varsha Puranik bags 300m short-track race gold in KIWG

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
LEH : Top Indian ice-skater Varsha Puranik proved her credentials yet again, clinching gold in the 300m short-track race for women (above 17 years category) at the Khelo India Winter Games here on Saturday.

Varsha's Karnataka team-mate Akash Aradhya also hogged the limelight with his second individual gold at the games.

Varsha and Akash, who won the men's over-17 short track (500m) event on this day, have given their state a head-start in the short-form skating competition.

Karnataka have three gold medals out of the five decided so far and are leading the overall tally.

Telangana won their first gold when Tallur

Naiyanashri won the women's Under-17 short track (300m) final.

But Varsha was unbeatable. The 37-year-old, who has been competing internationally since 2001 with her last foreign assignment being the World Games in July 2022 in the US, was a start-to-finish winner, clocking 39.81 seconds.

"I'm a microbiologist by profession and skating is my passion. Originally, I am a roller-skater and have represented India at the 2018 Asian Games. On suggestion of my coach, K. Srikantha Rao, I chose to take up ice skating. I would like to thank Khelo India," said Varsha.

Aradhya (54.91 seconds) also rode his international experience when he out-

sprinted Suyog Tapkir (55.27) of Maharashtra for the gold medal. Aradhya has represented India in various international and was the country's flag-bearer at the 2017 Asian Winter Games in Japan.

In ice hockey, top sides such as ITBP, Army and Ladakh dominated the competition. In men's Group A, ITBP defeated Haryana 13-0 with Mohammed Ismail scoring four goals. Army scored a massive 24-0 win against Rajasthan in Group B game, with Tsewang Dorjey scoring six goals and Tsewang Stanzin netting four. In another Group B match, U-T Ladakh trounced Maharashtra 13-0. In a women's round-robin match, ITBP crushed Telangana 19-0.

Srinagar Admin seals two clinics in violation of guidelines

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
SRINAGAR: District Administration Srinagar on Saturday evening undertook a surprise inspection of various Clinical Establishments operating in the City in order to ensure proper regulation and operationalization of Clinical Establishments in Srinagar District.

The inspection was carried out on the directions of the District Magistrate (DM) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to stop mushrooming growth of ill equipped pathological/ microbiological laboratories and other clinical establishments lacking in infrastructure and technical expertise.

The inspection team head-

ed Deputy CMO, District Health Officer, ZMO accompanied by Tehsildar concerned undertook a thorough inspection of various clinics in Hawal and Nowshera areas of the District during which the inspection teams found infirmities and deficiencies in some centres.

During the inspection 02 clinics were sealed who found violating norms and laid guidelines.

Speaking regarding the drive, the District Magistrate Srinagar, stressed on intensifying such inspections of the clinical establishments in Srinagar to ensure that such establishments are running according to laid down guidelines and regulations to the

best satisfaction of the patients.

The DM urged the medical practitioners in the private sector, chemists, and drug-gists to strictly follow the guidelines, norms and medical ethics while discharging their professional duties and responsibilities.

He also asked the Health Department to conduct frequent inspections to ensure that the rules in vogue are followed in letter and spirit by these medical establishments.

The DM stressed on ensuring upto mark health care facilities to the people and said patient care is the top most priority of the Administration.

Div Com Kashmir takes stock of arrangements for Shab-e-Meraj at Hazratbal Shrine Greets people on fresh snow fall, as dry spell finally ends

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
SRINAGAR: To ensure all requisite arrangements are in place for devotees to observe Shab-e-Meraj with religious fervor and devotion at Dargah Hazratbal, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Saturday paid visit to the Shrine to take first hand appraisal of available facilities.

He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohid ud Din Bhat; Commissioner SMC/CEO SSCL, Dr Owais Ahmad; Director Health Services Kashmir; SSP Traffic, Tehsildar North, Tehsildar Waqf Board and other officers of civil departments.

Div Com issued a slew of directions to concerned officers for utilizing their all resources to ensure smooth arrangements for devotees.

He was informed that to ensure uninterrupted power supply all the steps have been taken by the concerned department. It was also given that in addition to DG sets



Div Com Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri during visit to Hazratbal Shrine.

two service lines have been connected to supply electricity.

On the request of the Imam of Shrine, Div Com instructed SSP Traffic not to allow parking of vehicles on the north side of Shrine on the special occasion as it is causing inconvenience to the people who are visiting the Shrine in large numbers to pay obeisance.

In view of cold weather, Div Com directed Tehsildar Waqf Board to only install water-proof tents within the premises of Hazratbal besides making heating arrangements inside tents.

Div Com instructed for

making public utilities functional and sanitation of the surrounding area.

CEO, SSCL was asked to deploy smart city buses on some routes to avoid overcrowding especially at the time of dispersal of visitors.

Talking to the media, Bidhuri reiterated that the arrangements will be best compared to the past.

Meanwhile, he greeted people on the occasion of fresh snowfall with "Nu Sheen Mubarak" as the long dry spell of the season ends and brings respite to the people from the apprehensions of drought.

DC Ganderbal discusses MGNREGA Convergence Plan 2024-25

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
GANDERBAL: In a bid to boost developmental initiatives in the district, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir Saturday presided over a crucial meeting to deliberate on the MGNREGA convergence plan 2024-25 with various line departments.

The focus of the discussion centered on creating public assets for the overall advancement of the district.

Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Dr. Bashir Ahmad provided a comprehensive overview of the MGNREGA Convergence annual action plan for the fiscal year 2024-25. He highlighted that out of the 266 permissible works under MGNREGA, a substantial 182 are related to Natural Resource Management (NRM). Notably, 166 of these works are aimed at directly creating productive assets linked to

agriculture and allied activities. During the meeting, the DC underscored the significance of strategic convergence with various depart-

ments, including Agriculture, Fisheries, NRLM, Food Supplies, Forestry, Horticulture, and Irrigation.

Power shutdown

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCJammu has informed that the power supply to Industry, DC Office, Bainglad, Raiyan and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 04 from 2 pm to 4 pm. Meanwhile, the Superintending Engineer, O&M Circle, Rajouri JPDCJammu has informed that the power supply to Sunderbani PSS to Kantham Police Station will remain affected on February 04, 06, 08 and 10 from 9 am to 3 pm.

Ramban's Cyber Cell restores hacked What'sApp Account

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
RAMBAN: Cyber Cell of District Police Ramban restored a hacked What'sApp Account. Reportedly a complaint was received at DPO Ramban on February 3, 2024 regarding hacking of whatsapp account of one lady namely Ifrat Begum wife of Fayaz Ahmed Bohru resident of Doligam Banihal. The said whatsapp account was hacked on Feb 2. SSP Ramban directed the Team of Cyber Cell DPO Ramban for necessary action. The Cyber cell team swung into action immediately and they promptly restored the hacked account and provided the complainant, guidance on enhancing security and privacy features to prevent future incidents.