Air surcharge 50 paisa for Leh

J&K SCERT launches Toycathon 2023 titled 'Promotion

MOON

THE BANQUET WITH A DIFFERENCE

**10** Dr Jitendra holds interaction with UU young StartUps, calls for wider awareness

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# HC stays judgment on 2022 village defence guards scheme

of innovative ideas, revival of local heritage'

#### **STATE TIMES NEWS**

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Friday stayed a judgment, pending outcome of appeal, with regard to the new village defence guards scheme announced last year by the Centre as part of efforts to tackle terror activities in the

Union Territory. The scheme came into effect on August 15 last year and replaced a 1995 scheme of the Jammu and Kashmir government.

However, the new village defence guards (VDG) scheme was challenged in the high court and petitions were filed, mostly by special police officers (SPOs) heading these groups whose honorarium was reduced from Rs 18,000 to Rs 4,500.

On April 6, a single-judge bench had quashed the 2022 scheme and directed authorities to treat Special Police Officers (SPOs) as having 1995 with all powers and privileges of SPOs under the Police Act.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice N Kotiswar Singh and justice Rahul Bharti stayed the singlejudge bench's verdict.

"Keeping in mind all the

factors and circumstances and legal issues of seminal importance involved, in the context of a security sensitive part of the country and weighing the rival contentions, we are of the opinion that interest of justice would be better served if the impugned judgment and connected writ petitions, is stayed in terms of its operation during the pendency of this letters patent appeal," the division bench said Pronouncing a 27-page judgment after hearing Senior Additional Advocate General Monika Kohli, who was appearing for the govern-

lage defence committee of lawyers representing the petitioners, the court listed the matter for June 7.

> "In assessing the balance of convenience, we have also kept in mind that the issues raised in the appeal in the context of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, which is still not out of the woods in the context of its security issues and problems, have a direct bearing on the scheme of 2022 getting non starter and any uncertainty which may be caused in the implementation of the impugned judgment ought to be avoided,' the order read.

> The court said it is equally conscious that these issues ought to be resolved at the earliest, stressing on the need to notify and hear all the parties.

It said the appellants are assailing through this appeal a common judgment of April 6 passed by the single-judge bench, adjudicating 19

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

# Markets in Srinagar to soon resemble those in metro cities: LG

### **STATE TIMES NEWS**

SRINAGAR: The markets in Srinagar will soon resemble the ones in metro cities, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday after he inaugurated a market under the smart city project.

"The Polo View Market has been redesigned under the Smart City project. The electric wires and telecom fiber have all been laid underground. The market can be kept open even during the night," Sinha told reporters.

Known for handicrafts and handloom products, the shopping centre has been transformed into a premium pedestrian  $_{
m market}$ Smart Srinagar Limited.

Sinha said the locals face some difficulties wherever infrastructure projects are taken up but the traders cooperated with the authori-

STATE TIMES NEWS

threats emerging

ahead of the crucial

G20 meeting, the

top cop of the

Kashmir Valley took

a surprise round of

the city during the night to check the

preparedness of the police

force and said night-and-day

domination by security forces would be ensured to

make the prestigious pro-

Passing through the lanes

and bylanes of the interior

city. Additional Director

General of Police (Kashmir

gramme a grand success.

SRINAGAR: Amid terror



LG Manoj Sinha inaugurating a market under the smart city project at Srinagar on Friday.

"I express gratitude to the traders who cooperated. I am sure it will increase the busi-

This is just a start and in the days to come, the smart city project will develop many such markets at Residency Road, Lal Chowk and the old city area, the Lt Governor

"The endeavour to make Srinagar look like Delhi or Chandigarh or other big cities is on. The people who have come here would have felt that they were in Delhi or Mumbai and not in Srinagar. You will get to see many more markets like this in the coming days," Sinha added.

Other than the Polo View market, the LG also inaugurated two other Srinagar Smart City Projects and 25 Urban Local Bodies (ULB) projects.

The two smart city projects include Abi Guzar Shiv temple, which has been renovated and dedicated to the people and smart advanced traffic management vehicles that have been included in the fleet for Srinagar smart city. Of the Urban Local Bodies

(ULB) projects dedicated to

developing urban infrastructure is focused on Individual's well-being, new avenues and opportunities for the people for more diver-

the public, 16 are develop-

ment projects in 11 ULBs

and nine solid waste manage-

ment facilities in 10 ULBs.

The LG said these projects

will significantly boost urban

infrastructure and give an

The holistic approach in

impetus to ease of living.

sified incomes, improved service delivery, mobility, cleanliness and to achieve the objectives of sustainable urban development," Sinha Bicycle-sharing facilities

for different locations in the city were also inaugurated on the occasion by the Lt

Sharing the efforts to create facilities at par with other big cities of the country,

### SC directs Centre, states to ensure constitution of sexual harassment committees

### STATE TIMES NEWS

ment, and a battery of

DELHI: Supreme Court on Friday directed the Centre and the state governments to undertake a time bound exercise to verify whether sexual harassment committees have been constituted in all ministries and the departments.

The top court said there are serious lapses in the enforcement of the 2013 Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act.

A bench of Justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli said an improperly constituted sexual harassment panel would be an impediment in conducting an inquiry at the

workplace, as envisaged under the statute and the The apex court said it will

be equally counterproductive to have an ill prepared committee conduct a half-baked inquiry that can lead to serious consequences like imposition of major penalties on a delinquent employee.

"The Union of India, all State Governments and Union Territories are directed to undertake a time bound exercise to verify as to whether all the concerned Ministries, Departments, Government organizations, authorities, Public

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

### 2,500 mobile toilets to be set up for Amarnath Yatra ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Over 2,500 mobile toilets will be set up for the Amarnath Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir, with most on the two routes to reach the cave shrine located at a height of 3.880 metres in the Himalayas, officials said.

Scheduled to begin on July 1. the 62-day-long yatra this year could see more pilgrims, they said and added that in total, 1,500 personnel will be manning the toilets

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

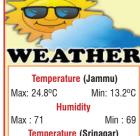
### Gulmarg all set to host G-20 events

### STATE TIMES NEWS

BARAMULLA: International tourist resort Gulmarg of Baramulla is all set to welcome tourism delegates from the G-20 nations in the last week of May 2023.

In this regard, the District Administration Baramulla is finalizing all the related arrangements, and the district is undergoing a major makeover amid a stringent security plan for the

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9



Max: 6.8°C Max: 94 Min: 83

Sunset: 17:27 Hours

Sunrise: 07:23 Hours

Range) Vijay Kumar reached a checkpost at Panthachowk, an area always

G20 will be held in

peaceful manner: ADGP

bustling with traffic as it forms part of the National Highway connecting the Valley with the rest of the coun-

A 1997-batch IPS officer, Kumar took out time to stand with his jawans who have been tirelessly maintaining tight vigil along the crucial highway, a possible route for terrorists to enter

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

**STATE TIMES NEWS** 

JAMMU: The much-awaited

Jammu-Akhnoor four-laning

road project, sanctioned by

the Union Government in

2015, is back on the rails

after missing several dead-

Jammu-Akhnoor highway

is a stretch of national high-

way 144-A, which connects

the border districts of

Rajouri and Poonch with

Jammu and is also a very

"Almost all the hindrances

have been cleared and the

construction work has gained

pace from 2021 to 2023. We

have made the road stretch

important defence road.

# Jammu DDC chairpersons call on Chugh, applaud PM's development agenda in J&K

### STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: National General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Partv (BJP), Tarun Chugh has said that there has been a positive change in Jammu & Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 and today there is mutual development of both peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Tarun Chugh was interacted with the DDC chairpersons along with several other DDCs from Jammu and Kashmir at party National Headquarter, Delhi on

Work on delayed 4-lane Jammu-

Akhnoor highway back on track

up to 4.4 kilometres under

phase-1 and hope the work of

other' phases may be com-

pleted by 2025 February and

March", General Manager,

National Highway and

Infrastructure Development

(NHIDCL), Col Surajpal

The NHIDCL, a company

under the Ministry of Roads

and Highways, is executing

the Jammu-Akhnoor road

widening project costing Rs

1,345 crores, which has been

The flyover under Package

II has been fully functional

and more than 72 per cent of

divided into four Packages.

Singh Sagwan told PTI.

Limited

Corporation



BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh at New Delhi

Speaking on the occasion, Chugh said that the people of

work on the 20-kilometre-

long stretch under Package

III has been completed,

Package I work on a 0.8 km

long stretch from Bhagwati

Nagar Chowk (4th Tawi

Bridge) to Canal Head in

Jammu city is also under

"The work was assigned

during 2018 but, got started

in 2019. Earlier the work

was delayed due to the abro-

gation of Article 370 in 2019

as the state was converted to

UT the work was delayed due

to a lack of materials and

land acquisition. It was fur-

CONTD ON PAGE 9

ther delayed in 2020 due

progress.

Jammu & Kashmir have high

### Pakistan situation will not impact J&K: BJP ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The situation in Pakistan will not have any impact on Jammu and Kashmir, the J&K BJP said on Friday after some regional political parties expressed concern about the state of the affairs in the neighbouring nation and its ramifica-

Widespread protests broke out across Pakistan after the arrest of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf founder Imran Khan by the paramilitary Rangers, prompting the deployment of the army as well as in Punjab, Khyber

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

### Imran Khan gets two-week protective bail in corruption case

PM Modi. The proof

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

#### ISLAMABAD: In a temporary relief to Imran Khan, a special bench of the Islamabad High Court on Friday granted him protective bail for two weeks in a corruption case and ordered that the former Pakistan prime minister should not be arrested till May 17 in any

Tuesday. The bench comprising Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Saman Rafat Imtiaz heard the Al-Qadir trust corruption case, a day after the Supreme Court termed

registered after



Khan's dramatic arrest from the Islamabad High Court (IHC) premises on Tuesday as "invalid and unlawful".

The court in its order also stated that the former premier should not be arrested

in any case, registered after May 9, till May 17. The bench also ordered the authorities to provide 'foolproof security' to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief. Khan is expected to return to his Bani Gala residence

In another case, the IHC Justice Mehmood Jehangiri conducted the hearing in the Zile Shah murder case and after arguments, the court accepted Khan's protective bail in the case till May 22. Shah was a PTI supporter and was killed in violence in

# G20 delegates to act as brand ambassadors for J&K: Tourism Secy

### **STATE TIMES NEWS**

SRINAGAR: Delegates attending the G20 event here later this month will act as brand ambassadors for Jammu and Kashmir and its tourism at the global level, boosting local businesses, an official said on Friday.

The third G20 Tourism Working Group Meeting will be held in Srinagar from May 21-23.

Tourism Secretary Syed Abid Rashid Shah said, "The G20 event is a great opportunity for Jammu and Kashmir and its tourism -- directly and indirectly -- as well for the other connected sectors like handicrafts, handloom, hospitality and trade."

The delegates will act as ambassadors of Jammu and Kashmir across the world as a global tourist destination, Shah added.

Speaking to reporters after inaugurating hot-air balloon, cycling and trekking activities at Zabarwan Park,



Shah said such activities will act as added attractions for tourists

The launch of such adventure activities is a prelude to the main G20 event, the tourism secretary said.

Shah said a cyclothon in which most of the participants are from government schools has also been started, adding that such events will be scaled up in the future so that tourists and locals enjoy adventure tourism in the Union Territory. Enthusiastic school children from

government-run schools were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Abid

ties presented by the upcoming G20 Tourism Working Group meeting, stating that the event is an opportunity for all of us to promote Jammu and Kashmir Tourism on a global scale and showcase our beautiful region to the world.

"It has the potential to increase international and domestic tourist footfall," he said.

Envisioning the significant economic impact, he further added that the G20 event is set to propel Jammu and Kashmir's economy by leaps and bounds, benefiting sectors such as handicrafts, handloom, trade, travel, and, of course, tourism.

"With over 150 foreign and national delegates participating, this event provides an unparalleled global platform for Jammu and Kashmir to demonstrate its potential, with the delegates ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

### Proud of these youngsters for their hardwork: PM congratulates students after CBSE Class 12, 10 results

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS DELHI: Prime

Minister Narendra Modi on Friday congratulated students who have successfully cleared the CBSE Class 12

"I congratulate all the Exam Warriors who have successfully passed the CBSE Class XII examinations. I am proud of these youngsters for their hard-



Many congratulations to all the students who have successfully cleared CBSE Class 10th & 12th examinations. Wishing you all a great academic iourney ahead

examinations, saying he is proud of these youngsters for their hardwork and determi-

The prime minister also congratulated students who have passed the Class 10 CBSE exams, and wished them for their upcoming

endeavours.

work and determination, Modi said in a tweet.

He also congratulated the parents and teachers of these students for their monumental role in the success of the youngsters

"I would like to tell those bright youngsters who

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9