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SOWING SKILLS

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Digitalisation of governance enabled uninterrupted office working during pandemic: Dr Jitendra

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Migrant property cannot be handed over to anyone without owner's written consent: HC

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Pak should vacate Indian territory under its illegal occupation: India

EAM cites Pak's 'longest-standing' illegal occupation of part of J&K to highlight flaws in world order

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Pakistan should vacate Indian territory under its "illegal" occupation instead of "spreading lies", New Delhi said on Tuesday hitting out at Islamabad for its reaction to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks on Jammu and Kashmir during a podcast.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the world knows that the real issue in Jammu and Kashmir is Pakistan's "active promotion and sponsorship" of cross-border terrorism.

PM Modi during the podcast with Lex Fridman said "every attempt to foster peace with Pakistan was met with hostility and betrayal" and that he hoped that "wisdom would prevail on the leadership in Islamabad to improve bilateral ties".

On Monday, Pakistan rejected the remarks as "misleading and one-sided".

"We note that Pakistan has



High-security alert sounded in J&K after recent terror attacks in Pakistan

JAMMU: A high-security alert has been sounded across Jammu and Kashmir in view of the recent terror attacks in Pakistan, including the killing of a top commander of terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), officials said on Tuesday.

All the protected persons, including politicians, have been advised to be conscious and strictly follow the security protocols for their safety, the officials in the security establishment said.

They said the forces have been directed to maintain a close watch and "extraordinary" vigil to thwart any attempt by anti-national elements to carry out any attack, especially on soft targets, by intensifying area domination patrolling and search operations. Several recent terror attacks in Balochistan, including a train hijacking and

once again made some comments about the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir," Jaiswal said.

"The world knows that the real issue is Pakistan's active promotion and sponsorship of cross-border terrorism. In fact this is the biggest road-block to peace and security in the region," he said.

"Instead of spreading lies, Pakistan should vacate Indian territory under its illegal and forcible occupation," Jaiswal added.

Earlier, India endured Pakistan's "longest-standing" illegal occupation of a part of Jammu and Kashmir since 1948 and the "invasion" was made a "dispute", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on, highlighting the West's selective application of global rules.

In an interactive session at the Raisina Dialogue, Jaishankar said global rules on issues pertaining to sovereignty and territorial integrity were never applied

Fire breaks out in Rajouri hospital, 150 patients evacuated

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI/JAMMU: A fire broke out at the Government Medical College (GMC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on Tuesday, prompting the evacuation of more than 150 patients from the hospital, officials said.

The fire was noticed in the basement of the hospital in Rajouri town on Tuesday morning. It was

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Sanjeev, Saleem Dar get addl charge

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The government on Tuesday assigned additional charge to IAS and JKAS officer. According to the order issued by M. Raju, Commissioner/ Secretary, General Administration Department (GAD), Sanjeev Verma, IAS (AGMU: 2001), Commissioner/ Secretary to the Government, Social Welfare Department shall hold the charge of the post of Administrative Secretary, Culture Department, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

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New buildings, accommodation coming up in New Delhi, Chandigarh for J&K: CM

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that the government has acquired a 3,179.58 sqm plot on a perpetual lease from the Delhi Development Authority at Dwarka, New Delhi to address the limited accommodation at J&K House, Chanakypuri.

Responding to a question raised in Legislative Assembly by Tanvir Sadiq, regarding lack of accommodation for those visiting Delhi, Chandigarh from J&K after the transfer of main buildings of Jammu and Kashmir House, New Delhi, to the Union Territory of Ladakh, the Chief Minister, who also holds the Hospitality & Protocol portfolio, clarified that a significant portion of the Guest House at Chanakypuri has been allocated to Ladakh. "Consequently, the UT of J&K has limited accommodation available at J&K House, Chanakypuri, New Delhi," he informed the House.

To address this issue, the



government has acquired a plot at Plot No. 3, Sector-19, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi, where a JK Bhawan complex will be constructed. This location was chosen for its accessibility and proximity to other state bhawans, ensuring better facilities for J&K visitors.

Regarding the property in Chandigarh, the Chief Minister informed the House that J&K owns a property in Sector-17, Chandigarh, which will be modified after obtaining the necessary permissions.

He assured that arrangements would be made to provide proper accommodation for patients traveling to Chandigarh for medical treatment. The Chief Minister emphasized that while constructing new buildings, J&K's architectural heritage will be reflected in the designs, and traditional J&K cuisine will also be made available. Additionally, more locals from J&K will be employed in these establishments. Clarifying concerns over asset distribution

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Delhi woman held with loaded pistol at Vaishno Devi Shrine

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A woman pilgrim from Delhi was arrested after a loaded pistol was recovered from her possession at the Mata Vaishno

Devi shrine, officials said on Tuesday.

Jyoti Gupta, who claimed to be a retired police constable, was intercepted with weapon, six rounds at checkpoint

Dev shrine, officials said on Tuesday.

Jyoti Gupta, who claimed to be a retired police constable, was intercepted with the weapon and six rounds at a checkpoint near the 'Bhawan' (sanctum sanctorum) on the intervening night of March 14-15, they

have launched a probe after registering an FIR, they said.

In a similar incident, Sanjay Singh, a pilgrim from Uttar Pradesh, was booked after two cartridges were found in his bag near the Bhawan, the officials said.

CM moves 13 demands, 12 supplementary demands in LA

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday moved 13 demands and 12 supplementary demands in the Legislative Assembly which was subsequently presented before the House for discussion by Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather. "I move that a sum not exceeding

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ROZA TIMING

SEHR TIME:
05:19 (MARCH 20)

IFTAAR TIME:
06:50 (MARCH 19)

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 28.0°C Min: 12.2°C

Humidity
Max: 61 Min: 46

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 18.8°C Min: 2.5°C

Humidity
Max: 73 Min: 30

Sunset : 18:40 Hours
Sunrise : 06:37 Hours

LG interacts with youth delegation from Ladakh under ABVP's SERU initiative



LG Manoj Sinha along with youth delegation from Ladakh under Student's Experience in Regional Understanding initiative in Jammu on Tuesday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday interacted with the youth delegation from the

UT of Ladakh under ABVP's Rashtriya Ekatmta Yatra - Student Experience in Regional Understanding (SERU) initiative.

During the interaction, the participating youth shared the experience and exposure they gained during their visits to different regions of the

country.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the initiative by Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) to provide the youth of Ladakh with an opportunity to understand the country's cultural heritage, democratic values, educate them about educational and governance framework, and recognize their role in realising the vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'. He extended his felicitations and best wishes to the youth.

The tour is designed to broaden the youth's

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BJP MLA stages walkout from LA alleging bias



BJP MLA R S Pathania staging walkout from Assembly.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Alleging bias in denying him time to speak and not including his questions in the business of the House during the Budget Session, BJP MLA R S

Pathania staged a walkout from the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on Tuesday.

Pathania attempted to raise his question, which

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Maha Kumbh strengthened India's spirit of unity: Modi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the recent Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj was a defining moment in India's history, much like the revolt of 1857 and the Dandi March of Mahatma Gandhi that inspired the nation and paved the way for independence.

Making a statement in the Lok Sabha, the prime minister said the Maha Kumbh also strengthened the spirit of unity in the country and gave a befitting response to those who ques-

tioned India's collective strength to organise such a large congregation.



Modi said the huge display of unity at the Maha Kumbh was India's strength, particularly at a time the world was in disarray.

"People put aside their egos

and gathered in Prayagraj with the feeling of 'we' and not 'I'. The Maha Kumbh demonstrated that there was no distinction between big and small -- it reflected India's immense strength. It reaffirmed that the profound element of unity is deeply ingrained within us," he added.

The Lok Sabha witnessed some protests by opposition members, led by Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, who wanted a discussion on the Maha

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Srinagar man arrested for posting, sharing 'extremist' content

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police has arrested a social media user for allegedly posting extremist content online, an official said on Tuesday.

The accused, identified as Showkat Ahmad Dar (28), is a resident of Doodh Mohalla in Srinagar, said the Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK) wing, which made the arrest.

Its spokesperson said that Dar had been operating a Facebook account, 'Shaddy Kashmir Dryfruits,' to post and share glorifying content about terrorism and militant commanders and

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J&K Govt to hold judicial probe into deaths of two brothers: Dy CM



Dy CM Surinder Choudhary meeting locals and family of deceased brothers at Chandain Pajan Kulgam.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government

will hold a judicial probe into the deaths of two persons from Kulgam district whose

bodies were recovered after they went missing last month, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary said on Tuesday.

Three people, including two brothers from Rajouri who were staying in Kulgam, went missing last month. While the bodies of the two brothers were recovered, another person is still missing.

Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Minister Sakina Itoo, and the Chief Minister's advisor Nasir Aslam Wani visited

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Kashmiri leadership's hatred-driven narrative on reservations



JAMMU: A new and venomous narrative is being built and broadcast that Jammu is the biggest beneficiary of the recruitment in the reserved categories in the Union Territory. This is a clear bid to state that Kashmir is being discriminated against and its share in the professional institutions, government services and competitive examinations is shrinking.

The whole narrative is based on some of the statistics that the Government released in response to a question of People's Conference president and lawmaker, elected from Handwara Sajad Gani Lone, who is seeking to become a frontline hero of the Kashmiris (essentially Kashmiri Muslims; though on occasions he tries to widen his appeal by men-

tioning Kashmiri Pandits) by raising their issues. He is armed with the figures the government provided to him in the ongoing Assembly session in Jammu.

These statistics have been produced as a comparative study between the two regions - Kashmir and Jammu, - showing that the people in Jammu region have got more certificates vis-a-vis reserved categories - SC, ST, OBC, Resident of Border areas, and so on than the residents in the Valley. These figures may be correct as the government is supposed to furnish factual position in The Legislative Assembly, but the real issue is what the basis is for these statistics and the comparative study that it these have triggered.

It establishes one simple fact that there is more population falling under the reserved categories living in Jammu than in the Valley. And if there is more of such population in the region, it is but natural that there would be more certificates for

them. Where is the contradiction? There is absolutely no confusion but the attempts are being made to throw a smoke screen over the whole issue.

At the bottom of this narrative, which is now becoming a propaganda tool for vested interests bent upon causing regional, ethnic and linguistic disharmony with the underlying intentions to trigger another conflict in Jammu and Kashmir that has achieved substantial peace in the past five years. There is a clear attempt to undo welfare measures taken in these years and to put Kashmiri population face to face with the state of India. This would be a mistake to read the whole concept of this ethno nationalism as just Kashmir-centric because the Valley too has substantial ST, OBC and other categories of population that qualifies to benefits under the reservation rules.

These advocates of the rights of Kashmiris have two clear objectives - one, to maintain and take the Kashmiri Muslim supremacy to next level by projecting the population in the Valley as a victim of the reservation rules. Second, to push back the fact-based narrative that Jammu over the decades has been discriminated in all spheres - it was denied its due role and place in political decision-making, government services and development. The voices of discrimination against Jammu region were audible in the Assembly, but those were ignored and at times shouted down with the claim that no discrimination has ever taken place.

The political leadership advancing the theory that the status and space for Kashmiri Muslim officers would be suffering an irreversible reduction in future are not ignoring the very concept of coexistence, which they deploy to assert their cultural ethos and sense of accom-

modation but sowing seeds of communal tensions in the system of governance. They are hitting at the roots of social justice, sowing discord in society.

They also raise questions about the fate of the youth, who have to appear and compete in open merit category. Their presumption is that the open merit candidates will have to compete for very limited number of seats and there would be very few from Kashmir in the select lists. This is outcome of the self-centred thinking that Kashmir is the sole custodian of merit and the people from Jammu region are not as competent as their counterparts in the Valley.

Jammu has vast constituency of merit. The region has proved it time and again. But those calling out Jammu for getting maximum benefit of reservations are doing more harm than good to the people of Kashmir.