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the world, he added. He hailed the collaboration of IIM Jammu with Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Confederation of Indian Industry, which he said "is going to set up a special diversity cell for helping potential entrepreneurs from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes".

"I am told that this is going to be the first centre of its kind among the IIMs," he said.

Kovind also expressed happiness over the cooperation among the Jammu-based IIM, Indian Institute of Technology and All India Institute of Medical Sciences.

"I am happy that these three institutes are integrating and offering courses in which students from one institute can get access to the other. This integration of courses and institutes is in line with the objectives of the National Education Policy-2020," he said.

The President also urged the IIM and other institutes in Jammu and Kashmir to adopt towns and villages and channelise the potential of the people in the union territory for bigger goals.

To the passouts, Kovind said education and knowledge remove ignorance and set the mind and soul free.

Only that learning which liberates the learner is real learning, he added.

Asserting that the role of fast-paced technological changes is going to be disruptive, Kovind told the students, "The shelf life of technologies is getting shorter. Therefore, the shelf life of management and leadership styles is also going to be shorter. To deal with such a scenario, you have to move from the mindset of utilising the known' to the approach of exploring the unknown'," he said.

While President Ramnath Kovind was the Chief Guest on the occasion, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Govt of India, and Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor, Union territory of J&K were the Guests of Honour.

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), and Ravi Kumar Narra, President, Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCII) were the special guests on the occasion.

The Convocation was declared open by Dr. Milind. P. Kamble, Chairman, BoG, IIM Jammu, who also delivered the welcome address while Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director IIM Jammu presented the Directors' Report.

As many as 214 students were conferred with a Master of Business Administration (MBA) Degree. On this meritorious occasion, the Institute confers the Chairman's Gold Medal, Director's Silver medal, and Chairperson MBA's Bronze Medal for their scholastic performance.

Sonali of the Batch 2020-22 was awarded the Gold medal, Shraddha Shukla received the Silver medal, and Raafeq Dawara got the Bronze medal.

President Ram Nath Kovind presented the medals to the students.

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) awarded the ICSI signature award to Sonali, the top rank holder in the MBA programme.

The President also inaugurated the diversity cell at IIM Jammu for the SC/ ST Community in the IIM Incubation Center with the support of the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DICCII).

The Diversity Cell aims to promote entrepreneurship in this segment of society for their economic and social upliftment.

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State encouraged the graduating MBA batch to actively participate in taking India to the next pedestal.

Dr Jitendra also emphasized that the establishment of IIM Jammu happened during the commencement of two important events: NEP 2020 and Start-Up India. He stressed the growing importance of start-ups, especially in the agricultural, dairy industries and agritech.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha congratulated the graduating students, remarking that learning shouldn't be confined to books and courses but should also be used in the real world. He also proposed to make Jammu and Kashmir 'Aatmanirbhar' in the upcoming years and stressed the need for interdisciplinary and holistic education, which is the main motto of NEP2020.

Dr. Milind P. Kamble, Chairman, Board of Governors, IIM Jammu gave an overview of the Institute and mentioned that IIM Jammu provides a conducive environment for nurturing talent, excellence, and innovation. He reminded everyone of the importance of adaptability and preparedness in this new era and wished success to future corporate leaders.

Prof. B. S Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu presented highlights of IIM Jammu in the past one year where he spoke about the progress of the Institute in the form of research publications, academics, infrastructure development, and setting up of the new state of the art campus at Jagti which is nearing completion.

He gave an insight into the programmes currently offered by IIM Jammu and mentioned the various MoUs that have been signed between IIM Jammu and various institutions, both nationally and internationally. He mentioned that was an increase of 33% in average salary with the highest salary of 32 LPA. He congratulated the graduating students and wished them good luck in their future endeavors.

The event was attended by all the Chairpersons, faculty members, staff members, graduate students, their family members, and media personnel. A live webcast of the event was done through National Informatics Centre (NIC). The link was <https://webcast.gov.in/moe/imj>.

Dr. Milind Kamble declared the Convocation closed and the event concluded with the National Anthem.

BSF fires at...

light suspected to be from a drone was observed in Arnia area (along the International Border) about 04:15 hours today," a BSF spokesperson said.

Alert BSF troops fired at the flying object which was at a height of about 300 metres, causing it to withdraw, he said.

The security forces have been alert to attempts being made by Pakistan and terror outfits across the border to smuggle weapons, ammunition and explosives through drones via the International Border in Jammu region to arm terrorists.

Forees have shot down several drones in the recent past in Jammu, Kathua and Samba sectors and seized their payloads including rifles, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), sticky bombs besides narcotics,

On Monday, the police had recovered three magnetic IEDs dropped by a drone in Akhnोर border area of Jammu after BSF shot it down with its payload.

On May 29, seven sticky bombs and as many under-barrel grenades (UBG) were found with a drone that was brought down by police in Rajbagh area of Kathua district.

Shiv Sena MP...

terrorists inside the crowded tehsil office in Chadoora town of Budgam district



Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi consoling family members of Rahul Bhat at Jammu.

in central Kashmir on May 12.

"I met the family members of Rahul Bhat today at their home in Jammu", she said.

Chaturvedi said Shiv Sena will raise the issue of Kashmiri Pandits, and demanded the safety and security of those who are working in the valley.

Terrorists, their cross...

responsible for most killings in the region. He also termed the social media as a new challenge to the security establishment in Jammu and Kashmir. "Social media is being used to spread rumours. Cyber crimes, as compared to other crimes, increased by over 11 per cent between 2019 and 2020," he said.

Sinha said that the social media is being used to create conflict within the society, and called on the forces to prepare for the fourth generation warfare .

Congratulating the passing out cadets, the Lt Governor asked them to discharge their duty with utmost responsibility and dedication by effectively tackling traditional as well as modern challenges, and carry forward the rich legacy of courage and bravery of Jammu & Kashmir Police.

Paying his tributes to the bravehearts of JKP and other security forces personnel who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty, the Lt Governor observed that the Jammu and Kashmir Police is a proud force of the country tackling big challenges like Anti-Terror operations, maintaining Law & Order, dealing with the increasing threats from drones, drug trafficking, cybercrime, and radicalization, every day to maintain peace in Jammu & Kashmir and ensure safe & secure environment for its people. Our Police and Security Forces have been successful in dismantling terror modules of the neighboring country. Yet a handful of disgruntled people are radicalizing our youth and are shedding innocent blood by carrying out terror activities in the UT, he said, adding that they will never succeed in their nefarious designs. A total of 30 Deputy Superintendents of Police (Dy:SpP) and 61 Probationary Sub-Inspectors (PSIs), at SKPA Udhampur completed their rigorous training today at the Police Academy. An oath was administered to the passing out cadets for performing their duties with dedication and honesty. At the outset, the Lt Governor took the Rashtriya Salute and inspected the Parade, besides taking the salute at an impressive March Past by Men and Women contingents. Dr. S.D Singh, Director, SKPA, in his introductory remarks informed about the training provided to the cadets on a number of courses on general policing, law and order management and other specialized operations. Dilbag Singh, DGP, in his address congratulated the Director of SKPA Udhampur for providing quality training to the Probationaries and welcomed the new entrants into the family of JKP. He congratulated the trainee officers and wished them a bright service career in their field work. He also highlighted the significance of 15 women officers in the POP. The Lt Governor also handed over awards and certifications to best trainees and outstanding achievers. Parade Commander DySp Vikram Nag led an impressive parade of trainee DYSSP and PSIs.

Prominent among others, present on the occasion were Lal Chand DDC Chairperson Udhampur; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; RK Goyal, Additional Chief Secretary Home; R R Swain, Special DG CID, Pardeep Katyal, IG BSF, Kritika Jyotsna, Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, besides AK Bhan (Retd.) DGP; PRI representatives; former Legislators, serving and retired Army & Police personnel and family members of the passing out cadets.

Court denies bail...

his disclosure, a pistol along with 2 magazines and 18 rounds of 9 mm were also recovered. During course of hearing, counsel for applicant submitted that applicant is a teacher by profession having great respect in the society and his prolonged detention may jeopardize his entire career. APP Anil Magotra appearing for UT submitted that applicant was involved in unlawful activities by aiding, providing and transporting arms and ammunitions to terrorists, who further create terror amongst peace loving citizens. Special Judge NIA Ashwani Sharma, while rejecting the bail application, observed that the embargo contained under section 43-D (5) is attracted in the present case. "By the act of accused/applicant herein the unity, integrity, security and sovereignty of country shall be endangered as the applicant has disclaimed, questioned and disrupted the sovereignty and territory of India with intention to secede territory of the UT of J&K from Union of India. If the applicant will be enlarged on bail the confidence of the general public upon the courts shall be shattered as such, in the larger interest of the State and taking into consideration security of the state, the applicant does not deserves the concession of bail at this stage, particularly when the material witnesses are yet to be examined," the Court observed.

Presidential poll on...

member Binoy Viswam said the Congress had reached out to him to discuss a "common candidate".

"Consultations for the presidential election have begun among various opposition parties," a senior opposition leader told PTI, adding that once a consensus is arrived at, a joint candidate may be put up.

Though the final list of electors will be notified after the bye-elections to three Lok Sabha seats and the Rajya Sabha polls to 16 seats, the NDA has 440 MPs in its favour while the opposition UPA has around 180 MPs, besides 36 MPs of Trinamool Congress who normally support the opposition candidate.

The Congress and the BJP are likely to win six more Rajya Sabha seats in the June 10 election and the UPA partners may bag three seats more.

According to rough calculations, the NDA has around 5,35,000 votes out of a total of 10,86,431 votes of all electors.

This includes 3,08,000 votes with the support of its MPs along with that of its allies. Among the states, the BJP has the maximum of 56,784 votes from Uttar Pradesh where it has 273 MLAs. Each MLA in Uttar Pradesh has the maximum vote of 208. The NDA will get its second-highest votes among states from Bihar where with 127 MLAs, it will get 21,971 votes as each legislator has 173 votes, followed by 18,375 votes from Maharashtra where it has 105 MLAs and each has 175 votes.

With 131 MLAs, the NDA will get 17,161 votes from Madhya Pradesh, 16,464 votes of 112 MLAs from Gujarat and 15,982 votes of its 122 MLAs in Karnataka.

The UPA, on the other hand, has a little over 1,50,000 votes from among its MPs and will get around the same number of votes from its legislators in states. Opposition candidates in the past too have been getting a little more than 3 lakh votes in the previous elections for the highest post in the country.

The value of the vote of a Member of Parliament has gone down to 700 from 708 in the presidential polls this time due to the absence of a legislative assembly in Jammu and Kashmir.

Kumar said the EC is fully geared to conduct the election in a free and fair manner, while all Covid-related safety protocol would be followed during the voting and counting of votes.

He further said that no political party will be allowed to issue any kind of whip in this election, which will be held on secret ballot.

"The Constitution has expressly provided that election to the office of President shall be by secret ballot. Therefore, the electors are expected to scrupulously maintain secrecy of vote. There is no concept of open voting in this election and showing the ballot to anyone under any circumstances in the case of Presidential and Vice-Presidential elections is totally prohibited," the CEC said.

Any violation of the voting procedure will entail cancellation of the ballot paper by the presiding officer, he said, adding that the marking of vote can be done only with the particular pen provided by the presiding officer to the electors at the place of polling.

"It is the resolve of the EC that there should be no malpractice of any kind in this election for the highest office in the country and if anything is found, it is a ground for election petition in the Supreme Court and could lead to cancellation," Kumar said, adding that the entire process of voting would be videographed.

He said as per Section 18 of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952, the offence of 'bribery' or 'undue influence' as defined in Sections 171B and 171C of IPC, by the returned candidate or any person with the consent of the returned candidate are among the grounds on which the election can be declared void by the Supreme Court in an election petition.

Scrutiny of nominations will take place on June 30 and the last date for withdrawal of nominations will be July 2.

If necessary, the voting will take place on July 18 and counting of votes on July 21.

Kumar said the total number of electors for the election will be 4,809, comprising 776 MPs and 4,033 MLAs.

Voting for presidential election will take place in Parliament and the premises of state assemblies, while Rajya Sabha Secretary-General will be the returning officer.

The president is elected by the members of the electoral college consisting of elected members of both houses of Parliament, and elected members of the legislative assemblies of all states including the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the Union Territory of Puducherry.

The nominated members of either Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha or legislative assemblies of the states are not eligible to be included in the electoral college and therefore, they are not entitled to participate in the election.

Similarly, members of the legislative councils are also not electors for the presidential election.

Incidentally, there has only been one presidential election in 1977 where Neelam Sanjiva Reddy was elected unopposed, after the candidatures of 36 of the 37 candidates who filed their nominations were rejected.

Rajendra Prasad was the only President to have got two full terms and Zakir Hussain and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed could not complete their full terms.

Since 1997, there has been contest between only two candidates - one of the ruling dispensation and the other supported by the opposition, after a change of law making it mandatory for 50 MPs to propose the candidate for the election to the highest office in the country and another 50 seconding his candidature.

In the last election in 2017, Ram Nath Kovind became the President after defeating joint opposition candidate Meira Kumar. Kovind polled 7,02,000 votes compared to Kumar's 3,67,000 out of a total of 10,69,358 votes.

Govt winds up...

has a sanctioned strength of 5 Gazetted officers, 113 Non-Gazetted officials and 52 class IV employees.

The Administrative Council decided to close the Department and transfer its infrastructure and manpower to other Government departments, as per need, for their optimal utilization.

Earlier, the Department of stationery and office supplies was the nodal agency for procurement of stationery/paper and binding items for its onwards supply to all the Government/Semi Government Departments; issued rate contract for photocopy, copy printers, fax machines, toners, cartridges etc; and appointed a Government auctioneer. However, the advancements in IT interventions have made all these functions simpler and have obviated the necessity of maintaining a specialized cadre for the purpose.

Centre plans third...

pilgrims who travel by helicopters on either route to Panchtami. Officials said if more pilgrims take the choppers, the threat from militants would also be reduced considerably. The pilgrimage, which presents a big security challenge for the government, could not take place in 2020 and 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic and was cut short in 2019 just before the abrogation of Article 370. About three lakh pilgrims are likely to take part in the pilgrimage, which is expected to end on August 11. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags will be given to each pilgrim to monitor their movements and security, the officials said. Earlier, RFID tags were given only to the vehicles of the pilgrims. About 12,000 paramilitary personnel (120 companies), in addition to Jammu and Kashmir Police, are expected to be deployed along the two pilgrimage routes, one from Pahalgam and the other via Baltal, the officials said. Drone cameras will help the security forces to ensure protection of the pilgrims. Of late, there has been a spurt in attacks on non-Muslims and migrants living in the Kashmir valley since the abrogation of the Article 370 of the Constitution, which accorded special status to Jammu and Kashmir, in August 2019.

Educational institutions across...

in Government High School Gopalpora in Kulgam district where she was killed by the militants on May 31.

The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday visited the family of Rajni Bala at her residence in Samba. The Lieutenant Governor met the husband and other family members of Rajni Bala and expressed condolences on her death.

The Lieutenant Governor assured the family of Rajni Bala for every possible help from the Government.

In a bid to pay respects to Rajni Bala, the government has also decided to name the Government High School in the Gopalpora area of South Kashmir's Kulgam after her name.

Two hybrid LeT...

as well as civilians including outside labourers," police said. Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Tarzoo and investigation has been initiated.

Centre asks states/UTs to ensure high-level of testing in areas reporting new COVID cases

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Thursday asked all states and Union territories to ensure high level of testing in areas reporting new or cluster of COVID-19 cases while emphasising the need to follow the five-fold strategy of combating the disease.

This strategy is test-track-treat, vaccination and Covid appropriate behaviour.

In a letter to the states/UTs, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said in the past two weeks, an upsurge in cases has been noticed even as there has been a sustained and significant decline in the number of cases across the country during the past four months.

In the week ending June 8, 4,207 average daily new cases were reported as compared to 2,663 average daily cases in the week ending June 1, he high-

lighted in the letter.

There has also been an increase in the weekly positivity rate from 0.63 per cent (week ending June 1) to 1.12 per cent (week ending June 8).

In the last 24 hours, 7,240 new coronavirus cases have been reported in India, out of which, 81 per cent cases have been reported from Maharashtra, Kerala, Delhi and Karnataka (in descending order of number of new cases reported).

Bhushan said specific strategic areas of intervention for states/UTs like testing and surveillance, clinical management, vaccination, Covid appropriate behaviour and community engagement with an increased focus on evidence-based decision-making was underlined.

"Given the significance of adequate testing in early identification of cases and providing an

accurate picture of the level of infection spread, it is required that states/UTs must ensure high level of testing in all such areas that are reporting new cases/cluster of cases," he said.

The health secretary also advised the states and Union territories (UTs) to monitor average daily testing per million as well as share of RT-PCR in total tests conducted.

"This will enable states/UTs to take timely pre-emptive action wherever required," the letter stated.

States/UTs must also enhance monitoring of Influenza like Illness (ILI) and SARI cases in all health facilities on a regular basis for detecting early warning signals of the spread of infection, he stressed.

Genome sequencing of prescribed samples of international passengers

as well as collection of samples from sentinel sites (identified health facilities) and local cluster of new COVID-19 cases is equally important.

Such samples must be sent promptly by state/UTs to designated lab of INSACOG network for genome sequencing, Bhushan underlined.

States/UTs have also been advised to continue implementation and monitoring of necessary meas-

ures for prompt and effective management of COVID-19 and to ensure compliance with various advisories issued by the ministry. The five-fold strategy should be followed diligently and enforcement be monitored regularly.

"States/UTs must not lower their guard and continue working towards building on the progress made thus far to bring the pandemic situation under control," Bhushan added.

COVID: 13 new cases in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported 13 new Covid cases on Thursday that took the infection tally to 4,54,314, officials said.

Of the new cases, eight were reported from Jammu district while five other districts reported one case each, they said.

There are 68 active cases,

while overall of recoveries have reached 4,49,494, officials said.

The COVID-19 death toll stands at 4,752. No Covid-related fatality was reported in the last 24 hours, they said.

There were 51 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black fungus), officials added.

Hindu temple vandalised in Karachi City

■ AGENCY

KARACHI: The idols of deities at a Hindu temple in this Pakistani city have been destroyed, police have said, the latest incident of vandalism against the places of worship of the minority community in this country.

The idols of deities at Shri Mari Maata Mandir in Karachi's Korangi area were attacked on Wednesday. The temple is located in "J" area within the limits of Korangi police station.

After getting information, the police reached the area and inspected the temple and inquired about the incident.

The Express Tribune newspaper reported that the incident caused panic and fear among the Hindu community living in Karachi, particularly in the Korangi area where police were deployed to avoid any untoward incident.

Sanjeev, a Hindu resident of the area, told the newspa-

per that six to eight individuals on motorcycles came into the area and attacked the temple. "We don't know who has attacked and why," he said, adding that the police were approached to lodge a case.

Five to six unknown suspects entered the temple and escaped after vandalising it, Korangi SHO Farooq Sanjrani confirmed. He added that the case was being registered against the unknown suspects who attacked the temple.

Temples belonging to the minority Hindu population in Pakistan are often the target of mob violence. In October, a historical temple located at the bank of the Indus River in Kotri was allegedly desecrated by unidentified people.

Law enforcement agencies came to the scene soon after the news of the incident went viral on social media. An FIR of the incident was lodged at the Kotri police station against the unknown miscreants.

Local residents said that an unidentified person entered the temple premises and vandalised the idols of their deities after midnight.

In August, dozens of people reportedly vandalised a Hindu temple in the town of Bhong and blocked the Sukkur-Multan Motorway after an eight-year-old Hindu boy, who allegedly urinated in a local seminary, was granted bail by a local court.

Following the court's decision, a mob of young men gathered and vandalised the Shree Ganesh Hindu temple in the town, according to the paper.

According to official estimates, 75 lakh Hindus live in Pakistan. However, according to the community, over 90 lakh Hindus are living in the country. The majority of Pakistan's Hindu population is settled in Sindh province where they share culture, traditions and language with Muslim residents. They often complain of harassment by extremists.

