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J&K reports 4 new COVID cases
■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Friday reported four fresh Covid cases, three from the Valley and one from the Jammu Division, thus taking the total number of positive cases to 454032 in the Union Territory.
According to the daily Media Bulletin, out of 454032 positive cases, 65 are Active Positive
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Lt Gen BS Raju to be new Vice Chief of Army

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NEW DELHI: Lt Gen Baggavalli Somashekar Raju will take over as the next vice chief of the Army Staff on May 1, the defence ministry said on Friday.
Lt Gen Raju will succeed incumbent Lt Gen Manoj Pande who will take the reins of the 1.3 million-strong Army after Army Chief Gen MM Naravane completes his term on Saturday.
A qualified helicopter pilot, Lt Gen Raju is currently serving as the Director General Military Operations and oversaw the Army's overall operational readiness in eastern Ladakh.
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An alumnus of Sainik School Bijapur and National Defence Academy, he was commissioned into the JAT Regiment on December 15, 1984. In his
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Powerful explosion at Kabul mosque kills at least 10 people
■ **AGENCY**
KABUL: A powerful explosion ripped through a mosque in the Afghan capital of Kabul on Friday, killing at least 10 people and wounding more than 20, a Taliban spokesman said.
Hundreds of worshippers had gathered for prayers on the last Friday of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and the Khalifa Aga Gul Jan Mosque was packed, said local residents, fearing the casualty toll could rise further.
The Taliban-appointed interior ministry spokesman, Mohammad Nafi Takor, could not provide more details and Taliban security men cordoned off the area.
The source of the explosion was not immediately known and no one has claimed responsibility for the blast.
The explosion was so loud that the neighbourhood of the mosque shook from the blast, the residents
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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 40.6°C Min: 30.0°C

Humidity
Max : 25 Min : 23

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 22.8°C Min: 12.5°C

Humidity
Max : 77 Min: 48

Sunset : 19:12 Hours
Sunrise : 05:47 Hours

J&K pays relief to families of 12 kids who died after consumption of spurious cough syrup: NHRC

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NEW DELHI: On the recommendations of the NHRC, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has paid Rs 36 lakh as relief to the relatives of 12 infants, who had died after consumption of "unchecked spurious cough syrup" in Udhampur, officials said on Friday.
The incident had happened in Ramnagar, Udhampur during December 2019 and January 2020, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) said.
The Commission had registered a case on the basis of a complaint dated April 30, 2020, it said in a statement.
"On the recommendations of the National Human Rights Commission, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has finally paid the monetary relief of Rs 36 lakh to the next of kin of the 12 infants who had died after consuming a cough syrup which was subsequently found to be spurious," it said.
Initially, in response to the notices of the Commission, the UT administration had maintained that "there was no scope for any complicity on the part of its Drugs Control Department: the manufacturing of quality
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drugs is primarily the responsibility of the manufacturing firm and the department had already lodged a formal complaint against it before the competent court of law," the statement said.
"The Commission found the contention unacceptable and observed that there was no denial of the lapse in the case though the drugs department did not want to own responsibility.
"It observed that the department had failed to keep a regular vigil on the contamination and
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3 Army personnel injured in mine blast along LoC in Poonch

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: Three Army personnel were injured in a mine blast during patrolling along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district on Friday, officials said.
The injured personnel were taken to a hospital and undergoing treatment.
"During a routine patrol along the Line of Control in the Krishnaghati Sector, there was a mine blast," a defence spokesman said, adding that three Army personnel were injured in the explosion.
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Curfew in Patiala after clash over 'anti-Khalistan march', 4 injured

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
PATIALA: Curfew was clamped Friday evening after four people were injured as two groups clashed over an anti-Khalistan march in this Punjab city, hurling stones at each other. Police opened fire in the air to bring the situation under control.
The curfew will be enforced between 7 pm Friday and 6 am Saturday in Patiala district, authorities said. Essential services were exempted.
Hours later, police arrested Harish Singla, working president of a group called "Shiv Sena (Bal Thackeray)" for
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Srinagar-Sharjah flights approved to extent of 5 flights per week

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: The Ministry of Civil Aviation has approved the Srinagar-Sharjah flights to the extent of 5 flights per week on a regular basis.
Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha expressed gratitude to Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and observed that regular International flights between Srinagar and Sharjah will help in boosting trade and tourism.
The Lt Governor further noted that the UT administration, Ministry of Civil Aviation under Jyotiraditya Scindia, Union Minister for Civil Aviation is taking necessary steps on priority to strengthen air connectivity to cater to the growing tourism and industry sectors.
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taking out the procession without permission and instigating violence.
The clash took place outside the Kali Mata temple after Singla's group had begun the "Khalistan Murdabad March" from the nearby Arya Samaj Chowk.
Some Sikh activists, including Nihangs, who had initially gathered at Dukh Niwaran Sahib Gurdwara, marched towards the temple, a few of them seen brandishing
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Pakistani pilgrims arrested for chanting 'Chor' against PM Shehbaz Sharif at Madina mosque

■ **AGENCY**
ISLAMABAD/RIYADH: Saudi authorities on Friday arrested some Pakistani pilgrims for hounding and chanting abusive slogans against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his delegation at the Masjid-i-Nabwi in the holy city of Madina, the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Islamabad confirmed on Friday.
According to the media director of the Saudi embassy, the protesters have been taken into custody for "violating the regulations" and "disrespecting" the sanctity of the revered mosque by chanting "chor chor" (thieves) as soon as they saw the prime minister, Pakistan's Dawn newspaper reported.
The newly appointed prime minister is on a three-day visit to Saudi Arabia -- his first foreign trip since assuming office -- along with a delegation including Bilawal Bhutto-
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Zardari among others.
The delegation, which headed to the Prophet's mosque to offer prayers
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after arriving in Madina on Thursday, faced protest and chanting at the holy mosque, highlighting the videos circulating on social media.
Prime Minister Sharif and his son Hamza are facing allegations of money laundering. They have denied any wrongdoing and alleged that the cases against them were politically motivated.
Another video showed the pilgrims heckling and chanting abusive slogans against federal ministers Marriyum Aurangzeb and Shahzain Bugti, who were escorted by Saudi guards. A pilgrim could also be seen pulling Bugti's hair from behind.
Responding to the harassment faced by pilgrims, Marriyum Aurangzeb in a video message said the act was perpetrated by a "select group", while most Pakistanis respect the sanctity of the holy mosque.
"I don't want to name the person
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responsible for this incident because I don't want to use this holy land for political purposes," she added.
Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said his ministry would request the Saudi Arabia government to take "appropriate action" against the Pakistani pilgrims.
"My ministry will make a humble request to the Saudi government to take appropriate action on this matter. We are going to convey the pain the nation felt in these incidents in Masjid-i-Nabwi," he said.
Sanaullah said the Saudi authorities would be requested to identify those involved in the incident so that they could be deported to Pakistan as they were "not worthy of living on the sacred land".
Condemning the incident, Pakistan Ulema Council chairman Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi said Muslims were meant to
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Make India semiconductor hub of world: Modi

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
BENGALURU: Asserting that the government has put in place a supportive policy environment, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday urged the industry to make India a semiconductor hub of the world based on the principles of high technology, high quality and high reliability.
In his inaugural address at the Semicon India-2022 conference here, Modi said the country has the appetite for "technology and risk-taking" and emphasised that hard work has been done over the last few years to create an environment that encourages growth.
India's own consumption of semiconductors is expected to cost USD 80 billion by 2026 and USD 110 billion by 2030, he noted.
Highlighting that the country has an exceptional semiconductor design talent pool, which makes up for up to 20 per cent of the world's semi-
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Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing inaugural session of Semi-con India Conference in Bengaluru through video conferencing in New Delhi.

conductor design engineers, he said, "It is our collective aim to establish India as one of the key partners in global semiconductor supply chains".
"We want to work in this direction based on the principle of high tech, high quality and high reliability," Modi said.
The prime minister took a jibe at earlier governments for not working in sync with the industry by mentioning
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PM to inaugurate CMs-CJs Conference today

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate on Saturday a joint conference of chief ministers and chief justices of high courts in presence of Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, an event which is being held after a gap of six years.
The conference is a platform to discuss challenges being faced by the judiciary. A proposal of CJI
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Pakistani man arrested along LoC in Rajouri

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: A 55-year-old Pakistani man was arrested along the Line of Control when he crossed into this side of the borderline in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on Friday, officials said.
Troops guarding the Line of Control (LoC) arrested the man who was moving under suspicious circumstances in forward area in Turkundi area, they said.
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Lt Governor addresses Indian Family Business Awards-2021 in Mumbai

Invites Industry leaders to J&K for exploring business opportunities & becoming partners in UT's unprecedented developmental journey

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
MUMBAI: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday addressed the Indian Family Business Awards-2021, organised by Moneycontrol, Network 18 Group, to recognize the significant role of Family Businesses in shaping the Indian economy.
Addressing the distinguished gathering of business leaders, the Lt Governor congratulated the award-winning family businesses and said that the award is a fitting tribute to traditional business families of the country, who have been serving as the backbone of India's prosperity. There is an emerging perception that new generation with their dynamism will add to the growing economic success, he added.
"There are many examples of such business families who with humble beginnings, hard work and honest
■ **CONTD ON PAGE 9**



LG Manoj Sinha at the Indian Family Business Awards-2021 in Mumbai on Friday.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
The award is a fitting tribute to traditional business families of the country, who have been serving as the backbone of India's prosperity. There is an emerging perception that new generation with their dynamism will add to the growing economic success: LG
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CBI arrests CTO Kathua for accepting bribe

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday arrested Chief Taxation Officer Circle Kathua Ramnik Singh for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 13,000 from the complainant.
An FIR was registered on a complaint against the accused on allegations of demanding bribe.
It was alleged that the complainant had filed applications with State GST office, Circle Kathua for claiming refund of excess balance in electronic cash ledger and for taking registration under GST for his new firm.
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It was further alleged that the CTO Circle Kathua Ramnik Singh, son of Swaran Singh, resident of Lane No 3, Greater Kailash demanded Rs 15,000 from the complainant for processing his refund claim and the matter of GST registration. Later, the bribe was negotiated at Rs 13,000.
CBI laid a trap and caught the CTO Ramnik Singh red handed while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 13,000 from the complainant. The searches were conducted at the office and residential premises of the accused at Kathua, Jammu and Samba.
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