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STATE TIMES

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Congress is ‘guarantee’ for development, peace and growth of common masses: Bhalla

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THIRD NAVRATRA

Maa Chandraghanta

Maa Chandraghanta is the third incarnation of Maa Durga and worshipped on third Navratra. Maa Chandraghanta has weapons in her hands. She rides on Tiger. This day has specific significance as on this day the soul of worshiper enters in 'Manipur Chakra'. By the blessings of this Devi one gets rid of enemies, bad souls and gets politeness & courage. Mantra to be recited nine times on this day is :-

"Om Kleeng Hareeng Aing Bhagwati Chandraghanta Mum Sarwam Bandhan Naashe Naashe Swaha"

ॐ क्लीं ह्रीं भ्रुवांती चन्द्रघंटा मम सर्वं बन्धन नाशय नाशय स्वाहा

BJP changed public perception towards politicians, politics: Rajnath

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAHARANPUR/BULAND SHAHR (UP): The BJP has changed the public's perception that politicians speak lies to seek votes, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Wednesday and asserted "it is our character that we do what we say".

Speaking at a campaign rally for the BJP's Saharanpur candidate Raghav Lakhanpal, he said, "A few years ago, there was a perception that politicians speak lies to seek votes and go away. They don't care about the public or the nation. This was the common perception towards politicians and political parties."

"We have changed this perception. It is our character that we do what we say. Earlier, it was the norm to think that a politician would lie but we changed this perception," Singh added.

The defence minister said political parties make big promises in their manifestos but forget those after assuming power.

"We have overcome the crisis of confidence in politics. We had promised to revoke Article 370 and we did it after assuming power. We had promised to abolish triple talaq and we did it after getting a majority in Parliament," he said.

Singh, a former Uttar Pradesh chief minister,

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 32.9°C Min: 18.1°C

Humidity
Max: 41 Min: 34

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 22.8°C Min: 6.6°C

Humidity
Max: 50 Min: 36

Sunset : 18:56 Hours
Sunrise : 06:06 Hours

Article 370 abrogation eradicated terror breeding ground from J&K: Adityanath

Vote bank politics of Congress halted development: Dr Jitendra



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath along with Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and other senior BJP leaders during public rally at Kathua on Wednesday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday asserted that abrogation of Article 370, granting special status to erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir, had helped in eradication of the breeding ground for terrorism from

the valley.

Addressing an election rally in Jammu, Adityanath praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for abrogation of the Article and emphasised the palpable enthusiasm from Red Fort.

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‘No riots, curfews in UP during my tenure’

KATHUA: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said the previous governments in Uttar Pradesh gave patronage to those who created anarchy while there have been no riots or curfews during his seven-year tenure in the state.

Addressing an election rally in support of Jitendra Singh, the BJP candidate from the Udhampur-Kathua Lok Sabha constituency, Adityanath urged the people to vote for the saffron party, crediting the sitting MP

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Army Chief inaugurates Command hospital in Udhampur

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Army Chief General Manoj Pande on Wednesday inaugurated a new hospital complex at the Northern Command in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district through virtual mode, officials said.

A defence spokesman said the 650-bed capacity hospital spans across 60 acres and was built at a cost of Rs 274 crore. It has provision for an additional 200 beds, he added.

"A new Command hospital was inaugurated by COAS General Manoj Pande through virtual mode in the

presence of the Army and civil dignitaries," the spokesman said.

The new complex includes "eight state-of-the-art operation theatres, a medical gas pipeline system, a fire fighting system, a central air conditioning system and advanced medical treatment facilities", he added.

The spokesman said that environmental sustainability was kept as a key focus area during the construction of the hospital with an effluent treatment plant and a central sewage treatment plant ensuring responsible

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Cong creating north-south divide to break India: Amit Shah

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GAYA (BIHAR) : Launching a blistering attack on the opposition INDIA bloc, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday accused the Congress of creating a north-south divide to break the country.

Addressing an election rally at Guraru block of Gaya district which falls under Aurangabad Lok Sabha seat, he also accused the Congress and the RJD of indulging in the politics of appeasement.

"The Congress party is creating a north-south divide to break the nation which the NDA-led Central government and people of the country will not allow. Their leader Rahul Gandhi is maintaining a stoic silence on this," Shah said.

People have now made up their mind



to give a befitting reply to such divisive forces in the Lok Sabha polls and will ensure 400 plus seats for the NDA, the BJP leader said.

They (Congress and RJD) are indulging in politics of appeasement and that is the reason they are protesting the removal of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir," said Shah.

"Jammu and Kashmir is an integral

part of India. The NDA government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi abrogated Article 370 on August 5, 2019, which Congress never wanted," he said.

During the Congress regime, terror strikes in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country were a routine affair; but after Modi became the prime minister, "we carried out surgical strike and destroyed terror camps in Pakistan," said Shah.

Praising the developmental works done by the NDA government, he said, "India will become the third largest economy in the world when Modi ji becomes the PM for the third term. Modi ji becoming PM for the third term means

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For Modi Govt, nothing can be above country's interest: Jaishankar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAIPUR: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Tuesday that India under Narendra Modi focused on national interest and has successfully resisted attempts to put pressure on it on issues like Russia-Ukraine war, scrapping of Article 370 and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

At a meeting with intellectuals and a press conference earlier in Bikaner in Rajasthan, the minister talked about an India that faced the world with

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Chugh demands CBI probe into sand mafia operations in Punjab

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

CHANDIGARH: BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Wednesday demanded CBI investigation into the operations of the sand mafia gangs in Punjab.

In a statement, he said the AAP government, led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, has been just doing a cover-up exercise due to forthcoming elections by registering cases against small players whereas big sharks in the field have been allowed a free run follow-



ing which the ecology of the state has been gravely endangered.

Strongly condemning the media report on the possibility of a highway bridge between Ropar and Hoshiarpur collapsing due to rampant sand mining in the Swan river belt,

Chugh said such reports have been coming from other parts of the state as well.

He said a large number of people in villages are being put to immense harassment and inconvenience due to illegal and rogue activities of the sand mafia gangs all over the state.

The investigation into the entire matter must be handed over to the CBI because there were inter-state ramifications of the sand mafia operations, Chugh added.

Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated across J&K with fervour

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR/JAMMU: Eid-ul-Fitr was celebrated on Wednesday across Jammu and Kashmir with traditional fervour and gaiety.

A large congregation of devotees assembled at Hazratbal Shrine on the banks of Dal Lake in Kashmir.

Former chief ministers of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti were among those who offered prayers at the shrine.



Muslim brethren offering prayers in a mosque in Jammu.

"A genocide of Palestinians is going on while Muslim governments are silent. I hope they wake up and break their silence on this murder of humanity," Abdullah said

after offering his prayers at Hazratbal.

On India-Pakistan ties, he said the two nations can progress only when they have friendly relations.

"We cannot progress if we have hostile and confrontational relations," Abdullah said.

Eid-ul-Fitr, which marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, is being celebrated across India after the crescent Moon was sighted on Friday evening.

In Jammu, the biggest congregation took place at Eidgah and Mecca Masjid, where hundreds of devotees performed Namaz-e-Eid.

"We congratulate everyone on Eid. We should

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

People reaping peace dividends; 21 tourists visited J&K in 2023: Modi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that over 21 million tourists visited Jammu and Kashmir in 2023 and the people are reaping the peace dividends.

"There has been a significant decline in terror incidents. Organized bandh/hartals (protests), stone pelting, which once disrupted normal life, are now a thing of the past," the Prime Minister said in an interview with Newsweek magazine of the US.

On criticism of abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status, Modi said, "I would encourage you to visit Jammu and Kashmir to witness firsthand the sweeping positive changes happening on (the) ground. Do not go by what I or others tell you. I went to

Jammu and Kashmir just last month. For the first time, people have a new hope in their lives."

"The process of development, good governance and empowerment of the people is to be seen to be believed," he said.

Asserting that stable and peaceful relations between India and China are important for the entire region and the world, the Prime Minister expressed hope that through positive and constructive bilateral engagement at the diplomatic and military levels, the two countries will be able to restore and sustain peace and tranquillity at their borders.

He said for India, the relationship with China is important and significant.

"It is my belief that we need to urgently address the prolonged sit-



uation on our borders so that the abnormality in our bilateral interactions can be put behind us.

Stable and peaceful relations between India and China are important for not just our two countries but the entire region and world," he said.

"I hope and believe that through positive and constructive bilateral engagement at the diplomatic and military levels, we will be able to restore and sustain peace and tranquillity in our borders," Modi said.

During the wide-ranging inter-

view with the New York-based magazine, the prime minister talked about a host of issues including the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, ties with Pakistan, Quad, Ram temple and democracy, among others.

Asked about ties with Pakistan, Modi said he has congratulated the prime minister of Pakistan on taking over office and asserted that India has always advocated for advancing peace, security and prosperity in the region in an atmosphere free from terror and violence.

On the imprisonment of former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, Modi said, "I won't comment on matters internal to Pakistan."

Talking about China and the Quad grouping, the prime minister

said the US, Australia, Japan, India, China are members of many groups.

"We are present in different combinations in different groups. Quad is not aimed against any country. Like many other international groupings, like SCO, BRICS and others, Quad is also a group of like-minded countries working on a shared positive agenda," he said.

The Quad grouping comprises India, the US, Australia and Japan.

On the significance of the newly-inaugurated Ram temple at Ayodhya, Modi said the name of Shri Ram is imprinted on our national consciousness.

"His (Lord Ram) life has set the contours of thoughts and values in our

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