

03 55 Start-Ups registered with ISRO, 75 Students' Satellites being launched: Dr Jitendra

05 Vaishno Devi Yatra on new routes suspended after forest fire

09 Woman among four arrested with banned drugs in Katra

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Cabinet empowers boards of PSEs to decide on closure

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet on Wednesday empowered boards of state-owned companies to decide on the closure and divestment of units/subsidiaries.

Presently, the Board of Directors of holding or parent public sector enterprises have been delegated certain powers to make equity investments to establish financial joint ventures and wholly-owned subsidiaries and undertake mergers/acquisitions, subject to certain ceilings of net worth.

However, the Boards do not have powers for disinvestment or closure of their subsidiaries or units or stake in JVs, except for some limited powers given to Maharatna PSEs for minority stake disinvestment in their subsidiaries.

Therefore, approval of the Cabinet was required for both strategic disinvestment and minority stake sale or



closure of the subsidiaries or units or sale of their stakes in a JV, irrespective of the size of operations or capital deployed of such subsidiaries, etc.

"The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the proposal for empowering the Board of Directors of the Holding / Parent Public Sector Enterprises to recommend and undertake the process for Disinvestment (both

strategic disinvestment and minority stake sale) or closure of any of their subsidiaries/units/stake in JVs," an official statement said.

The alternative mechanism on disinvestment will accord 'in principle' approval for disinvestment (both strategic disinvestment and minority take sale) / closure of subsidiaries of Maharatna PSEs, which was delegated to them and review the process of disinvestment or closure by the parent or holding PSEs.

The process for undertaking the strategic disinvestment transactions/closures to be followed by the PSEs should be based on the principles of competitive bidding and consistent with the guiding principles to be laid down.

"For strategic disinvestment, such guiding principles will be laid down by DIPAM. For closure, DPE shall issue guiding principles," the state-ment said.

Northern Army Commander reviews security situation in Rajouri, Poonch



Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi during visit to forward area.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi on Wednesday visited forward areas in twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch to review the security situation and operational preparedness in the region, officials said.

Lt Gen Dwivedi, accompanied by 16th Corps Commander Lt Gen Manjinder Singh, visited the forward areas in Rajouri and Poonch today, Jammu-based PRO (Defence) said.

He reviewed the operational preparedness and the prevailing security situation in the region, the PRO said.

The Indian Army's Northern Command chief was briefed in detail on the actions being taken to maintain a robust posture to thwart the nefarious designs of anti-national elements.

He complimented all ranks for their untiring efforts and reiterated the continued need to remain vigilant and alert while operating in the area, the PRO said.

Amid protests, grenade attack victim Ranjit Singh cremated in Rajouri

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Amid protests, Ranjit Singh, who was killed in a grenade attack on a liquor shop in Kashmir's Baramulla district, was cremated on Wednesday in his native place in Rajouri.

A burqa-clad terrorist walked up to a newly-opened wine shop in Baramulla on Tuesday night, dropped a grenade inside through the porthole window, causing an explosion which killed Singh and left three other employees injured, police said.

The other injured employees have been identified as Govardhan Singh, Ravi Kumar, both residents of Billawar in Kathua and Govind Singh, a resident of Kangra in Rajouri.

As the mortal remains of Ranjit Singh reached his home in Bakra area this morning hundreds of mourners gathered there.

They kept his body on the highway, thereby blocking it and raised slogans against



Family and locals burning tyres to mark protest at Rajouri.

Pakistan sponsored terrorists, demanding an end to killing of Hindus in Kashmir.

However, Singh was later cremated with the intervention of the top officials of the district.

The protesters demanded Rs 25 lakh compensation for the deceased's family and government job to one of the family members.

"We want that there should be an end to killing of Hindus in Kashmir valley. Day in and day out, Hindus are killed. First a Kashmir

Pandit was killed in his office and now a Dogra Hindu of Rajouri was killed. How long will they kill minority Hindus in Kashmir," one of Singh's kin Surjeet Singh said.

Ranjit Singh, who was very poor and falling in BPL category, had gone there to earn livelihood but they killed him for 'being a Hindu', he said.

Former army captain Hem Raj said "Lieutenant governor should announce Rs 25 lakh compensation for his family and a government

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Centre asks States/UTs to be better prepared for monsoon to avoid losses

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Wednesday asked state governments to be better prepared during the monsoon so that losses due to natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, and landslides can be minimised.

In his address during the annual conference of relief commissioners and secretaries of departments of disaster management of various states and Union Territories, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla stressed the need for building up capacities and response reflexes to ensure round the clock preparedness throughout the year.

The home secretary asked officials from the state as well as central government to be better prepared so that losses due to natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, landslides can be minimised, an official statement said.

He referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to develop infrastructure for the long term to prevent disasters not only for ourselves, but also for future generations.

Bhalla observed that through continued efforts over the last several years, the disaster management system has been able

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Forest fire triggers several landmine explosions in Poonch

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A forest fire triggered several landmine explosions along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said on Wednesday.

The fire that started in a forest across the LoC on Monday spread to the Indian side in the Mendhar sector, they said. The fire triggered the explosion of nearly

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Sarangal posted as SP East Srinagar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The government on Wednesday posted an IPS officer.

"Consequent upon his repatriation from the Anti Corruption Bureau, J&K to Home Department for further placement, conveyed by the General Administration Department vide O.M. GAD-VIGOADM/81/2021-09-GAD dated May 18, 2022,

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 39.2°C Min: 23.8°C

Humidity

Max : 26 Min : 22

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 27.0°C Min: 11.4°C

Humidity

Max : 72 Min: 31

Sunset : 19:25 Hours

Sunrise : 05:32 Hours

SC orders release of Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convict Perarivalan

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Invoking its extraordinary power under Article 142 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court Wednesday ordered the release of A G Perarivalan, who has served over 30 years in jail in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case.

A bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao said the Tamil Nadu state cabinet's advice recommending the premature release of all seven convicts in the case was binding on the governor.

The apex court also discarded the Centre's argument that the president



exclusively has the power to grant pardon in a case under section 302 the Indian Penal Code, saying this would render article 161 (power of governor to grant pardon) func-

tionless.

The bench, also comprising Justice B R Gavai, held that states have the power to advise and aid the governor in case of pleas of pardon under article 161 made by convicts in murder cases.

Article 142 of the Constitution deals with the Supreme Court's power to exercise its jurisdiction and pass order for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it. The article was

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India intends to operate S-400 missile system to defend against threats from Pak, China: Pentagon

■ AGENCY

WASHINGTON: By June 2022, India intends to deploy the S-400 missile defence system that it has received from Russia to defend itself against threat from Pakistan and China, a Pentagon spy master has told US lawmakers.

India started receiving the delivery of S-400 missile defence system from Russia in December last year, Lt Gen Scott Berrier, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee during a recent Congressional hearing.

As of October 2021, India's military was seeking to procure advanced surveillance systems to strengthen its

land and sea borders and boost its offensive and defensive cyber capabilities.

In December, India received its initial delivery of the Russian S-400 air defence system, and it intends to operate the system to defend against Pakistani and Chinese threats by June 2022, Berrier said.

India continued to develop its own hypersonic, ballistic, cruise, and air defence missile capabilities, conducting multiple tests in 2021. India has a growing number of satellites in orbit, and it is expanding its use of space assets, likely pursuing offensive space capabilities, he said.

Berrier told lawmakers that New Delhi is pursuing

an extensive military modernisation effort encompassing air, ground, naval, and strategic nuclear forces with an emphasis on domestic defence production.

India is taking steps to establish Integrated Theatre Commands that will improve its joint capability among its three military services.

Since 2019, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given priority to strengthen India's economy by expanding its domestic defence industry, and establishing a negative import list to curtail defence purchases from foreign suppliers.

India's longstanding defence relationship with Russia remains strong, holding their first 2+2' format

COVID: J&K logs 6 new cases

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported six new Covid cases on Wednesday that took the infection tally to 4,54,159, officials said. Of the new cases, three were reported from Srinagar district while two surfaced in Jammu district. The remaining one case was recorded in Kupwara district, they said. There are 53 active cases while the overall recoveries have reached 4,49,354, officials said. The COVID-19 death toll stands at 4,752. No fresh Covid-related fatality was reported in the last 24 hours, they said. There were 51 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black fungus), they added.

talks in December a joint foreign and defence ministerial that India previously only held with the United States, Japan, and Australia.

India has maintained a neutral stance on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and continues to call for peace, Berrier told the lawmakers.

According to Berrier, throughout 2021, New Delhi continued to implement foreign policy aimed at demonstrating India's role as a leading power and net provider of security in the Indian Ocean region.

India seeks to promote prosperity and ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific region by seeking strategic partnerships to build

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Water supply in Jammu City; Parmar tells engineers to ensure regular supply

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Undertaking extensive tour of Jammu city to assess water supply scenario, Principal Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Ashok Kumar Parmar, on Wednesday issued directions to the engineers to make concerted efforts for ensuring regular supply especially in the water scarce areas keeping in view the hot summer conditions.

"Take regular stock of public grievances concerning their jurisdictions so that no inconvenience is caused to common masses on this account", Parmar told the

engineers while giving on spot instructions to prepare a comprehensive plan for improvement and augmentation of water filtration plants.

The Principal Secretary was accompanied by Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Jammu, Manesh Bhat, Superintendent Engineers Hydraulic Circle, Mechanical Rural Circle, Superintendent Engineer and PHE Mechanical Urban Circle besides other senior officers of the department.

During his visit, Principal Secretary inspected

Filtration Plants at Sitlee, Dhountly and Boria to take stock of working of these facilities.

Chief Engineer PHE apprised the Principal Secretary of functioning and capacity of these filtration plants besides highlighting various issues faced by the department in maintaining optimum utilization of these filtration plants, especially during rainy season.

Principal Secretary also visited the raw water intake structure of water supply scheme of Jagti Township in Nagrota, which is

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SC upholds provisions on setting-up of NGT, rules out branches in all States, UTs

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld several provisions of a statute under which the National Green Tribunal (NGT) was set up and ruled out a plea to have an NGT branch in every state and union territory.

A bench comprising Justices K M Joseph and Hrishikesh Roy, while dismissing the plea of the Madhya Pradesh High Court Advocates Bar Association, also held that the provision of an appeal directly in the top court against an order of the NGT was intra-vires and does not oust the high courts' power under writ jurisdictions as it was part of the basic structure.

Importantly, the right to

appeal before the High Court is a creature of the statute and is not an inherent right. The provision for appeal to the High Court should not, therefore, be created by issuing a writ of Mandamus as that would be legislating through a judicial order; and would impinge upon the well-founded concept of separation of powers, the judge-ment said.

It cannot also be overlooked that it is the Supreme Court itself that had recommended the setting up of an environmental court with direct appeals to it, the bench said.

This would also support the proposition on the constitutional validity of Section 22 of the NGT Act and that it is not ultra vires to

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GoM finalises report on GST on casinos, race course, online gaming

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The panel of ministers tasked to review the GST levy on casinos, race courses and online gaming has finalised its report, which will be taken up in the upcoming GST Council meeting.

The Group of Ministers, chaired by Meghalaya chief minister Conrad Sangma, had in its previous meeting earlier this month unanimously decided on hiking the tax rate on these services to 28 per cent.

The GoM met again on Wednesday and finalised the method of valuing these services for the purpose of levying this tax.

"The Group of Ministers (GoM) on casinos,

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