

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Step up fight...

government is committed to wiping out terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasised the Modi government's policy of zero tolerance against terrorism to achieve the goal of a terrorism-free Jammu and Kashmir and directed all security agencies to remain vigilant and continue to work in synergy to eliminate terrorism in the Union Territory.

The Home Minister said the narco network is providing support to infiltrators and terrorists to carry out their activities.

"There is a need to take prompt action against terror funding from the proceeds of the narcotics trade with alacrity and rigour," he said.

Shah directed the agencies to make new appointments in the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in view of the timely implementation of the new criminal laws.

He also appreciated the efforts of the security agencies for significant improvement in all parameters of the security scenario in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Home Minister reviewed the security situation of Jammu and Kashmir with top officials of the Army, police, paramilitary forces and others in two back-to-back meeting held on Tuesday and Wednesday. This was for the first time that the home minister had such such threadbare discussions on security situation on Jammu and Kashmir in two consecutive days.

The meetings were held in the wake of a terror attack in south Kashmir's Kulgam district, in which ex-serviceman Manzoor Ahmad Wagay was killed and his wife and niece were injured.

CM holds pre...

government's dedication to involving elected representatives in significant decision-making processes.

"These consultations are not a one-off event. We aim to establish consistent coordination with the people's representatives, ensuring transparency and inclusiveness in governance," he said. Reassuring the participants, he said "This consultation process will continue, and we will consult with you regularly to address your concerns and provide all possible support." Addressing the participants, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed confidence that the forthcoming budget session in the J&K Assembly would reflect a collective commitment to serving the people with dedication and sincerity. "Together, we will work to uplift the socio-economic conditions of our people and ensure sustainable development across J&K," the chief minister added.

Earlier in the consultation sessions, the DDC Chairpersons and MLAs from these four districts highlighted various issues and projects requiring priority attention in the upcoming budget. Key concerns and demands raised included road widening projects, new road projects, enhancement of sports infrastructure, upgradation of health and educational institutions, provision of potable drinking water, development of tourist destinations, strengthening healthcare facilities with adequate staffing and the establishment of new colleges and schools in their constituencies.

The elected representatives expressed their gratitude to the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for initiating these consultations, appreciating the government's efforts to incorporate grassroots perspectives into the budgetary framework.

CJM rejects bail...

general public and society at large, court has to deal with such persons with tough hands. No one is given right to play with the life of any person by using excessive force, which was not required and which she was not authorized to do so. In the present case, the accused/applicant is alleged to have committed a serious offence of attempt to murder along with other co-accused which is a heinous offence From the perusal of the CD file, it clearly reveals that applicant/accused has prima facie committed the said offence and there are sufficient grounds to presume the involvement of accused/applicant in the alleged crime and the fact that investigation is at initial stages. Moreso, as per CD file, statement of victim before Magistrate has not been recorded yet and co-accused are still absconding and weapon of offence has not been recovered yet.

Delhi records over...

are allowed to cast their vote," the statement said.

Polling booths across the city daubed themselves with colours and hung posters of celebrities bearing special messages to give the voters an impression of a true festive spirit. One such poster bore the image of Lata Mangeshkar, while several others depicted paralympians.

A total of 699 candidates are engaged in a keen battle that would decided whether the AAP comes to power in Delhi for a fourth term or the BJP gets a chance to form a government in the national capital after 27 years. The Congress also made all-out effort to regain its foothold in the city politics.

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, Union ministers S Jaishankar and Hardeep Singh Puri, Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal were among the early voters.

After casting his vote at a polling booth in Moti Bagh, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said everyone has worked very hard for the smooth conduct of polls.

During the day, the Aam Aadmi Party and BJP indulged in an intense blame game, accusing each other of voting malpractices in different constituencies.

Delhi Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) told PTI around noon that the polling process was going on "smoothly". Some EVMs were replaced during mock polls and actual voting also, the CEO said.

High drama unfolded in Seelampur when a BJP leader alleged that some people wearing burqas were attempting fraudulent voting. However, police denied any fake voting in the area. In Kasturba Nagar, police sources said two men allegedly attempted to vote fraudulently. They have been apprehended and were being interrogated, they said.

Following allegations of fake voting by the BJP in Seelampur, AAP workers resorted to sloganeering. The Delhi Police, however, dismissed the charges of fake voting, and said there was enough security deployment in the area including personnel from the paramilitary forces.

In Delhi's Majnu-ka-Tilla, Pakistani Hindu refugees, who got Indian citizenship following implementation of Indian citizenship under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, cast their votes for the first time in India.

First timers, elderly, transgenders and women enthusiastically exercised their franchise in the elections to form a new government.

At least six exit polls predicted a BJP victory, while two said the AAP would retain power. Two other polls showed a close contest between them, with an edge for the BJP.

AAP national spokesperson Reena Gupta rejected the exit poll results, saying the party will again form the government in Delhi and Arvind Kejriwal will become the chief minister fourth time in a row.

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva asserted that party's victory will be more spectacular than what the exit polls showed.

After casting his vote along with his family members, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal appealed to the people of Delhi to exercise their franchise for "good schools, hospitals and development of the city".

Kejriwal, who is contesting from the New Delhi seat for the fourth time in a row, is pitted against the BJP's Parvesh Verma and Congress' Sandeep Dikshit, in a keen contest.

"My parents have health issues but they were very excited about voting since morning," Kejriwal told reporters. His wife Sunita Kejriwal and son Pulkit Kejriwal also accompanied him to the polling station.

Hopefully people will vote for "those who work", Kejriwal said. His wife Sunita Kejriwal said people are "very intelligent" and will make the right choice.

"They won't tolerate hooliganism," she said.

The BJP is making an aggressive push to reclaim Delhi after over 25 years, with its campaign focusing on issues like corruption, governance failures, and law and order.

Leaders meet family...

"I believe the National Conference is responsible for whatever happened in Jammu and Kashmir since 1931 till date. The party is fundamentally responsible for the bloodshed that has taken place in Kashmir. I want to remind the National Conference that the killer of 110 people in just 10 days was their chief minister," the leader of the opposition said.

Hindu society can...

The RSS chief urged family discussions about legacy, claiming it could help tackle Kerala's drug problem.

"Why are our youth addicted to drugs? It is because there are no 'sanskars' at home," he claimed. He said that if everyone acts as one, "Hindu unity can be achieved".

"The whole world is waiting for Hindustan to show the way," he added. Bhagwat is in Kerala for a two-day visit and will leave the state on February 6. The RSS chief was in the state for six days in January as part of organisational activities.

Gataru murder case...

murder stemmed from an old rivalry between him and another gangster Vikas Slathia of Mandi Gharota in Samba.

The enmity between the two intensified after the murder of a Gataru gang member Akshay Kumar by Slathia's gang in 2023 at Ramgarh, the SSP said.

Following Akshay Kumar's murder, there was an exchange of fire between police and the two gangs at GMC Hospital in Kathua. Probationary Sub-Inspector Deepak Sharma and Vasudev Kumar, a notorious criminal, were killed in the encounter, he said.

To avenge Vasudev's killing, Vikas Slathia allegedly planned the murder of Jandyal, the officer said.

Harsh Singh alias Banta was allegedly instructed to arrange shooters for Jandyal's assassination, he said.

A one-room accommodation was allegedly rented in the Shastri Nagar area specifically to plan and execute Jandyal's murder. Weapons were procured from outside Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

An Alto car was purchased for Rs 1,05,000 around a week before the murder to conduct reconnaissance and execute the plan.

During the investigation, the car and scooter used in the crime were recovered from different locations in Jammu and Samba districts. The entire conspiracy behind Jandyal's murder has been uncovered, and so far, 11 persons have been apprehended, SSP Singh said.

Efforts are underway to apprehend the remaining accused. Additionally, police are investigating financial transactions linked to the planning and execution of the murder, he added. "Jammu Police is committed to eradicating crime, with a special focus on eliminating gangsterism. Rogue elements are warned to abandon their criminal activities, or they will be dealt with an iron hand," he said.

Govt makes quality...

high-quality products," a senior official said.

The number of products under QCO coverage has witnessed a significant jump from 106 in 2014 to over 732 products by October 2024.

The move aligns with India's broader strategy to enhance domestic manufacturing standards while curbing the influx of low-quality imports.

The chemical and petrochemical sector will also see new standards for various fatty acids, including those derived from palm, rice bran, and coconut sources.

‘Blessed to be...

social media, saying he offered prayers as per rituals for the "happiness, peace and prosperity" of countrymen. On the way, he acknowledged the greetings of crowds that had lined up on both sides of the riverbanks to catch a glimpse of him. After the holy dip, the prime minister performed rituals, including an 'aarti' as he got on board a floater, a specially built makeshift platform on the river. He was dressed in a black jacket, white pyjamas, a saffron stole and a Himachali cap for the 'aarti' during which he offered milk and flowers to the holy rivers. He also offered a 'chumari' at the confluence of the rivers. A priest guided the prime minister in the rituals.

Security was stepped up for the prime minister's visit, which comes on a day assembly polls are underway in Delhi and there are bypolls in Milkipur in Uttar Pradesh. The visit also falls five days after a stampede at Sangam claimed lives of at least 30 pilgrims and left another 60 injured.

However, barring some portions mandatory for security protocols, devotees continued to take a dip at other ghats during the VIP visit, officials said.

By 2 pm, nearly 60 lakh devotees had taken a dip on Wednesday, they added.

Rahul Sharma, who came from Jaipur to take a bath in Sangam, said, "Today, while taking a bath, it did not feel that our prime minister was present in the Sangam area because no policeman stopped anyone from going to the ghat and the bath was very comfortable."

Being held after 12 years, the Maha Kumbh started on January 13 and will continue till February 26. It is considered among the holiest pilgrimages by Hindus. While all three Amrit Snan of January 14 (Makar Sankranti), January 29 (Mauni Amavasya) and February 3 (Basant Panchami) are over, two more special bathing dates remain - February 12 (Maghi Purnima) and February 26 (Mahashivratri). These special bathing dates, which depend on celestial alignments and Hindi calendar, draw major crowds.

According to the Uttar Pradesh government, more than 38 crore pilgrims have visited the Maha Kumbh since January 13.

On Tuesday, Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck visited the Maha Kumbh and took a dip at the Triveni Sangam. Accompanied by Adityanath, the king performed rituals like offering 'arghya' to the sun before taking the dip.

On February 1, a delegation of 73 diplomats and foreign guests from different countries also arrived at the Maha Kumbh, some of whom took a holy dip.

Earlier Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Kiren Rijju, among several others also visited the Maha Kumbh. On January 22, the Uttar Pradesh cabinet led by Adityanath had its official meeting at Maha Kumbh.

Celebrities from the film industry and other walks of life including international artiste Chris Martin of British rock band Coldplay have also made appearances at the Maha Kumbh. An official statement said Modi's ritual bath at the Sangam coincided with an auspicious alignment of celestial events - "Gupt Navratri and Bhishmashtami. While Gupta Navratri is dedicated to worshipping the goddess, Bhishmashtami is observed for ancestral 'Tarpan' and 'Shradha'. This convergence of faith and tradition further enriched the sanctity of the occasion, it added. In his previous visit to Prayagraj on December 13, Modi inaugurated 167 projects worth Rs 5,500 crore. These projects encompassed major railway station upgrades, ROB flyovers, road widening, strengthening, and beautification. Additionally, he inaugurated permanent ghats, riverfront development, sewerage and drinking water facilities, and power supply projects. Among the key religious and cultural developments were the Akshayvat Corridor, Saraswati Koop Corridor, Bade Hanuman Mandir Corridor, Bhardwaj Rishi Ashram Corridor, and Shringverpur Dham Corridor, the statement said.

Cache of arms...

at Anganpathri in Boniyar area, they said.

The recoveries included three AK 47 rifles, 11 AK magazines, 292 AK rounds, one UBGL (Under Barrel Grenade Launcher), nine UBGL grenades and two hand grenades, the officials added.

2 Kashmiris arrested...

a personal search led to the discovery of two specially designed waist belts concealed gold coins wrapped in plastic envelopes, it said.

The officials seized 10.092 kg of gold coins, valued at approximately Rs 7.8 crore, the customs department said in a post on X. The passengers have been detained for further investigation, it added.

Army honours sniffer dog Teena for exemplary service

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Army on Wednesday honoured a sniffer dog for exemplary service in detecting explosive materials, including Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Jammu, officials said.

Teena, a highly skilled specialist in explosive detection, was honoured by General Officer Commanding, Tiger Division, Major General Mukesh Bhanwala, at headquarters in Jammu, the defence spokesperson said.

"Her exceptional service has been a testament to her rigorous training and resilience," the spokesperson said.

Teena's remarkable career has been marked by her unwavering dedication and expertise in detecting explosive materials, he added.

Teena has been stationed in Jammu and Kashmir for over two years in her current assignment and has participated in various important events and operations, providing critical support to the security forces, he continued.

Teena leaves behind a legacy of bravery, loyalty, and selflessness, the spokesperson said.

"Her contributions to the security forces will never be forgotten, and she will always be remembered as a hero and a loyal companion," he said.

Seminar on Scientific Beekeeping under NBHM commences

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A two-day Seminar on Scientific Beekeeping, organized by the Apiculture Development Scheme, Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu, commenced today here at Baba Jitto Kisan Kendra.

The seminar is being held under the auspices of the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM) and aims to raise awareness about the benefits of beekeeping among beekeepers, farmers, unemployed youth, women, and entrepreneurs from 10 districts of the Jammu division.

The inaugural session was attended by Director Agriculture Jammu Arvinder Singh Reen as the Chief Guest. In his address, the Director



Agriculture highlighted the crucial role of beekeeping in generating sustainable income and employment opportunities, especially for the youth of the region. He emphasized the immense potential of Jammu & Kashmir in beekeeping, given its diverse agro-climatic conditions, rich biodiversity, and the growing demand for honey due to its medicinal and nutritional properties.

Director A.S Reen further highlighted that the Department of Agriculture is providing an 80% subsidy for the establishment of One Unit comprising 35 bee colonies, worth Rs. 1,40,000. He also assured the beekeepers that the department would offer technical and financial assistance, particularly to support the migration of bee colonies and to optimize honey production. Additionally, he highlighted the economic potential of other hive products such as royal jelly, bee venom, propolis, and pollen, which can become valuable sources of income.

Joint Director Extension Satish Sharma also spoke at the seminar and underscored the significance of beekeeping as a source of livelihood for women farmers. He suggested that women self-help groups could explore beekeeping as a profitable venture for income generation.

The seminar also featured an informative presentation by Assistant Entomologist, Rajesh Verma, who elaborated on the role of beekeeping in income generation, entrepreneurship, advanced beekeeping practices, and the status of beekeeping in Jammu. Expert lectures were delivered by Prof. Devinder Sharma from SKUAST-J, Deepak Singh, Training Officer FTC Jammu, and S. Om Singh, Farm Management Specialist FTC Jammu, covering critical topics such as the impact of pesticides on honey bees and various tools, implementation and techniques used in apiculture.

The inaugural session was attended by several distinguished officers and experts, including Satish Sharma, Joint Director (Extension/SLUB), Alok Pandotra, Deputy Director Trainings (J), Dr. Aman Jyoti Sharma, Agriculture Chemist, and Prof. Devinder Sharma from SKUAST-J. The officers and staff of the Apiculture Development Scheme, Directorate of Agriculture Jammu, conducted the proceedings of the program.

The seminar will continue through tomorrow, providing participants with valuable insights and hands-on training in scientific beekeeping practices, which hold great promise for enhancing agricultural productivity and income generation in the region.

Dr. Narinder, Randhawa hold public Darbar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Dr. Narinder Singh, BJP National Secretary and MLA from RS Pura-Jammu South, along with Ch. Vikram Randhawa, MLA from Bahu, held a public Darbar at the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar on Wednesday. The event saw deputations from various areas in the city, who approached the senior leaders to voice their grievances and request swift resolutions to their issues.

Several issues were raised during the Darbar. A deputation from Nawabad Sunjwan expressed concerns about the state of lanes, drains, and electric poles in their area. A deputation from Sainik Colony highlighted the problem of out-of-order streetlights and called for the construction of proper lanes and drains. The deputation from Last Morh Gandhi Nagar sought improvements in the area's civil infrastructure, while a deputation from Gangyal requested the cleaning of clogged drains. Two deputations from Ashok Nagar and Nai Basti raised issues regarding leakage in drinking water supply pipes and requested immediate repairs.

Dr. Narinder Singh emphasized the importance of a people-centric approach, particularly in the governance of J&K. He stressed that the government's priority should be addressing the concerns of the people and ensuring that policies are aimed at making their lives easier. Singh pointed out that the residents are eagerly awaiting a popular government that will resolve their issues in a timely manner. He urged the NC government to focus on solving the problems of the people rather than making political statements. Randhawa reiterated the BJP's commitment to serving the public and assured that the party is making every effort to address the issues raised by the people.

NHM employees face hardship, demand immediate salary release

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The All J&K NHM Employees Association, Jammu Division, has strongly urged the government to release the pending salaries of National Health Mission (NHM) employees without further delay. In a statement issued to the media, Dr. Vikas Sharma, Provincial President of All J&K NHM Employees, Jammu Division, expressed deep concern over the financial hardships faced by NHM employees due to the non-disbursement of their wages.

He emphasized that these employees have been tirelessly serving the public, especially during critical healthcare situations, and it is unjust for them to suffer financial uncertainty. Echoing similar sentiments, Dr. Hamid Parray, Chief Spokesperson of NHM Employees, Jammu Division, stated that the delay in salary payments has caused distress among healthcare workers who rely on their earnings to support their families.

He urged the authorities to address the issue on a priority basis to prevent further hardships. The NHM employees, many of whom are the sole breadwinners of their families, are struggling to meet basic needs such as rent, education expenses, and medical bills due to prolonged salary delays. The NHM employees have been the backbone of the healthcare system, particularly in remote and rural areas, ensuring essential medical services reach the people. The association urges the Health Secretary J&K and the Mission Director, NHM, to immediately intervene and ensure the timely release of pending salaries. They warned that if their rightful dues are not cleared soon, they will be compelled to take further steps in pursuit of justice.

SSP Doda holds interaction meeting with public

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: In order to strengthen the relation between the Police and the public and to have a first hand insight of the prevailing issues, SSP Doda Sandeep Mehta visited far-flung villages and held an interactive meeting at Kastigarh which was attended by prominent persons/respectables of Kastigarh and its adjoining areas. DySP Hqrs Doda Sh Ajay Kumar and Dy SP PC Kastigarh Sh Pankaj Kumar were accompanied with the SSP.

During the meeting, participants, appreciated the efforts of police for listening the issues and grievances of the general public in far-off areas. The participants appreciated the role of police in taking action against the drug smugglers and also highlighted many demands and issues of their areas.

A patient hearing was given by SSP Doda to their demands and they were assured that the issues related to Police would be resolved on priority and demands pertaining to other departments will be taken up with concerned for appropriate action. While addressing the participants, SSP Doda, urged upon the participants to maintain brotherhood, communal harmony and cooperate.

Police by providing inputs/information regarding movement of anti national elements, drug peddling, drug addiction, bovine smuggling, timber smuggling and other criminal activities if they notice in their neighborhood for taking lawful action against the offenders. A general awareness was also given to participants regarding New Criminal Laws, online fraud, cheating, traffic rules, bovine smuggling, hazardous affects of drugs, liquor etc. The participants assured their full cooperation and support to Police in eradicating the menace of drugs and other criminal activities from the society.

