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Addresses 10th Convocation of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University in Katra Abrogation of Article 370 gave wings to aspirations of generations: VP



Vice-President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar addressing at the Convocation Ceremony of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University on Saturday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Vice-President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday said, "Jammu and Kashmir, which had the highest voter turnout in 35 years during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, witnessed a 30-point increase in participation in the Kashmir Valley. "Democracy has found its real voice, its real resonance. The region is no longer a story of conflict; every

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- ▶ New Kashmir no longer story of conflict, but story of trust being restored, faith being rewarded
- ▶ Highest voter turnout in 35 years during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in J&K reflects democracy's true resonance
- ▶ Region is confluence of confidence and capital
- ▶ Dr. B.R. Ambedkar refused to draft Article 370; Sardar Patel integrated most princely states but not J&K
- ▶ Investment proposals worth Rs 65,000 Cr received in J&K signal new era of progress

VP Dhankhar pays obeisance at Vaishno Devi shrine



KATRA: Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday paid obeisance at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, officials said.

Dhankhar reached Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the revered shrine, on a day-long visit to preside as chief guest the 10th convocation of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University.

After attending the convocation, the Vice President accompanied by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha flew to the cave shrine in the afternoon and offered his prayers, the officials said.

He was received by Anshul Garg, the Chief Executive Officer of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. Garg briefed him about various developmental

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Need fresh look at teaching-mentoring system for Viksit Bharat: LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATRA: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday addressed the Convocation Ceremony of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU).

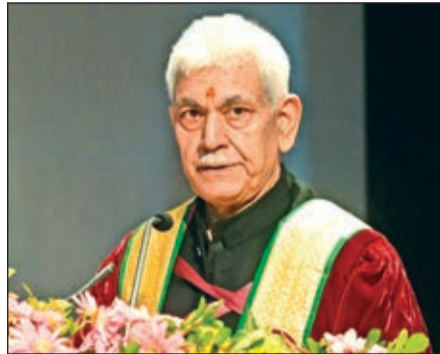
The Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to Vice-President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar for blessing the graduating students of SMVDU at University's 10th Convocation. Today's moment will remain etched in students' memories for a lifetime, he said.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor called upon the youth to carry forward the country's development and make it the largest economy of the world.

"The strength of our nation will be determined by the values, innovation and knowledge and I strongly believe the young men and women graduating in this Amrit Kaal will shape the destiny of our nation. Those stepping out today into the real world have a unique opportunity of nation building," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said the advances in humanities, arts, science and technology have opened new areas of opportunities and the knowledge and learning of the graduating students will help them achieve success. "Today our youth are equipped with special knowledge and skills that can be properly

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LG Manoj Sinha addressing gathering at Convocation Ceremony of SMVDU.

- ▶ LG expresses gratitude to Vice-President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar for blessing graduating students of SMVDU
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Another batch of 32 villagers returned home from isolation centre in Rajouri

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: A second batch of 32 villagers, who were lodged in an isolation centre owing to mysterious deaths in their village, returned home in the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, officials said.

Seventeen members of three families, including 13 children, died under mysterious circumstances after falling sick in the remote Badhaal village of Kotranka Sub-division between December 7 and January 19.

On Saturday, at least 350 members of 70 families were allowed to return home after spending 22 days in the separation centres at Government Nursing College Building and Government Boys' Higher Secondary School in Rajouri town.

Among the 50 villagers put up in a separate isolation facility at Government Medical College (GMC) Hospital in Rajouri, 32 people returned home on Saturday, the officials said.

They said 18 people are still under observation in this separation facility.

Though the exact cause of the death remained unknown so far despite authorities roping in experts from premier institutions in the

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Cop among 3 Govt employees sacked for terror links

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday dismissed three government employees including a jailed policeman for their alleged terror links, officials said.

The sacked employees have been identified as police constable Firdous Ahmad Bhat, teacher in school education department Mohammad Ashraf Bhat and orderly in forest department Nisar Ahmad Khan who was earlier arrested in connection with the killing of a National Conference minister in 2000, they said.

The officials said the LG invoked Article 311 (2) (c) of the Constitution to terminate the services of the three employees after investigation by law enforcement and intelligence agencies clearly established their terror links.

Over 70 government employees have been fired by the LG in the Union Territory for their terror links in the past few years.

The termination of the three government employees comes close on the heels of two back-to-back security review meetings by the LG in the twin capital cities of Srinagar and Jammu, directing the security agencies to intensify anti-terror operations to neutralise terrorists and terror ecosystem.

The officials said the dismissed policeman, who was arrested in May last year, was initially appointed as Special Police Officer (SPO) in 2005 and subsequently promoted as constable in 2011.

Currently, lodged in Kot Bhalwal

Jail, Bhat was posted at a sensitive position of Electronic Surveillance Unit in the J-K Police but started working for terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

However, he got exposed when two terrorists -- Waseem Shah and Adnan Beigh -- were arrested in Anantnag with a pistol and a hand grenade as they were planning to attack non-local civilians and tourists, the officials said.

During the interrogation, Bhat revealed his sinister design and led to the recovery of a sizable quantity of arms including pistols, ammunition and explosives from his residential quarter in Police Housing Colony in Srinagar and a newly constructed house in Mattan, Anantnag.

According to the officials, 3 kg of charas was also recovered from his

residence which was dropped by Pakistan-based LeT terrorist Sajid Jutt alias "Saifullah" through a drone in Samba district a few days earlier.

Using his police constable cover, he was transporting arms, ammunition and explosives for terrorists and investigation also revealed that he was also working for Hizbul Mujahideen's Commander Khurshed Dar and LeT terrorist Hamza Bhai and Abu Zabar besides Jutt.

"He not only provided classified information about security forces movement, collection, storage and delivery of arms ammunition but also guided terror attacks," the officials said.

They said he was also found involved in an attack on a police party in 2020 which

Justice Vinod Gupta passes away at Delhi



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Justice (Retd) Vinod Kumar Gupta, former Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand High Courts passed away this evening at New Delhi after a brief illness. He was 77. Justice Gupta was survived by his mother;

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J&K Govt notifies Excise Policy 2025-26

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Saturday notified new Excise Policy 2025-26. According to notification, the Excise Policy 2025-26 enunciated as hereunder will come into force on April 1, 2025 and will continue to remain in force till March 31, 2026. However, the government may revise the same at any point of time during the course of the year.

The policy objectives include to bring about greater social consciousness and awareness about the harmful effects of consumption of alcoholic beverages and drug abuse; to encourage transition from high to low alcoholic content beverages; to rationalize the number of taxes/duties and other levies to optimize revenues for common good; to check bootlegging/smuggling of liquor and narcotic drugs in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir from neighboring States/Union Territories; to provide choice of liquor brands and

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 24.9°C Min: 10.9°C

Humidity
Max: 68 Min: 36

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 18.2°C Min: 1.7°C

Humidity
Max: 69 Min: 26

Sunset : 18:16 Hours
Sunrise : 07:14 Hours

CBSE Class 10, 12 board exams begin

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: CBSE Class X and XII board examinations began on Saturday, with students expressing mixed emotions, from initial nervousness to relief after taking the exams.

Raghav Goyal, a student from DPS Vasant Kunj, said, "We had solved sample papers and studied NCERT for preparation. Initially, I was nervous, but the exam went well, though it was quite lengthy," said Goyal.

CBSE's Controller of Examinations Sanyam Bhardwaj told PTI Videos, "Today marked the beginning of the CBSE Class X and XII board examinations for

2025, with students sitting for their English and entrepreneurship papers."

He said the exams were conducted smoothly across the country in a conducive environment.

"For class 10, the exams took place at over 7,780 centres, with approximately 23,86,000 students appearing. Meanwhile, the class 12 exams were held at 995 centres, with nearly 23,000 students participating," Bhardwaj added.

Some students raised minor concerns about the exam format.

A class 10 student from Sarvodaya Senior Secondary School in Sadar Patel Nagar

said, "My exam went well, but I have some doubts about the word limits. For the questions asked, what I wrote seemed sufficient, but I couldn't meet the required word count."

He also added, "One question was out of the syllabus, but since we had an option to choose, it was fine."

Several parents were seen waiting for their children outside the exam centres.

Yuti, another student, said, "The papers were easy if you had practised old sample papers. There were some changes in the analytical and writing sections, but overall, it was quite similar to

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Democratic India able to feed 800 million people, says Jaishankar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MUNICH: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar challenged an American senator who said that democracy "doesn't put food on the table" telling her that in India it does.

Jaishankar was apparently referring to the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) at a panel discussion at the Munich Security Conference, where he countered US Senator Elissa Slotkin.

"Senator, you said that democracy doesn't put food on your table. Actually... in my part of the world, it does. Today, since we are a democratic society, we give nutrition support, and food to 800 million people," Jaishankar said on Friday.

"That is a matter of how healthy they



are and how full their stomachs are. So, the point I want to make is that different parts of the world are going through different conversations. Please do not assume that this is a kind of universal phenomenon, it is not," he said.

"There are parts where it is working

well. Maybe there are parts where it's not," he said. "I think people need to have honest conversations about why it's not."

"But I would argue that to an extent, as someone dispassionately viewing it, a lot of it is an accumulated problem of the model of globalisation that we have followed for the last 25-30 years. I think a lot of chickens have come home to roost."

"So, yes there are issues, but from our point of view, let's not make that universal," the External Affairs Minister added at the discussion.

The central government has been providing food grains free of cost under the PMGKAY since January 1, 2023 to two types of beneficiaries under the National Food

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BJP discusses strategy ahead of budget session in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Ahead of the upcoming budget session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, the BJP held a "crucial strategic" meeting of its legislators and organisational district presidents on Saturday to plan its course of action for raising important public issues, a party spokesman said.

The meeting was chaired by J-K UT President Sat Sharma and attended by, among others, Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, the spokesman added.

The budget session of the J-K Legislative Assembly will begin on March 3, with the Chief Minister presenting the budget on March 7.

In his address, the BJP president urged the party MLAs to "aggressively

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Judicial Officials during the training programme on "Hardware & Software maintenance" in Jammu on Saturday.

at J&K Judicial Academy, Janipur, Jammu.

In the first technical ses-

sion, Jagdish Chhailkar, Scientist F, e-Courts Division NIC Pune, joined the session

virtually. He explained the introduction to concept of CIS 4.0 and improvements in comparison to CIS 3.2. He discussed that CIS 4.0 is a giant move under the initiative of e-committee to make the Indian Judiciary more transparent and litigant friendly.

He also discussed the data center VMs, transfer of physical data centers into digital data centers (i.e., virtual) using a cloud software platform, enabling companies to remotely access information and applications.

The Resource Person explained the replication methodology which helps in creating and maintaining multiple copies of the same data to help ensure data availability, reliability and

resilience. He also gave a hand on demonstration of various concepts.

The second technical session of the day was conducted by Anoop Sharma, Registrar Computer(IT), High Court of J&K and Ladakh along with his team. They explained the process of Logical Replication, NJDG Intra, Establishment Tagging, json creation and json import/installation, Data Monitoring, etc. The Resource Person addressed the elaboration on networking concepts and VC equipment, Ubuntu OS maintenance in relation to e-Court Project. He elaborated on working of other portals viz. e-Summons, NSTEP, ICJS in tandem with CIS 4.0.

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