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Disengagement, de-escalation way forward: Rajnath on eastern Ladakh

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

NEW DELHI: With the India-China military face-off continuing in eastern Ladakh, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said Indian troops are standing "firm" and the ongoing talks between the two sides for a peaceful resolution of the matter will continue as disengagement and de-escalation is the way forward.

Addressing top commanders of the Army, Singh reaffirmed the faith of the billion-plus citizens in the force as one of the "most trusted and inspiring" organisations in the country.

The Army commanders deliberated extensively on national security challenges along the borders with China and Pakistan and ways to boost the force's overall combat capability.

The defence minister, complimenting the Army leadership for successfully taking ahead the country's defence



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh being welcomed by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan as he arrives to attend the Army Commanders' Conference, at the Manekshaw Auditorium, in New Delhi on Tuesday. Army Chief General Manoj Pande is also present.

and security vision to new heights, said the role of the force is very important in nation-building.

In his remarks, Singh also lauded the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), saying its efforts have led to "quantum improvement" in road communication along the western and northern frontiers.

On the current situation

along the northern borders, Singh expressed full confidence that while the troops are standing firm, the ongoing talks for peaceful resolution will continue and disengagement and de-escalation is the way forward, the defence ministry said in a statement.

The Indian and Chinese troops have been locked in a standoff at certain friction

points in eastern Ladakh for nearly four years even as the two sides have completed disengagement from several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks.

Referring to the situation along the borders with Pakistan, Singh complimented the Army's response to cross-border terrorism, adding that the proxy war by the adversary continues.

The defence minister complimented the "excellent synergy" between the Central Armed Police Forces, local police and Army in tackling the menace of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The synergised operations in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir are contributing to increased stability in the region and the same should continue," he said. Singh lauded the forces for the high standard of operational preparedness

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Three terror associates arrested

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

BARAMULLA: Security forces on Tuesday arrested three terrorist associates from Sopore area of Baramulla district, police said.

A pistol and other incriminating materials were recovered from their possession, a police spokesman said.

He said the security forces established a joint checkpoint and noticed three

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ED attaches properties worth Rs 1.56 Cr in Srinagar

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

SRINAGAR: The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday attached properties worth Rs 1.56 crore in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The properties include land measuring over 6,000 square feet along with a two-storey residential house and a vehicle belonging to Niamat Ali Bhat, the probe agency said. "ED Srinagar has

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LG reviews preparedness for upcoming festivals



LG Manoj Sinha chairing high level meeting in Jammu on Tuesday to review preparedness for upcoming festivals.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday directed the Deputy Commissioners and Senior Superintendents of Police to visit the prominent holy places and take every possible measure to ensure smooth conduct of the festivals.

"All the arrangements must be put in place as per the ECI guidelines", he said while chairing a high-level meeting to

review the preparedness of concerned departments and agencies for upcoming Eid, Navratras and Baisakhi festivals.

The meeting was attended by Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; RR Swain, DGP; Vijay Kumar, ADGP, Armed, Law & Order; Anand Jain, ADGP Jammu;

Administrative Secretaries; Divisional Commissioners; Deputy Commissioners and senior officers of Civil and Police

administration.

The Lt Governor directed for adequate security arrangements, traffic and crowd management; identification of parking spots; availability of essential items on notified rates, constitution of teams for regular market inspection, un-interrupted water and power supply, medical facilities, fire and emergency services and arrangements for sanitation and cleanliness.

Terror module busted in Rajouri, Poonch; 3 held

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Police busted a module of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch, arresting three out of seven identified members involved in receiving and distributing arms, ammunition, explosives, cash and narcotics dropped through drones from across the border, officials on Tuesday said.

Police issued a poster with a Rs 10 lakh award for the mastermind of the module, Mohammad Qasim of LeT based in Pakistan.

"In a planned manner, Zone police and CIB have identi-

fied individuals involved in receiving arms, ammunition, IEDs and narcotics dropped through drones from across the border in Rajouri," Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain told reporters here.

"Cases were registered against them and their premises were searched. During the past 24 hours, ten places were searched and seven persons were identified. Three of them were already arrested," he added.

The DGP said it was proven through evidence that they have received consignments of arms,

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First LS poll where corrupt people rallying together to stop action on corruption: Modi

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAIPUR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday hit out at the opposition INDIA bloc and said this is the first Lok Sabha election in which the corrupt are rallying together to stop action on corruption.

He also said Congress leaders are threatening that if the BJP wins, the country will be on fire. "Modi has been extinguishing such fires for the last 10 years," the prime minister said while addressing a public rally in Rajasthan's Kotputali.

Speaking about the country's development, Modi said a lot happened in the last 10 years but whatever happened was just a "trailer", a lot still has to be done.

He asserted that the third term of the



BJP-led government will be about taking "historic decisions".

"This election is to uproot corruption, to fulfil the dream of self-reliant India, to resolve for the prosperity of the farmers and to provide tap water to every household...but the Congress and its INDI Alliance are fighting the elections not for the country but for their own selfish motives," Modi said.

He said this is the first election in which family-based parties are holding rally after rally to save their families.

"This is the first election in which all corrupt people are rallying together to stop action on corruption. I say remove corruption, they say save the corrupt," he said.

Modi made the remarks days after the INDIA bloc held a rally in New Delhi to protest against the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.

"Congress people have started showing their dangerous intentions. This election is very important to save the country's future and to make the lives of future generations prosperous," he said. The prime minister

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Azad to contest from Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

SRINAGAR: Former chief minister of Jammu and



Kashmiri Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Lok Sabha elections from Anantnag - Rajouri constituency, his party DPAP said.

Azad left the Congress in 2022, ending his five-

decade-long association with the party, and floated his own political outfit-

Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP).

"Today the core committee of DPAP met and we have decided that (party president) Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Anantnag-Rajouri seat," DPAP leader Taj Mohiuddin told reporters here.

This will be the first Lok Sabha election for Azad after he lost from Udhampur constituency in 2014 to BJP leader Jitendra Singh.

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1 dead, another injured as vehicle falls into gorge

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

DODA: A man was killed and another injured Tuesday when a vehicle skidded off a road and plunged into a deep gorge in Doda district, police officials said.

The accident took place at Assar-Bulandpur when the driver lost control of the vehicle while negotiating a curve, they said. A rescue operation was immediately launched and the

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Arvind Kejriwal 'kingpin', 'key conspirator' in excise 'scam', ED tells Delhi HC

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

NEW DELHI: The ED on Tuesday told the Delhi High Court that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was the "kingpin" and the "key conspirator" of the "excise scam" and there were "reasons to believe" on the basis of material in its possession that he was guilty of the offence of money laundering.

Opposing the AAP leader's petition challenging his arrest by the agency in

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Gangster opens fire on police near GMC Kathua; killed in retaliation

PSI injured in firing, shifted to GMC Jammu

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

KATHUA: A gangster was shot dead by police on late Tuesday night in a shoot-out outside Government Medical College (GMC) Kathua while a Probationer Sub Inspector (PSI) and a Special Police Officer (SPO) have received bullet injuries.

In connection with the investigations of a murder case in Samba, a joint police team had laid a trap near Kathua GMC. However, sensing police presence in the area, the gangster opened fire on police team.

In retaliation, the gangster identified as Vasu Dev alias Shunu, resident of Ramgarh,



Police cordoned off GMC Kathua campus to trace out slain gangster's accomplices.

was killed on the spot while PSI Deepak Sharma and a SPO have received bullet injuries. PSI Deepak has been referred to GMC Jammu for specialized treatment. Kathua

police is investigating the matter and have launched a man-hunt to trap the accomplices of the deceased gangster, wanted in Samba murder case.

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Nine more candidates file nomination for Jammu LS constituency

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Nine more candidates today filed their nomination papers from Jammu Lok Sabha constituency for second phase of ensuing parliamentary elections scheduled to be held in Jammu and Kashmir on April 26.

The candidates, including Raman Bhalla from Indian National Congress, Ankur Sharma from Ekam Sanatan Bharat Dal (URPP), Swami Divya Nand from J&K Nationalist People's Front; Shikha Bandal from National Awami United Party; independent candidates Raj Kumar,

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Udhampur among India's top 3 districts in rural road construction: Dr Jitendra

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

UDHAMPUR: Union Minister and BJP Candidate for Udhampur, Doda, Kathua constituency Dr Jitendra Singh said here today that Udhampur has emerged among India's top three districts in rural road construction under Central PMGSY scheme and this has been possible only because of the prioritisation given by the government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last 10 years.

Dr Jitendra accused the Congress led governments in the past, including the UPA government from 2004 to



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh addressing public rally at Gordy of district Udhampur on Tuesday.

2014, of following a policy of regional discrimination as a result of which the upper hilly remote areas and far flung peripheral panchayats

of district Udhampur remained unconnected by road because these did not receive the kind of

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Five IAF helicopters conduct trial landing, take-off on emergency landing strip on NH

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

SRINAGAR: Five IAF helicopters, including the recently inducted US-manufactured Chinook, landed on a stretch of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway as part of an Emergency Landing Facility drill, the first such exercise in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Tuesday.

With this, Jammu and Kashmir became the first Union territory to operationalise an Emergency Landing Facility (ELF). Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are the three states where these emergency landing strips are currently operational.

According to the officials, two US-manufactured Chinook, one Russian-made Mi-17 and two Advance Light helicopters (ALH) of the Indian Air Force (IAF) landed on the Wanpoh-Sangam stretch of the national highway linking Kashmir with the rest of



the country in the early hours of Tuesday.

The entire drill ended by 2.50 am, during which the helicopters landed at the stretch and carried an exercise of picking up troops lying on the ground, the officials said, adding the exercise was held without any problems, they

said.

Work on the 3.5-km emergency landing strip was started in 2020 and completed late last year as part of a programme initiated by the IAF along with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the creation of ELF's at different locations across the

country.

Chinook helicopters, which have a top speed of 310 kmph and a travel range of 741 km, are used for heavy lifting and the main cabin can hold over 33 fully-equipped troops. It can also be used for medical evacuation and has space for 24 stretchers.

The Mi-17 helicopters can accommodate up to 35 troops. The ALH is an indigenously developed utility aircraft by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) with a twin-engine. It is used for causality evacuation.

These helicopters have been pressed into relief and rescue operations during natural disasters.

The ELF drill is to showcase the synergy and liaison between civil agencies, such as the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), district administration and state police, and the air force towards the conduct of complex multi-faceted activities.

CEO visits Rajouri; reviews preparations for LS polls

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**

RAJOURI: Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Jammu and Kashmir, Pandurang K. Pole, on Tuesday visited the border district Rajouri to oversee preparations being put in place for the upcoming Parliamentary Polls.

The CEO also assessed the status of District Election team while chairing a review meeting with all the concerned officers. He reviewed arrangements related to the conduct of Lok Sabha Elections 2024 in the district.

During the meeting, the CEO took stock of key aspects of the election preparations.

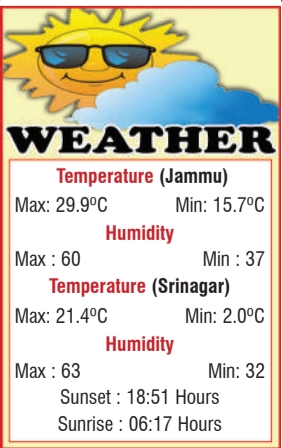
District Election Officer Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat, provided a detailed PowerPoint Presentation,

elaborating the electoral landscape of the district. With 680 polling stations and a total of 4,84,725 voters, the electoral framework of the district was underlined, emphasizing a gender ratio of 918. Notably, the status of additions and deletions in the electoral roll over the past two years was also elucidated.

The meeting also reviewed the status of all AMFs on the essential facilities ensured at all the polling stations.

The DEO highlighted the completion of physical verification of polling stations, ensuring their readiness for the upcoming elections. It was reaffirmed that adequate resources, including Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 29.9°C Min: 15.7°C

Humidity
Max: 60 Min: 37

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 21.4°C Min: 2.0°C

Humidity
Max: 63 Min: 32

Sunset : 18:51 Hours
Sunrise : 06:17 Hours