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TUNNEL MISHAP: 9 more bodies recovered as rescue operation ends; death toll reaches 10

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BANIHAL/JAMMU: Nine bodies were pulled out from the rubble of a landslide which hit one end of an under-construction tunnel on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway two days ago, taking the death toll in the incident to 10 on Saturday, officials said.

With the bodies of all the missing workers recovered, the two-day rescue operation ended late on Saturday evening. Three persons who survived were taken to hospital by the rescuers shortly after the incident on the intervening of Thursday and Friday.

Earlier, the officials had said that a portion of the under-construction tunnel at Khooni Nallah in Ramban district collapsed soon after the work on the project started.

But on Saturday, the deputy commissioner of Ramban Mussarat Islam quoted the National



Bodies being shifted to morgue in ambulances from incident site on Saturday.

Rs 16 lakh compensation for kin of each of 10 labourers

BANIHAL: A compensation of Rs 16 lakh will be provided to the family of each of the 10 labourers who died in the tunnel landslide on Jammu-Srinagar national highway in Ramban district, a senior government official said on Saturday. Following directions received from Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, Rs 15 lakh compensation each shall be given by the construction company to those who died in the adit tunnel landslide, deputy commission, Mussarat Islam said.

He said Lt Governor has also announced Rs 1 lakh exgratia from relief fund to each family of the deceased labourers.

Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to say that a landslide had hit the mouth of the

adit tunnel to T4.

"As clarified by NHAI, it is informed that there is no

tunnel collapse near Khooni Nallah. A slide occurred on the mouth of the adit tunnel to T4 on Thursday night under which a labourer component of concessionaire company was working. Operation continues," Islam tweeted.

The body of one person was recovered on Friday, while three others, including two locals, were rescued and are stable.

Officials said that on Saturday, another body was pulled out after several hours of intense search. It took the rescuers over two hours to pull out the body from under the rocks.

Eight more bodies were later pulled out and shifted to hospital, the officials said, adding the labourers were crushed to death by the falling boulders.

"Bodies of all the missing workers were recovered from the scene of the landslide outside the mouth of

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47-day summer break for schools in Jammu division from May 23

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir authorities on Saturday announced a 47-day summer vacation for educational institutions, including recognised private schools up to class 12, in the summer zone of the Jammu division.

According to an order issued by Ravi Shankar Sharma, the director of School Education department, Jammu, the decision on summer vacation was taken in view of the prevailing hot weather conditions.

Government and recognised private schools up to class 8 standard will get summer vacation from May 23 to July 9, while for classes nine to 12 the vacation will be from May 30 to July 9.

Schools in Kashmir and parts of Jammu under winter zone have a nearly three-month-long winter vacation and a 10-day summer break annually. The summer zone schools in Jammu usually go on a one-and-a-half month summer vacation with a brief winter break.

Petrol price cut by Rs 9.5, diesel Rs 7; poor to get Rs 200 LPG subsidy

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Buckling under pressure, the government on Saturday cut excise duty on petrol by a record Rs 8 per litre and that on diesel by Rs 6 per litre to give relief to consumers battering under high fuel prices that have also pushed inflation to a record high.

The excise duty cut will translate into a reduction of Rs 9.5 a litre on petrol in Delhi and Rs 7 a litre in diesel after taking into account its impact on other levies.

Petrol price in Delhi from Sunday, when the excise cuts become effective, will cost Rs 95.91 a litre as against Rs 105.41 a litre currently while diesel will cost Rs 89.67 a litre as opposed to Rs 96.67 now.

Announcing the duty cut through tweets, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said the government will give Rs



It is always people first for us!

Today's decisions, especially the one relating to a significant drop in petrol and diesel prices will positively impact various sectors, provide relief to our citizens and further 'Ease of Living.'

200 per cylinder subsidy to poor who got cooking gas connection under the Ujjwala scheme, for 12 cylinders in a year to help ease some of the burden arising from cooking gas rates rising to record levels.

A 14.2-kg LPG cylinder costs Rs 1,003 in the national capital. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana beneficiaries will get Rs 200 subsidy directly in their bank accounts and the effective price for them would be Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

There was no subsidy paid on cooking gas since

June 2020 and all users including Ujjwala beneficiaries bought cylinders at market rate, which currently is Rs 1,003 in Delhi.

The Rs 200 subsidy will cost the government Rs 6,100 crore, she said.

Alongside, she also said import duty on raw material for plastics and steel is being reduced to ease inflationary pressure.

The move came after the government's inflation management was criticised by opposition parties and economists. A rise in price across all items from fuel to

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Chief priest of Mata Vaishno Devi shrine dies; LG expresses condolence

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Head priest at the revered Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Amir Chand passed away at his residence on Saturday, officials said.

The 85-year-old 'Pratham Pujari' apparently died of a heart attack at his Katra residence, the officials said, adding his cremation will take place at Balganga later in the day.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who is also the chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB), expressed his grief over the priest's death.

In a tweet in Hindi, the Lt Governor said, "The news of



the death of Shri Amir Chand Ji, the chief priest of Mata Vaishno Devi Ji, is extremely sad. I pay my humble tributes to him. My deepest condolences to the bereaved family and followers. Om Shanti."

Let's resolve to eliminate terrorism, its ecosystem: LG Sinha fixes June 15 as timeline for completing all works related to Amarnath Yatra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Describing terrorism as gravest threat to peace and prosperity, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday called for joining efforts to demolish the terror activities and motivated propaganda being conducted from across the border.

"On Anti Terrorism Day, let us resolve to eliminate terrorism and its ecosystem", Sinha said after administering the Anti-Terrorism Pledge to the senior officials, DCs and SSPs here at Raj Bhavan to mark the observance of Anti-Terrorism Day. He observed: "I

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SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday fixed June 15 as the timeline for completing all works pertaining to Shri Amarnathji Yatra and called for regular monitoring of specific works at Anantnag and Ganderbal.

Reviewing the preparations for the Yatra at a high-level meeting in Raj Bhawan, Sinha said that it is the priority of the administration to ensure best facilities for the pilgrims. The meeting was attended by DCs, SSPs and officials of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB). The Lt Governor directed that adequate field staff of



LG Manoj Sinha reviewing arrangements for forthcoming Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

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IFS Vivek Kumar appointed as PS to PM

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: IFS Vivek Kumar was appointed as Private Secretary (PS) to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday.

"The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the proposal for the appointment of Vivek Kumar, IFS (2004) as PS to PM at Joint Secretary level in the Prime Minister's Office with pay at level 14 of the Pay Matrix," reads the order. A 2004 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, Vivek Kumar is currently the director of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

J&K records 15 new COVID cases

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday recorded 15 new cases of coronavirus, taking the infection tally to 4,54,191 while no death was reported in the last 24 hours, officials

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Tourism boom in J&K due to scorching heat, not any better situation: Azad

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Veteran Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad on Saturday said the current tourism boom in Jammu and Kashmir is due to the rising temperature in the rest of the country and not because of any improved situation in the Union territory.

Azad made the assertion, reiterating his stand on the Delimitation Commission report, saying that the tailor-made report is in contradiction with the ground realities.

Azad, the J&K former chief minister, called for united efforts to finish militancy



Veteran Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad interacting with media in Jammu on Saturday.

and also urged the government to accept the genuine demands of vulnerable sections of the society to ensure that they are not put in

harm's way.

The government should not be happy over the increase in tourist arrivals (in Kashmir)

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Azad visits family of Rahul Bhat in Jammu

JAMMU: Senior Congress leader and former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad on Saturday visited the house of slain Kashmiri Pandit Rahul Bhat here and offered condolences to his family, a party leader said.

Bhat (35), who had got the job of a clerk under the special employment package for migrants in 2010-11, was shot dead by Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists at his office in the Chadoora area of central Kashmir's Budgam

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■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: It is the dawn of a new era of development, peace and prosperity in Kashmir and the troops must remain vigilant to maintain the sanctity of the Line of Control (LoC), Army Chief General Manoj Pande said on Saturday.

Pande, who is on his maiden visit to Kashmir after taking over as the Chief of the Indian Army on April 30, arrived in Srinagar on Saturday.

The Army chief, accompanied by Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi, Northern Army Commander, and



Army Chief General Manoj Pande during visit to a forward area along LoC.

Lieutenant General ADS Anuja, Chinara Corps Commander, proceeded to undertake a first-hand assessment of formations

along the LoC in north Kashmir, the defence ministry's statement said. Pande, whose Kashmir visit will

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India, Singapore call for global cooperation to deal with terrorism

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India and Singapore have strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms including cross-border terrorist activities and vowed to expand bilateral cooperation to combat the menace.

The two strategic partners also stressed the need to enhance international cooperation to deal with terrorism in a comprehensive manner, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Saturday.

India and Singapore deliberated on these issues at their fourth meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Combating Terrorism and Transnational Crime which was held from May 18 to 19.


"As strategic partners, India and Singapore strongly condemned terrorism in all

its forms including cross border terrorism and stressed the need to enhance international cooperation to combat terrorism in a comprehensive manner," the MEA said in a statement.

It said the JWG also emphasised that all countries must take immediate and sustained action to ensure that no territory under their control is used for terrorist attacks on others and agreed on the need to expeditiously bring perpetrators of such terror attacks to justice.

The meeting was held in Singapore. The MEA said the JWG discussed contemporary counter-terrorism challenges, including cross border movement of

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 39.8°C Min: 29.1°C

Humidity

Max : 30 Min : 27

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 19.8°C Min: 10.9°C

Humidity

Max : 76 Min: 59

Sunset : 19:28 Hours

Sunrise : 05:28 Hours

Rahul comments Abroad



pened is that India's voice has been crushed".

Gandhi alleged India's voice has been crushed by the institutional

framework of the country itself which is becoming parasitical.

"So, the deep state, the CBI, the ED, is now chewing the Indian state

and eating it, much like in Pakistan," he asserted.

An angry BJP shot back on Saturday, accusing Gandhi of harming India in his "hate" against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and alleged his frequent critical remarks about the country from foreign soil amounted to "betrayal".

BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia launched a sharp attack on the Congress leader for his remarks at the London event where Gandhi accused the ruling party of spreading "kerosene all over the country, you need one spark and we will be in big trouble".

It is the Congress which has been carrying kerosene to incite riots since the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, he alleged, dubbing Gandhi a "part-time, immature, unsuccessful leader of a hopeless Congress" who has often spoken negatively about the country in foreign places like the US, the UK and Singapore.

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