

03 'The Kashmir Files': A remarkable film that brings out gory truth about Hindu genocide in Valley

03 Court rejects plea of former Chairman JK Bank seeking release of passport

09 13 passengers injured in fierce Winger-Dumper collision

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'The Kashmir Files' a 'bold' representation of truth: Amit Shah



Home Minister Amit Shah along with makers and actors of film The Kashmir Files.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday described "The Kashmir Files", a Bollywood film based on the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley in the 1990s, as a "bold" representation of truth, and said it will help make the society aware that such "historical mistakes" are not repeated.

The remarks by Shah came

even as the PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, a former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, claimed that the "aggressive" manner in which the Centre is promoting the movie and weaponising the pain of Kashmiri Pandits makes its ill intention obvious.

After the film's makers and actors, including Vivek Agnihotri, Anupam Kher and Pallavi Joshi met him in

Delhi, the home minister also said the movie brings out the "unbearable pain and struggle" of the community before the world.

Interestingly, Chattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel invited all the MLAs of the Congress-ruled state to watch the film at a mall in Raipur.

Uttarakhand, meanwhile, became the eighth state to make the film tax free after

Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Haryana, Goa and Tripura—all BJP-ruled states.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that government employees will be given a half-day special leave to watch 'The Kashmir Files', while AIUDF president Badruddin Ajmal sought a ban on the film claiming it will promote communal tension. Sarma said as Assam, also a BJP-ruled state, does not have any entertainment tax, the question of waiver does not arise.

In the national capital, the Special Branch of the Delhi Police asked the DCPs of all districts to make adequate security arrangements in mixed population areas to maintain law and order situation following the screening of the movie, according to an official letter. The Kerala unit of the Congress,

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■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR:

Three Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, involved in the recent killing of a sarpanch in Khomoh, were killed in an encounter with security forces on the outskirts of the city here on Wednesday, police said.

Based on a specific input generated by Police regarding presence of terrorists in Nowgam area of Srinagar, a joint cordon and search operation was launched by Police and 50RR in the said area.

During the search operation, as the search party proceeded towards the suspected spot, the hiding terrorists fired indiscriminately upon the search party which was retaliated effectively leading to an encounter. Later on CRPF also joined encounter.

In the ensuing encounter, three categorized terrorists were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter. They have

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Pakistani handlers pushing terrorists to harm civilians, disturb peace: DGP

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Dilbag Singh on Wednesday said Pakistani handlers were pushing terrorists into the union territory to harm civilians and disturb the prevailing peaceful atmosphere.

"Over the past two weeks, the evil designs of terrorists once again came to light when they targeted panches and sarpanches. The sinful acts of harming and killing innocent people evoked strong condemnation from all quarters," the police chief told reporters on the sidelines of a function in Kishtwar district.

The DGP, along with Additional DGP of Jammu Mukesh Singh, visited Kishtwar to inaugurate a cricket tournament being hosted by the police department in the memory of Deputy Superintendent of Police Aman Thakur who laid down his life in an encounter with terrorists in south Kashmir's Kulgam in February 2019.

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Putin says 'economic blitzkrieg' has failed

■ AGENCY

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that the operation in Ukraine is unfolding successfully, in strict accordance with pre-approved plans and decried Western sanctions against Russia, describing them as aggression and war with economic, political, information means. At the same time Putin said that the West

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DGHS New Delhi approves Eye Bank, Corneal Transplant facility for GMC Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has awarded the Department of Ophthalmology, Government Medical College Jammu with registration of its Eye Bank, Corneal Transplant and Retrieval Facility in the UT of J&K under the Transplantation of Human Organs Act & Tissues Act 1994, THOTA. The registration has been granted for five years. Now the Corneal transplantation is expected to start soon.

Dr. Shashi Sudhan

Sharma, Principal and Dean, GMC Jammu congratulated Dr Satish Gupta, Head Ophthalmology Department, Dr Shazia Wafai, Sr Regional Director, H&FW, GoI and Dr Sanjeev Puri, Joint Director, SOTTO (J&K) and his team for their sincere efforts for this achievement. With the establishment of corneal transplant centres, it will be easy for our people to get transplants in Jammu without waiting for long.

"The Department is well-prepared to start corneal transplantation again", she added. It is pertinent to

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Jammu records season's hottest day at 35 deg C

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu, the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir, on Wednesday recorded the hottest day of the season at 35 degrees Celsius nine notches above the normal for this part of the season, an official said.

The summer capital Srinagar also recorded a high of 25.4 degrees Celsius which is 10.7 degrees above the normal, a spokesperson of the Meteorological department said.

The official said Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi shrine, was reeling at a maximum of 32.6 degrees Celsius.

He said the town in Reasi district recorded the minimum temperature of 18.2 degrees Celsius, which was the highest in any recorded place in the Union Territory.

The minimum temperature in Jammu was recorded at 16.8 degrees Celsius, 2.8 notches above normal,

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 35.0°C Min: 16.8°C

Humidity

Max: 62 Min: 37

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 25.4°C Min: 7.9°C

Humidity

Max: 68 Min: 33

Sunset : 18:40 Hours

Sunrise : 06:40 Hours

State Marriage Assistance Scheme restructured in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, on Wednesday restructured the State Marriage Assistance Scheme to provide the benefits to all AAY and PHH families.

Farooq Khan and Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisors to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The scheme requires the concerned District Social Welfare Officer to verify the details of the beneficiary

regarding marital status, age and non-availing of benefits under other schemes like Ladli Beti, besides ensuring disbursement of the financial assistance before the date of marriage through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

To further promote girl child education in the targeted population, the additional eligibility of completing elementary education by the beneficiary before her marriage has been included. However, to provide smooth transition in this regard, a grace period of three years, i.e., upto 31.03.2025 is

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5.2-magnitude quake hits Ladakh

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: A moderate earthquake of 5.2 magnitude jolted the Union Territory of Ladakh on Wednesday, but there was no report of any damage, officials said.

The tremor struck at 7.05 pm and lasted for a few seconds, an official of the Meteorological department said.

He said the depth of the earthquake was 110 km below the surface of the earth at latitude 36.01 degrees north and longitude 75.18 degrees east.

A police official said there was no immediate report of any damage.

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Bhagwant Mann sworn in as Punjab CM

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SBS NAGAR (PB): AAP leader Bhagwant Mann was sworn in as the Punjab chief minister on Wednesday.

Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mann in the swearing-in ceremony that took place at Khatkar Kalan, the ancestral village of legendary freedom fighter Bhagat Singh in Punjab's Shaheed Bhagat Singh (SBS) Nagar district.

Mann took oath in Punjabi. Besides newly-elected AAP MLAs, Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party national convener

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'G-23' leaders meet at Azad's residence

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Some leaders of the Congress's 'Group of 23' met at the residence of former Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad over dinner on Wednesday to work out the grouping's future strategy and discuss the party's poll debacle in the just-concluded assembly polls.

Sources said the grouping had earlier planned a dinner at Kapil Sibal's residence, but it was changed at the last minute.

Among the leaders who attended the meeting included Anand Sharma, Kapil Sibal, Manish Tewari, Shashi

Tharoor and Sandeep Dikshit.

The ambit of the G-23 grouping increased this time as some more leaders - Patiala MP Preneet Kaur, former Gujarat chief minister Shankar Singh Vaghela, former union minister Mani Shankar Aiyar and former Haryana speaker Kuldeep Sharma joined them.

The grouping had given an open invite to other Congressmen to join them at the dinner meeting.

The sources said the meeting was convened to apprise all the members of the G-23 about the decisions taken

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India's COVID vaccination drive science-driven, people-powered: Modi



groups to get vaccinated," he said in a series of tweets.

Modi asserted that India's vaccination drive, which is the largest in the world, is science-driven.

Highlighting the journey of India's vaccination drive,

Modi said, "We began work to create vaccines in early 2020, to protect our citizens and strengthen our fight against the pandemic."

"The manner in which our scientists, innovators and the private sector rose to the occasion is commendable. In late 2020, I had visited three of our vaccine manufacturers and got firsthand details of their efforts to protect our citizens," he said.

In January 2021, India began its vaccination drive for doctors, healthcare and frontline workers, he noted.

The aim was to

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Tablee Ki Bala Bander Ke Sar- Cong response to crushing poll debacle



Her Majesty of the self-styled first family of the Indian politics, Sonia Gandhi has been pleased to take urgent action over the humiliating and crushing debacle of All India Congress in the recent polls to legislative assemblies of the five states of the world's largest democracy-Punjab, Goa, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Uttar Pradesh. She has asked the Pradesh Presidents of these states to quit. They have obeyed and put in their papers well before the ink of the 'order' on the newsprint dried up. This is the Congress style of fixing accountability.

The classic action reminds of the yesteryear's primary class essay 'Tablee Ki Bala Bander (monkey) Ke Sar' (which some describe as Tablee Ki Bala Bandar Ke Sar), revolving around a Pujari and his son. The

Pujari wanted his son to learn to beat the drum (Tablaa), arranged a Guru and eventually the spoiled lad got so engrossed with the instrument that he hardly separated it from himself. The perpetual noise of Tablaa became irritable for the Pujari, who despite many pleas, could not prevail upon his son not to create nuisance, as it had started distracting him from Puja as well. One day, getting deeply frustrated over Tablaa beating at the terrace, a monkey jumped from nowhere and sat by the side of the Tablaa player-son. In a fit of anger, Pujari thrashed the head of the monkey and got a huge taunt from his wife for punishing the animal for the wrongs of his son.

Sonia Gandhi seems to have gone through this essay umpteen times during Hindi learning course. The lessons have placed her in good stead to tackle the embarrassing situations in the party, which she heads as a matter of birthright or copyright.

It is intriguing, why no Bander in

the Congress is mustering guts to question the Madam about no action against siblings, Priyanka Vadra and Rahul Gandhi. They were the star campaigners, playing non-stop tablaa in the poll-bound states for over two months. Priyanka Vadra had almost shifted permanently to Yogi's Karmabhoomi to defeat the saffron monk. She had coined the slogan of 'Beti Hun Lad Sakti Hun' though it is different that the poster girls of her slogan had deserted the old grand party within days of campaigning. Rahul Gandhi, known for speaking things he himself doesn't understand, kept playing RaGa, much to the amusement of his detractors rather wooing supporters. The siblings were the main campaign actors in the elections. They have gone unpunished for contributing hugely into the crushing defeat of the party. Putra Moh, or love for son, led Sonia Gandhi to ruin the Congress by sidelining very senior leaders, having a pan-India image. As

if it was not enough, Sonia chipped in daughter Priyanka in a bid to regain the losses son Rahul had incurred over the years as Congress President and then the deputy without any responsibility.

For the ruin of the Congress, Gandhis and Vadras are not responsible alone.

The senior Congressmen cannot absolve themselves, as they preferred not to assert to safeguard their vested interest. Those trying to set the rot right are being projected as villains and denied the space they deserve in the political spectrum of the country. Ghulam Nabi Azad has singled out himself to launch the campaign under G-23 hash tag but it is still struggling to take off.

An ecosystem has been created in the Congress to ensure centre-stage for the Gandhi-Vadra clan. The party folklore always insists that the Gandhis or Vadras in the leadership remains a strategic requirement, as

they alone hold the mass base, deliver victories and keep the party united. However, each of the arguments has lost ground in view of the emerging realities of Indian politics, which has entered another level with Modi-Yogi holding the flag of change. Their emergence is not just a phenomenon of Hindutva but they are delivering also at ground zero

The fact that the Congress holds just a single or two state governments shows the declining image of the party under Gandhi.

Instead of diagnosing the malady within the party, the Congress remains busy in insulating the Gandhis and Vadras. Sparing the Gandhi siblings from the blame of failing in the just concluded elections is a point in reference. The Congress will always find monkeys to fall prey. The party chiefs of the five 'failed' states have consented to be scapegoats to insulate the Priyanka-Rahul duo against any blame.