Air surcharge 50 paisa for Leh Semis line-up drawn in Reasi District **Volleyball Championship**

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Regd. No. L-29/JK-346/22-24

Heart health and urbanisation-incompatible and irreconcilable: Dr Sushil

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Modi sarkar ki Guarantee

root out corruption

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Centre aims to make three crore 'Two ECs likely to be appointed by March 15' women 'Lakhpati Didi': Modi

STATE TIMES NEWS

RAIPUR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said his government has resolved to make three crore women in the country "lakhpati didi" and asserted that women's welfare is their

Hamara Sankalp

Viksit Bharat

The PM was speaking after virtually inaugurating the 'Mahtari Vandan' scheme in Chhattisgarh to provide monetary assistance to women.

"It is fortunate that today I got an opportunity to dedicate the Mahtari Vandan scheme aimed at empowering 'nari shakti'. Under the scheme, we had promised to give Rs 1,000 per month to more than 70 lakh women and today, the BJP government has fulfilled it, Modi said addressing the function via video conference.

The first installment of Rs 655 crore was deposited into the bank accounts of beneficiaries (married women) under the scheme on Sunday, he said.

"I should have been among you today for this programme, but due to some other engagements I am in Uttar Pradesh. I am speaking from Kashi, the



land of Baba Vishwanath, who is also showering his blessings on you," he said.

The PM said he offered prayers to Lord Vishwanath on Saturday night and prayed for the well being of the country's people.

"When mother and sisters are empowered, then the entire family gets empowered. Therefore, the priority of the double-engine government (of BJP at the Centre and in the state) is the welfare of mothers and sisters." he said.

"Today, families are getting pucca houses and that too in the name of women," the prime minister said.

Through the Ujjwala scheme, women have been getting cooking gas cylinders at cheaper rates. More than 50 per cent of the Jan Dhan accounts are in the name of women. More than 65 per cent of Mudra loans were taken by women, he said.

"In the last ten years, our government has changed the lives of more than 10 crore women through self-help groups," Modi said.

"The efforts of our government have resulted in making more than one crore women 'lakhpati didi'. We have now resolved that we will fulfill the target of making three crore sisters of the country lakhpati didi," he added.

The government is also working on the 'Namo Drone Didi Yojna', under which drones as well training as drone pilot training will be provided, he added.

The scheme by the Centre aims to provide drones to 15,000 select women selfhelp groups to provide rental services to ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Two Election Commissioners (ECs) are likely to be appointed by March 15 to fill the vacancies created by the retirement of Anup Chandra Pandey and the surprise resignation of Arun Goel, PTI reported quoting sources on Sunday.

Days before the poll panel is expected to announce the schedule for the Lok Sabha polls, Goel resigned on Friday morning. His resignation was accepted by President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday and the Law Ministry issued a notification to announce it.

This leaves Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar as the sole member of the poll authority.

Pandey had demitted office on February 14 on attaining the age of 65 years.

A search committee under Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and comprising the Home Secretary and the

Department of Personnel Training (DoPT) Secretary will first prepare two separate panels of five names each for the two posts.

Later, a selection committee headed by the prime minister and comprising a Union minister and Leader of the Congress party in the Lok Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury will then name two persons for appointment as election commissioners.

The election commissioners will be appointed by the President.

Sources said the selection committee could meet either on March 13 or 14 depending on the convenience of the members and the appointments are likely to be made by March 15.

Before a new law on the appointment of CEC and ECs came into force recently, the election commissioners were appointed by the President on the government's recommendation and

as per custom, the seniormost was appointed as CEC. Clause 2 of Article 324 of

the Constitution states that the Election Commission shall consist of the Chief Election Commissioner and such number of other Election Commissioners, if any, as the President may from time to time fix.

Responding to questions on reasons behind Goel's resignation, the sources said he might have resigned due to personal reasons.

They also rejected suggestions that there were differences between Goel and Kumar, saying records of internal communication, minutes and decisions show there was no dissent recorded by Goel.

If seasoned bureaucrats brainstorm on an issue, there are bound to be differences in opinion and perception. These cannot be described as differences, they added. Goel, who tendered resignation on Friday morning, did not attend the crucial meeting between the EC and top home ministry and railway officials to firm up deployment and movement of central forces across India for poll duty.

Goel was a 1985-batch IAS officer of the Punjab cadre. He had joined the Election Commission in November 2022. His tenure was till December 5, 2027, and he would have become Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) after incumbent Rajiv Kumar retired in February next year.

Ashok Lavasa had resigned as election commissioner in August 2020. He had given dissent notes on various model code violations decisions taken by the EC in the last Lok Sabha polls.

Originally, the commission had only a CEC. It currently consists of the CEC and two election commissioners.

CONTD ON PAGE 9

KCCI delegation calls on LG



STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A delegation of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry, led by its President Javid Ahmad Tenga on Sunday

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, at Raj Bhawan.

The delegation apprised

the Lt Governor of various ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Inter-faith centre would be set up in Guru Nanak Dev University soon: Chugh Leads delegation to Union Education Minister for release of funds Minister Narendra Modi

STATE TIMES NEWS

AMRITSAR: National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Sunday said that the inter-faith centre that was mooted by the Modi government to be set up in the Guru Nak Dev University here on the occasion of 550th Parkash Divas of Guru Nanak Dev ji would be completed soon.

Chugh led a delegation to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in Delhi and presented him a memorandum for the



release of funds allocated for the project.

Chugh said while Rs 33.56 crores have been released by the Centre

already, the Union Minister was requested that the rest of the amount be released

said

has been endeavouring to spread the message of Guru Nanak Devi ji and other Sikh Gurus across the globe because the message of love for humanity propagated by the Gurus needed to be disseminated all over the world. Chuch said into

centres on the pattern of the one coming up in the Nanak University would be set up at other places also in near

Terror hideout busted in Poonch, 7 IEDs seized

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Security forces on Sunday busted a terror hideout in a forest in and 🌉 Jammu Kashmr's Poonch district and Mag seized seven rusted improvised explosive devices set, officials said.

They said the hideout located inside a cave was uncovered during a joint search operation by police and the Army at Dara Sangla in the

Blankets and some other materials were also found in

the hideout, the officials said. A case has been registered and further investigation is on, they said, adding that no arrests have been made

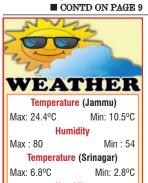
■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

12 Dental Surgeons, and 51 MOs transferred

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In two separate orders. Government on Sunday ordered transferred 12 Dental Surgeons and 51 Medical Officers (MOs) of Health Department.

As per issued by Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department, Dr. Rekha Uttama, Dental Surgeon has been transferred from PHC Karanwara and posted to PHC Rathana; Dr. Sandeep Rangroo, Dental Surgeon from School Health Samba to PHC Karanwara; Dr. Prince Ameet Singh, Dental Surgeon from JKMSCL to CHC Mahanpur; Dr. H.S. Bedi, Dental Surgeon from CHC Mahanpur to JKM-SCL; Dr. Jyoti Mahotra, Dental Surgeon, awaiting orders of adjustment



Sunset: 18:34 Hours

Sunrise: 06:47 Hours

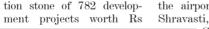
Max: 94

'We converted difficulties into opportunities': Rajnath tion stone of 782 develop- the airports of Azamgarh,

STATE TIMES NEWS

LUCKNOW: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said it is the result of the "jan seva" (public service) being done by the double engine government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guidance that the entire country along with Lucknow is progressing by leaps and bounds.

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated and laid the founda-





34,700 crore from Azamgarh that included inauguration of

Moradabad, Chitrakoot

Aligarh, and the new terminal of Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport, Lucknow. Addressing the gathering at an event in his parliamentary Singh stituency, said, "Under the visionary leadership of

Govt that will work for them: Azad **STATE TIMES NEWS** SRINAGAR: It will be easier

for the people of Jammu and Kashmir to elect a government that will work for them as all regional and national parties have had a chance to govern the region, DPAP Chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad said on Sunday.

"Every party -- be it a national or a regional party -- has had a chance to govern Jammu and Kashmir. That makes it easier now for the



It will be easier for people of J&K to elect

at Kokernag on Sunday.

that will work for them,"

Minister of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir State,

On charges levelled against the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) that it is a "B Team" of the BJP, Azad said his detractors have asso-

in the past. "Those who call us the BJP's 'B Team' were with them, they were 'A Teams' of the BJP. One leader had even begun his political career as a minister in a BJP govern-

ciated with the saffron party

ment," Azad said. ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Traffic suspended on Jammu-Srinagar NH for road widening work

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Traffic movement on the 270-km Jammu-Srinagar national highway remained suspended on Sunday morning as authorities were carrying out road widening work on several problematic stretches in Ramban district, officials

Vehicular movement on the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country was suspended late Saturday night to allow the widening of the carriageway to two lanes at Dalwas, Mehar-Cafeteria, Panthiyal Nachlana between



The traffic department officials said the decision to sus-

for 14 hours from 10 pm on Saturday was taken to ensure the safety of commuters as

shooting of stones have damaged the road at over a dozen places in Ramban, prompting

the authorities to restrict the traffic to one-way on the highway since February 26.

With traffic plying alternatively from Srinagar and Jammu for the past fortnight, travellers have been facing massive snarls, especially in Dalwas, Mehar Nachlana

The road widening work is in progress at many places on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway. People are advised not to undertake journeys between Nashri and Navyug (Banihal) Tunnel till the restoration work is completed," a spokesperson of the department said.

Former SC judge A M Khanwilkar sworn in as Lokpal chairperson

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Former Supreme Court judge Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar was administered the oath of office as the chairperson of the anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal by President Droupadi Murmu here on Sunday, nearly two years after the post fell vacant.

The swearing-in ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan was attended by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Minister Narendra Modi.

President Murmu administered the oath of office of chairperson, Lokpal to Khanwilkar at a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan

Sunday evening, according to an official statement. Justice

Khanwilkar was appointed as the Lokpal chairperson in the last week of February.

The Lokpal was functioning without its regular chief since Pinaki Chandra Ghose completed his term on May 27, 2022

Chairperson of the Law Commission of India and former Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court Ritu Raj Awasthi, former Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court Lingappa Narayana Swamy and former Chief Justice of Allahabad High

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9