

03 Div Com inaugurates Baisakhi Mela at Canal Road, Peer Kho Jammu

09 33 bovines rescued; 5 smugglers arrested

10 J&K Wrestler Babba lifts 29th Dera Kesari Dangal 2022 title

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Ramzan Mubarak



India likely to see normal monsoon for 4th year on trot
NEW DELHI: India is likely to witness normal rainfall during the southwest monsoon season this year with favourable La Nina conditions predicted to continue during the June-September period, the India Meteorological Department said on Thursday. The country had received normal

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Four terrorists killed in Shopian; 3 Army men martyred in accident on way to encounter site

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Four Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists were killed in an encounter with security forces in Shopian district on Thursday, while three army personnel lost their lives as their vehicle met with an accident on way to the site of the gunfight, officials said.

On receiving information about the presence of terrorists at Badigam in the Zainapora area of Shopian, security forces launched a cordon-and-search operation, a police official said.

During the search operation, the terrorists fired upon the forces which led to an encounter, he said.

In the exchange of fire, four terrorists were killed, the official said.

The official identified the slain terrorists as Aaqib Farooq Thoker and Waseem Ahmed Thoker -- both residents of Heffkhuri in Zainapora -- and Farooq Ahmad Bhat and Shooqeen



Ahmad Mir of Sukan.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) of Kashmir Vijay Kumar said the slain ultras belonged to the LeT.

"LeT #terrorists neutralised in today's #encounter were active in Shopian & adjacent areas of Pulwama. They were involved in 6 #terror crimes including attacks on outside labourers. Hunt for their associates like Aijaz of Pulwama is on & they will be neutralised soon, the IGP said on Twitter.

Meanwhile, three army personnel were martyred and five others injured when their vehicle met with an accident while on way to the encounter site, Srinagar-based Defence PRO Col Emron Musavi said. "Owing to the wet road conditions, the driver seemingly lost control over the vehicle and it skidded off the road. The eight injured soldiers were shifted to District Hospital Shopian, where two among them were declared dead.

One soldier had received minor injuries and was discharged from District Hospital. The five other injured soldiers were evacuated to 92 Base Hospital, Srinagar, where the third soldier also succumbed to his injuries. Four soldiers are presently at the 92 Base Hospital and are being treated," Col Musavi said.

Citing police records, officials said the slain terrorists were part of groups involved in several terror crime cases, including attacks on police and security forces and civilian atrocities.

Aaqib Farooq Thoker was involved in the snatching of a 12 bore rifle from Jammu and Kashmir Bank guard Abdul Hamid Wani, posted at Murrin. He was also involved in attacks on civilians in Nowpora and Yadar.

The IGP congratulated the joint forces for conducting successful anti-terrorist operation without any collateral damage.



A vendor selling earthen pots during Baisakhi Mela at Canal Road in Jammu on Thursday. (Pic by Shilpa Thakur)

Union Home Secretary in Kashmir ahead of PM visit

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla on Thursday arrived here to review overall and security preparedness for Amarnath Yatra and elections in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's visit to the Union Territory later in April, officials said.

The Home Secretary arrived here to take stock of progress on various development projects under Prime Minister's Development Programme ahead of Modi's

visit to Jammu scheduled for April 24, the officials said.

They said Bhalla, who is accompanied by senior officials from the ministry, is also likely to review the security situation in the valley as it prepares for the

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Lt Gen Pushendra Singh takes-over as Rising Star Corps Commander

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Lieutenant General Pushendra Singh on Thursday took over as commander of the Rising Star Corps in Himachal Pradesh, a Jammu-based defence spokesperson said.

The Indian Army's youngest corps, 9 Corps, which was raised in 2005, has its operational

area up to Jammu. It is based in the Yol cantonment town in the Kangra Valley, south-east of Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh.

Lt Gen Pushendra Singh took over as the 17th corps commander of the Yol-based Rising Star Corps, the spokesperson said. The officer is an alumnus of

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Terrorists using mobile data of unsuspecting civilians to escape security radar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: The phone could be in your hand but another person, possibly a militant or a sympathiser, could be using its hotspot' facility, say police officials, red-flagging the latest modus operandi of terrorists in Kashmir and warning unsuspecting civilians about the trouble they could land in.

Taking serious note of the new MO adopted by terrorists and their overground workers to escape security radars, the officials said wrong use of a SIM card or providing communication facility to a terrorist through

hotspot' will make the subscriber of the card liable for investigation and arrest.

SIM card subscribers cannot hide behind the fact that they themselves are not into terrorism and that their SIM card has not been used directly by the terrorists. Allowing one's SIM card to be used through 'hotspot' is direct liability according to police, an official told PTI on condition of anonymity.

The relatively new way of operating came to light during in-depth investigation of a terror network case.

In October last year, based on intelligence inputs, police

nabbed Mukhtar Ahmad Kumar from south Kashmir's Pulwama district under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) and shifted him to a prison in Agra.

His troubles, it appeared, started when he got a SIM card in his name and gave it to his fiancée in Srinagar along with a mobile phone. Investigations revealed that the SIM card and the device were used by the Lashkar-e-Taiba for planning a terrorist attack, officials said.

Though his fiancée denied giving the phone to anyone, she admitted that another woman, now on the run, was

using her data, particularly the hotspot.

Kumar's family, trying hard to secure his release, have said in their appeals to the government that he has not been involved in any wrongdoing. However, officials said he was picked up after intelligence agencies assessed his role in a terror network and alleged that he had deep links with a terror outfit.

The clinching evidence, they said, is the SIM card.

Terrorists and their associates have now been communicating with each other and their handlers in Pakistan

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BJP expresses concern over terror threats to Hindu community in Kashmir

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir BJP Thursday expressed concern over "terror threats" to the Hindu community in Kashmir, and demanded the administration and security establishment ensure their safety and security.

The killing of a Rajput driver, Satesh Kumar Singh, by a terrorist has generated a sense of fear and uncertainty among the members of the tiny community in Kakran village in Kulgam district who have stayed on in Kashmir Valley despite decades of militancy but are now considering leaving for a

safer place.

"The administration and security establishment must ensure safety and security of people in general and that of the minority communities in particular and we expect them to take visible steps to restore confidence in the community", J&K BJP spokesperson Girdhari Lal Raina told reporters here.

A threat letter was circulated at Veeraan village in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Wednesday. A hitherto unknown group, named Lashkar-e-Islami, has threatened the residents of the village, where a group

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Shah to attend 'PoJK Sankalp Rally' on May 8; will reiterate India's stance



■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Union Home Minister Amit Shah will attend the 'Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir Sankalp Rally' on May 8 which is being organised to reiterate India's claim over parts of Jammu and Kashmir occupied by Pakistan, B-JP sources said.

The rally is being organised in Jammu on May 8 by Jammu and Kashmir People's Forum.

The rally will be attended by the Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir refugees, who have settled in Jammu and Kashmir, and other states of the country. Shah's second visit to Jammu and Kashmir

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India has to grow big, those blocking way will step aside or be eliminated: Bhagwat

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI: India has to grow big and its rise is incumbent upon the rise of 'Dharma', RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has said, in remarks interpreted by some rivals of the BJP as a pitch for 'Akhanda Bharat'.

Likening India's progress to that of a vehicle that only has accelerator and no brakes, the RSS chief said those trying to stop it will either step aside or be eliminated.

Bhagwat made the comments at a gathering of

saints and seers in Haridwar on Wednesday.

"Bharat Ko Ab Bada Hona Hai Hai....Dharma Ka Utthan Hai Bharat Ka



Utthan Hai...Bharat Jo Apne Utthan Ki Patri Pe Chal Pada Hai Usko Paaye Bina Ab Rukna Nahin Hai. Isko Rokne Wale Ya Toh Hat

Jayengae Ya Mit Jayengae....Yeh Nahin Rukne Wala. Yeh Aisi Gadi Hai Iska Accelerator Hai Break Nahin Hai," Bhagwat said amid chants of 'Jai Shri Ram'.

(India has to now grow big. The rise of 'Dharma' is the rise of India. There's no stopping India, which has launched itself on the track of rise and upliftment. Those who try to stop it will either step aside or be eliminated. This is a vehicle which has an accelerator but no brakes).

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COVID: 6 new cases in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported six fresh Covid cases on Thursday that took the infection tally to 4,53,915, officials said.

All the new cases were reported from the Kashmir division, with Srinagar, Budgam and Baramulla districts recording two cases each, they said.

Seventeen of the 20 districts in the Union Territory did not report any new case.

There are 75 active cases while the overall recoveries has reached 4,49,090, officials said.

The COVID-19 death toll stands at 4,750. No

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India has proud tradition of strengthening democracy barring some exceptions: Modi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Every government formed after Independence has contributed in taking India to the heights it has achieved today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday and asserted that barring one or two exceptions, the country has a proud tradition of strengthening democracy in a democratic manner.

In a speech after inaugurating 'Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya' (prime ministers' museum), which is dedicated to all previous 14 prime ministers, Modi said every



prime minister has contributed immensely in the fulfilment of the goals of constitutional democracy.

Modi also bought the first ticket of the museum before its inauguration, officials said.

He said it is our responsibility to strengthen democracy, noting that India has a proud tradition of doing so in a democratic manner with one or two exceptions.

Though he did not elaborate, the BJP has been critical of some past Congress governments, especially the one headed by Indira Gandhi, of weakening democracy. Gandhi had suspended civil rights and imposed Emergency in 1975.

Modi, however, added that every government formed after Independence has contributed in taking the country to the heights it

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25,000 new seats added with start of 50 new colleges across J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR, Apr 14: With an aim to reform the educational ecosystem and infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir, the largest single addition of education capacity in 70 years was done with the addition of new 25000 seats in 50 new colleges in one year only.

The present administration under Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha is creating one of the best infrastructures for higher education in the country.

"Two colleges of architecture and One engineering college was also established. IIT and IIM was established in record time," official documents said.

Government is bringing reforms for the transformation of education ecosystem by bridging the gaps and openings up opportunities for the younger generation.

The focus of the Government has been value-based education; creating an environment for individual growth apart from scientific and technological knowledge.

"We are working to create a perfect balance between students and teachers for shaping the young minds through a value-based knowledge system," an official of the school education department said.

Speaking at a book launch of "Analysis of Accreditation Reports of Union Territories-Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh," by National Assessment and Accreditation

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 36.8°C Min: 21.0°C

Humidity
Max: 29 Min: 23

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 19.4°C Min: 8.7°C

Humidity
Max: 85 Min: 54

Sunset : 19:00 Hours
Sunrise : 06:04 Hours

Union Law Minister inaugurates J&K Int'l Arbitration Centre at Srinagar

SRINAGAR: Union Minister for Law and Justice, Kiren Rijiju on Thursday inaugurated the new premises of the J&K International Arbitration Centre (JKIAC) in the Old Sadar Court Complex, Lal Chowk, here.

Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Patron-in-Chief, JKIAC, Justice Pankaj Mithal; Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Justice Sindhu Sharma, Justice Sanjay Dhar, Justice Puneet Gupta, Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Justice Mohammad Akram Chowdhary, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, former judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Advocate General, D.C. Raina and the members of the Arbitration Committee of the JKIAC graced the occasion. Besides, officers from High Court Registry



Union Minister for Law and Justice, Kiren Rijiju inaugurating JKIAC in the Old Sadar Court Complex, Lal Chowk on Thursday.

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leadership role in the tourism sector in the country.

"The valley is not just beautiful, but there is so much to

see and do -- its culture,

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