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KP employee shot...

of Article 370 of the Constitution, which accorded special status to Jammu and Kashmir, in August 2019.

Reacting to Bhat's killing, Director General of Police Dilbag Singh told PTI, "This is a sad incident but let me assure that we have identified the killers. While one of them is involved in previous killings in Srinagar city as well, the second one is a new recruit."

Though a little-known terror outfit, Kashmiri Tigers, claimed responsibility for Bhat's killing, the police chief said the Lashkar-e-Taiba terror group was behind it.

As the news of Bhat's killing spread, Kashmiri migrants living in the Sheikhpora colony staged a protest. Inspector General of Police (IGP) of Kashmir Range Vijay Kumar went to the colony to pacify them. Kashmiri Pandit employees in Mattan and Vesu in south Kashmir also staged protests against the killing.

The protesting employees also blocked the national highway and raised slogans against the administration for failing to stop targeted killings.

The IGP said Lateef Ahmed, a "recycled" terrorist, and new recruit Aqib Sher Gojri were the prime suspects behind the killing. "Raids are being conducted and I am sure we will be able to get them soon," he told PTI.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and political parties in Kashmir condemned Bhat's killing.

"I strongly condemn the barbaric killing of Rahul Bhat by terrorists at Budgam. Those behind this despicable terror attack will not go unpunished. JK Govt stands in solidarity with the bereaved family in this hour of grief," Sinha tweeted.

National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah said, "I unequivocally condemn the murderous militant attack on Rahul Bhat. Rahul was a government employee working in the Tehsil office in Chadoora where he was attacked. Targeted killings continue and a sense of fear grows unchecked. My heartfelt condolences to Rahul's family. RIP"

"This young man had his entire life ahead of him and to know that his life was so cruelly extinguished today is tragic," he said.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) tweeted, "We unequivocally condemn the killing of Rahul Bhat ji, who was working as an employee in revenue dept Budgam. Despite deployment of security forces in every nook and corner of the valley, even govt offices aren't safe. Our thoughts, prayers are with the family in this hour of grief."

PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti condemned the gruesome attack and said, Another life ended and another family devastated. My heart goes out to the bereaved family in this hour of grief. It also belies the false claims of normalcy in Kashmir.

CPI(M) leader Mohammed Yusuf Tarigami also condemned the incident and said such brutal killings are harmful for the society and cannot be justified under any circumstances.

BJP spokesman Altaf Thakur strongly denounced the cowardly act by terrorists and demanded that the attackers must be brought to justice.

The Congress, while condemning the killing, said the perpetrators of such heinous crimes should know that they cannot achieve anything by such inhuman acts.

The Peoples Conference led by Sajad Lone also condemned the killing and extended sympathies and unwavering support to Bhat's family.

Kashmiri Pandit Sabha (KPS) vehemently denounced dastardly killing of Rahul Bhat by terrorists in broad daylight.

KPS demanded that adequate security should be deployed in such places which are vulnerable and measures taken to flush out terrorists who have been striking at will from time to time.

Kashmiri Pandit Conference (KPC) has also condemned the brutal killing of Rahul Bhat.

Kundan Kashmiri, President KPC condemned the drastic killing of young Kashmiri Pandit youth, and slammed government for its failure to stop such brutal killings of KPs.

Whole community demands thorough probe, KPC Chief also urged LG and DGP to beef up security of Kashmiri Pandits and sought intervention of Ministry of Home Affairs in order to reassure full proof security to displaced community.

He further asked PM package employees not to attend their duties and remain at their camps or rented accommodations till Government will not provide them adequate security cover.

Sudhanshu designated as...

SP Crime, Jammu' vide ibid Government Order, shall be designated as Superintendent of Police, Special Crime Wing (SCW), Jammu," reads an order issued by R.K. Goyal, Financial Commissioner/Additional Chief Secretary, Home department.

It further added, "Further; one post of Superintendent of Police from the overall cadre strength of JKPS, has been transferred to CID, J&K, for purpose of the drawl of salary of Intiaz Hussain Mir, posted as SSP CID Hqrs, vide ibid Government Order."

One ICAS, Nine...

Samba, has been transferred and posted as Additional District Development Commissioner; Udhampur; Dr Subash Chander, JKAS, Registrar District Samba, shall hold the charge of the post of Programme Officer, ICDS, Samba, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

Amarjeet Singh, JKAS, Deputy Excise Commissioner (Accounts) Jammu, has been transferred and posted as Additional Secretary , Tourism Department; Ankur Mahajan, JKAS, Principal, Excise & Taxation Training Institute, Jammu, has been transferred and posted as Additional District Development Commissioner; Kathua; Wasim Raja Dar, JKAS, Additional Secretary, Tourism Department, has been transferred and posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner; Bandipore; Sukriti Sharma, JKAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the GAD, has been posted as Deputy Excise Commissioner (Accounts), Jammu. She shall also hold the charge of the post of Principal, Excise & Taxation Training Institute, Jammu, in addition to her own duties, till further orders.

Shakeel Maqbool, ICAS, Deputy Commissioner; State Taxes, Enforcement (North), Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner; State Taxes (Recovery), Kashmir: He shall continue to hold the charge of the post of Deputy Commissioner; State Taxes, Enforcement (North), Kashmir; in addition to his own duties, till further duties.

As per another order, Namrita Dogra, JKAS, Joint Director; Information, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner; State Taxes (Recovery), Jammu;

Sapna Kotwal, JKAS, Project Manager; IWMP; Udhampur; has been transferred and posted as Joint Director; Information, Jammu.

"Shagun Sharma, JKAS, Joint Director; Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Jammu has been transferred and posted as Member; J&K Services Selection Board; and Peerzada Zahoor Ahmad, JKAS, General Manager; DIC, Anantnag has been transferred and posted as Member; J&K Services Selection Board." read another GAD order.

AC defines dev...

envision enhanced efficiency and productivity through greater inter-departmental convergence and coordination. Their implementation will be reviewed at the highest-level. The exercise of framing the detailed departmental deliverables and fixing tangible and time-bound targets; has been undertaken in consultation with concerned departments. The list of deliverables broadly includes approximately 1250 tangible targets relevant for improving public service delivery.

It is a transformative step to achieve the Government's objective of good governance through holistic and transparent development of Jammu and Kashmir.

At least 168 ...

to a positive environment to accelerate the government's development initiatives.

"Dividends of peace have started reaching the people and they are further getting motivated to preserve and sustain peace", the officer added.

In 2021, security forces eliminated 180 militants, out of which 18 were foreign elements. This was possible due to synchronised intelligence network and support from civil population, he said.

Last year, 495 over ground workers (OGWs) were apprehended, while 87 OGWs were nabbed in the first four months this year.

"Ceasefire violation, infiltration bids or any other misadventure attempted by the adversary will be met firmly and strongly," the officer said.

Senior opposition leader..

easy, like whatever has happened has happened and now I should rest. No. My dream is saturation, 100 per cent coverage of the welfare schemes, he said.

Modi did not mention anybody's name during his speech, which came a month after NCP chief Sharad Pawar met him in Delhi and raised the issue of the central agencies' action against Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut and the family members of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar:

'Kashmir to be...

which is going on in full swing despite challenging and inhospitable terrain.

While appreciating the Railways for the work done with respect to connecting the Jammu and Kashmir region with the rest of India, Dr Mehta observed that the railway line will act as a catalyst for the overall development, progress, and prosperity of the region and shall play important role in rapid industrialization, movement of raw materials, boost trade and tourism, besides providing opportunity for employment generation.

Dr Mehta assured all possible support and cooperation from the UT administration to finish the project within the given timeline.

General Manager NR also thanked the Chief Secretary for the UT administration's support that has been extended to the Railway for executing the several projects and finishing those in a time-bound manner:

CBI nabs two...

Devinder Sharma, Plant Protection Officer (PPO) and Rajinder Kumar, Field Assistant on Thursday were produced in the Court of Special Judge, CBI Cases, Jammu.

Mission Amrit Sarovar...

committee will be headed by Chief Secretary as its Chairman while Administrative Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj as Member Secretary and Administrative Secretary, Jal Shakti Department; Administrative Secretary, Forest, Ecology and Environment Department; Administrative Secretary, Revenue; and Administrative Secretary, Culture will be its Members.

SIA's crack down...

his release and deportation, Sajid Bukhari cultivated Gurpal Singh and introduced Gurpal Singh with Abdul Hameed Khan and other Pakistani handlers. Since, mohd. Rafiq Khan was desirous to join terrorist ranks in Pakistan/PoK he even attempted to cross over by legitimate means through Wagha Border but was stopped by Indian Immigration Authorities. Now, Mohd. Rafiq Khan was planning to illegally cross over through fence and he had shared a video of India strategic LoC locations with Abdul Hameed Khan and in order to win over the faith of Abdul Hameed Khan. Mohd. Rafiq transferred Rs.10,000 to Darshan Singh on the instructions of Abdul Hameed Khan, so that Abdul Hameed Khan facilitates Mohd. Rafiq Khan in illegally crossing the fence through Kanga Gali.

The amount of Rs.10,000 was deposited the account of Darshan Singh because Gurpal Singh had borrowed the said amount from Darshan Singh and Gurpal Singh provided the account number of Darshan Singh to Abdul Hameed Khan and Mohd. Rafiq Khan directly, to cover his identity by directly providing Darshan Singh's bank account number to them.

Substantial digital evidence has emerged during investigation wherein Gurpal Singh and various other Pak handlers have been sharing anti-Indian and pro-Khalistani content. Abdul Hameed Khan in his social media chat/audio clips recovered from the phone of Gurpal Singh is observed to have tutored him (Gurpal Singh) regarding the sale of Chitta (narcotic) in Punjab to earn maximum profit and to utilized the same for radicalization of youth and for meeting his (Gurpal Singh's) personal expenses. The chat specifically mentioned that chitta is available @ Rs.14 Lakh per kg if delivered in Rajouri and can be sold @ Rs.60-70 Lakh in Punjab. The chat regarding arrangement of a pistol is also retrieved from the mobile phone of Gurpal Singh. Some of the anti-national content in the form of WhatsApp chat/voice notes retrieved from the mobile phone of Gurpal Singh is reproduced in the charge-sheet.

Offences u/s 13, 17, 18, 39, of UA (P) Act 1967 and section 3 of Official Secrets Act 1923 have been established against Rajouri based Mohd Rafiq Khan and Punjab based Gurpal Singh whereas, sections 13,17,18, 20, 38 under UA (P) Act 1967 have been established against PoK based Abdul Hameed Khan.

The investigation in respect of the other suspects and associates of above named accused, who are in Pakistan is going on, which includes various symmetric contacts (Pakistani handlers) saved in the mobile phone of Gurpal Singh. These Pakistani handlers have instigated Gurpal Singh for spreading separatist ideology and anti-national sentiments, for which Govt. of India has been approached for accord of sanction for filing Letters Rogatory through the Court addressed to Pakistani Central Authority for investigation in Pakistan to establishing the identity of Pakistani elements inimical to India and their associates in India.

J&K Bank crosses...

while as the Advances have grown to Rs 70400.68 Cr. In J&K, the deposits have witnessed 7% increase while as the advances have grown by 10%.

Commenting upon the annual financial results, Bank's MD & CEO Baldev Prakash said, "Well, numbers do tell their own story and the story is that after long we have surely strengthened and stabilized as a financial institution. We have left the worst far behind us as it's after seven long years, the Bank has consolidated its balance-sheet and clocked over Rs 500 Cras annual profits. Our YoY and QoQ growth in business is consistent and provides the Bank requisite drive to grow and leap ahead with more strength and confidence."

"Preferring stability and consolidation of balance-sheet over profits, the Q4 numbers express our resolve to strengthen balance-sheet while making sustained profits, as we have provided for our liabilities besides making voluntary provisioning for some non-financial obligations that were not mandated and could be met over a period of next five years as per the board approvals. This has been done consciously to provide ourselves enough head-room for delivering better returns to our investors while going forward", he added.

Regarding the strategy for achieving Bank's business goals, he said, "For achieving our growth objectives, a comprehensive strategy review has been completed. As last leg of the reviewing process we organised a maiden but very fruitful Strategy Conclave in Srinagar last week that helped us to conclude the most enriching and exhaustive business strategy review of the Bank and delineate the future course of action by taking the all concerned stakeholders on board."

He further said, "Although growth in J&K has generally been around10%both for Deposits as well as advances even during the crisis situations but the green shoots of shift in stance in our Rest of India (ROI) business strategy have begun appearing with QoQ growth of 6%in our ROI loan book, which has happened after witnessing de-growth during last few consecutive years."

Summing up his future view of the Bank's position and performance, MD & CEO said, "With record tourist-inflow this year; Governmental emphasis on increased infra-structure spend and investment climate obtaining favorably in our core geography of J&K and Ladakh, we can see the promising scenario emerging for us as premier financial institution of the region that is expected to grow ahead and gain further significance in short as well as long-term."

Army Chief begins...

and inhospitable terrain. The Fire and Fury Corps is responsible for guarding the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China in the Ladakh region.

Gen Pande's visit to Ladakh came three days after he said China's intention has been to keep "alive" the overall boundary question with India though it remains the "basic" issue between the two countries.

While referring to the eastern Ladakh border row, the Army Chief had said the Indian Army's aim is to re-establish the "trust and tranquillity" between the two sides but asserted that "it cannot be a one-way affair."

He also asserted that the Indian Army's aim was to restore the status quo ante prior to April 2020 in eastern Ladakh.

The eastern Ladakh faceoff began on May 4-5 in 2022. India has been insisting on the restoration of the status quo ante prior to the standoff.

India and China have held 15 rounds of military talks so far to resolve the eastern Ladakh row. As a result of the talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year on the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area. India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along the LAC were key for the overall development of the bilateral ties.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the LAC in the sensitive sector:

Director Estates J&K...

Enquiry Officer to conduct inquiry into the fire incident of May 1, 2022 occurred in the Clerical Hall of the Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Civil Secretariat, Jammu," reads an order issued by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Principal Secretary, General Administration Department.

"The Enquiry Officer shall submit detailed inquiry report along with recommendations within a period of days," it added.

CSC services to...

network of Fair Price Shops (FPS), here on Thursday.

The MoU was signed by Additional Secretary, Department of FCS&CA, Jugal Kishore Anand, on behalf of the Department and Shahnavaz Rashid, on behalf of the CSC, e-Governance Services India Limited, in presence of Commissioner Secretary, Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Zubair Ahmad.

Government of India has identified few initiatives for leveraging e-PoS devices of FPSs to promote their financial viability. One such initiative is providing CSC services through FPSs. It is in this backdrop that the J&K Government entered into a MoU with CSC for leveraging e-PoS devices of FPSs to deliver their services. This step can be seen as a win-win situation for all the stakeholders, particularly FPS dealers and the beneficiaries, as the CSC services will be delivered to beneficiaries at the door step, even to the far off places. The FPS dealers in turn shall earn additional revenue in shape of service-charge against the services delivered through their FPSs. Availing of this initiative has been kept optional for FPSs.

FPS dealers will collect the service-charge from the beneficiaries against each service delivered. The service-charge for each service on Digital Seva Portal has been fixed by the respective departments, while as the service-charge for PDS services shall be defined by the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs.

Dr Jitendra for building 'sustainable' StartUps with indigenous innovation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JORHAT: Union Minister,

Dr Jitendra Singh on Thursday laid stress on building "sustainable" Start-ups with indigenous innovation. He said, for Start-ups to remain sustainable, innovation has to become a dynamic process with equal stake connect with the industry.

Speaking at the inaugural event of "Iconic 75 Industry Connect (i' Connect)" at Jorhat, Assam, the Minister said, the innovative Start-ups by the young entrepreneurs have to shoulder responsibility for the next 25 years of glorious journey, when we celebrate 100 years of India's Independence as a front-line nation in the world.

He said, the aim of industry connect is to explore globally benchmarked technologies and products for making the country self-sustaining and self-generating.

He said, while our research establishments are well equipped and competent to develop the world class technologies and products in laboratories, there is a gap in terms of taking these to market and ultimately to the society for the benefit

of common women and men of the country.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, research and industry share a reciprocal relationship to thrive and grow and he urged the industry to have an equal stake in R&D through meaningful investment for making and taking world class products from laboratories to market.

He also underlined the need for Brand building of the products to carve a niche in Indian and world markets.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that today's event will provide a platform for interaction amongst important group of technology experts, government leaders, academic scholars, industry captains and start-ups; reaching out to MSMEs and Start-ups in consolidated manner with focus on funding, technology development, technology transfer; identification and establishment of Network (Govt scheme, R&D setup, Industry, MSMEs, startup, Academia) around focus areas; and finally capturing the requirements of industry.

He hoped that this would pave the way for more synergistic collaboration with

industry and other stakeholders.

A Presentation on CSIR Technologies in areas like Medicinal, Aromatic & Floriculture plants and their value addition, Food technologies and Leather & leather products were made before the august gathering.

Dr Jitendra Singh also released CSIR Compendium of Technologies for Entrepreneurship of Relevance in North East India on the occasion.

COVID: One new case in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded one fresh Covid case on Thursday that took the infection tally to 4,54,126, officials said.

The lone case was reported from Kupwara district in Kashmir division, they said.

There are 54 active cases, while the overall recoveries has reached 4,49,321, officials said.

The COVID-19 death toll stands at 4,751, No Covid-related fatality was reported in the last 24 hours, they said. There were 51 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black fungus), they added.

Petitioners can't claim to be engaged as casual labour as matter of right, when respondents don't require services: HC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Justice Sanjeev Kumar held that petitioners cannot, as a matter of right, claim to be engaged as casual labourers, more particularly, when the respondents do not require their services. This significant order has been passed in a petition filed by petitioners who are aggrieved of the Government Order No.22-JK(JSD) of 2021 dated 25th January, 2021, whereby the claim of the petitioners for being engaged as casual labourers, considered in terms of order dated 30.01.1999 passed by the Court in SWP No.123/2019, has been found to be bereft of any merit and rejected accordingly. As per brief facts, as projected in petition by the petitioners, vide advertisement notification dated 27.07.2006, Superintending Engineer, PHE Mechanical Circle South, Srinagar invited applications from ITI trained plumbers for engagement as casual/seasonal labourers purely on need-basis. This advertisement notification was issued by the Superintending Engineer concerned having regard to the authorization given by the Government in terms of proviso to Rule 7 of SRO 64 of 1994. This authorization in favour of PHE/Irrigation and Flood Control along with Agricultural Production Department, Public Works Department and Power Development Department was given by Government vide Order No.239-F of 2005 dated 29.11.2005. The petitioners claiming to be ITI trained plumbers submitted their application forms to respondents but before respondents could consider and engage the petitioners, various complaints poured in with reference to authenticity of Plumber Trade

Certificates produced by many candidates. FIR bearing No.31/2007 under Sections 420, 468, 471 of RPC was also registered. It is submitted that the Investigating Officer could only find ITI certificates of nine candidates as fake and forged. Accordingly, charge-sheet against nine candidates was filed before Judicial Magistrate (Sub Judge), Baramulla. The contention of the petitioners is that their certificates were found to be genuine. Despite certificates of the petitioners having been found/declared genuine by the Crime Branch, services of petitioners were not utilized by the respondents constraining the petitioners to file SWP No.1240/2007 titled PHE Plumber Trade Union District Baramulla vs State of J&K and others, which was disposed of by a Bench of the Court on September 27, 2007 giving liberty to the petitioners to project their grievance before the competent authority by way of representation with a further direction to competent authority to dispose of the same with due dispatch provided the petitioners were in position under a valid order of engagement as skilled labour. It was submitted that in above writ petition, apart from the petitioners, there were 180 other candidates belonging to PHE Division Hydraulic Uri. The grievance of the petitioners was considered and disposed of by respondents by passing a consideration order on March 28, 2013, whereby Executive Engineers of Hydraulic Division Baramulla and Uri were asked to take steps for implementation of directions of the Court and to initiate process of verification as per the procedure in vogue for engagement of ITI trained plumbers as casual labour-

ers on need-basis subject to confirmation by the Chief Engineer, PHE Srinagar:

Feeling aggrieved, the petitioners and others challenged the consideration order dated 28th March, 2013 in SWP No.2179/2013. The writ petition was allowed and the consideration order was quashed. The candidates belonging to Sub Division, numbering 180, filed a separate writ petition SWP No.1312/2014 in which a Bench of the Court vide order dated 26.06.2014 directed the respondents to consider the representation of the petitioners in terms of order dated 26.02.2013 passed in Contempt Petition No.81/2008. It is submitted that pursuant to the aforesaid order, 180 casual labourers of Hydraulic Division Uri were engaged. The grievance of the petitioner is that they were similarly situated with 180 candidates of Uri Division and, therefore, similar treatment ought to have been accorded to them. Having been denied the similar treatment claimed by the petitioners, the petitioners filed SWP No.266/2018 in which the Court once again directed the respondents to consider the case of the petitioners in accordance with law.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar after hearing both the sides, observed, "I am of the view that the respondents have correctly concluded that the petitioners cannot seek any parity or analogy with 166 candidates, who were engaged as casual labourers on need basis in the Uri Division. It may be true that both set of candidates i.e. the candidates, who were considered and engaged in Uri division and the petitioners, who were shortlisted for engagement in Baramulla Division, had responded to the same advertisement notification but the engagement of

the petitioners was dependent upon the need of the time in the Division. Whatever be the circumstances, the engagement of the petitioners was delayed and fresh developments intervened by the time the directions passed by this Court to consider them on the analogy of those engaged in Uri Division, came up for consideration. The authority of the respondents to make engagement of casual labour stood withdrawn with the issuance of Government Order No.43-F of 2015 dated 17.03.2015 and also with the change in Government policy, the Hydraulic Division Baramulla was not in need of engagement of casual labourers and was self sufficient to carry its existing duties and responsibilities with the help of casual workers already working in the Division. It is correctly contended by the respondents that no right of engagement vested in the petitioners merely on their being shortlisted for engagement. Their engagement was subject to need of the time and the competency/authority of the respondents to engage them."

With these observations, Justice Sanjeev Kumar found no illegality or infirmity in the order impugned and observed that the petitioners cannot, as a matter of right, claim to be engaged as casual labourers, more particularly, when the respondents do not require their services. This apart, with the issuance of Government Order No.43-F of 2015, the respondents are, otherwise, bereft of any legal competence or authority to make such engagement w.e.f. 17.03.2015. The cumulative effect of the discussion made above is that the petition is without any merit and the same is, accordingly, dismissed.