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Start-Ups grew from 300 to 70,000 in 8 years: Dr Jitendra

Regd. No. L-29/JK-346/22-24

Andrabi presents Chadder at Ajmer Sharief Shrine on behalf of LG Sinha, prays for peace in J&K

Website: www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

Chhibber designated as **Director Estates Jammu**

Bank Manager from Rajasthan assassinated in Kulgam

NSA, RAW chief meet Amit Shah

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A 29-year-old Bank Manager hailing from Rajasthan was assassinated by a terrorist of banned Lashkar-e-Taiba inside his office premises in South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Thursday, making it eighth targeted killing in the Valley since May 1 and the third of a non-Muslim government

Vijay Kumar, posted with the Ellaqui Dehati Bank (EDB), sponsored by State Bank of India, at Arreh Mohanpora branch in the district, received grievous gunshot injuries and died on his way to hospital, officials

The CCTV footage showed the killer entering the premises first probably to verify whether the victim had come to the office, and within seconds returns with a pistol and fires at Kumar.

While one bullet hit the wall, the second hit Kumar leaving him seriously injured, the officials said, adding he suc-

cumbed to injuries on way to a hospital. Kumar, who joined EDB in March 2019, had married in February this year and was supposed to come back to Bhagwan in Hanumangarh of Rajasthan, his native village, for 10-15 days next month. But the destiny willed

otherwise, said his father Om Prakash Beniwal on Thursday after the news about his son reached him.

"He had called recently and promised to come home for 10-15 days in July. We wanted him to settle down in Rajasthan but the destiny was something else," said Beniwal, who is a government schoolteacher.

The family was in a deep shock as preparations for last rites were being made. Kumar's mortal remains will reach his native place on Friday.

The Resistance Front, a shadow outfit of banned Lashkar-e-Taiba terror group, has claimed responsibility for the

During the day, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, along with RAW chief Samant Goel, met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and are believed to have discussed the security situation in the Union Territory.

Details of their meeting were not known immediately but they were believed to have discussed the situation in restive Kashmir. The home minister will be chairing a high-level meeting tomorrow to discuss the situation.

The latest killing led to a chorus of condemnation from political parties



In CCTV footage, a terrorist shoots at bank manager Vijay Kumar (inset), after entering the Areh branch of Elagahi Dehati Bank in Kulgam district on Thursday.

Migrant labourer shot dead, another injured in Budgam

SRINAGAR: A non-local labourer was shot dead while another injured by terror ists in Budgam district on Thursday night, officials said.

Terrorists fired at two non-local labourers at a brick kiln at Magraypora in Chadoora area of the central Kashmir district, the officials said.

They said the labourers, identified as Dilkush Kumar and Guri, were injured in While Guri was discharged from the hospital, Kumar was shifted to SMHS hos-

pital here where he succumbed, the officials said, adding Kumar (17) was a resident of Arnia area of Bihar.

Police have cordoned off the area and are looking for the terrorists involved in the incident, which took place at 9.10 pm, they said.

Fear-stricken Govt employees carry out march in Jammu, demand transfer to home districts

JAMMU: Amid unabated targeted killings in Kashmir, hundreds of government employees posted in the valley took out a march here on Thursday to demand their immediate transfer to their respective home districts

The protesters were carrying placards in support of their demand and pictures of their colleague Rajni Bala, a school teacher who was shot dead by terrorists at a school in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Tuesday, and chanted slogans demanding relocation.

The march was carried out from Press Club to Ambedkar Chowk.

Assembled under the banner of All Jammu-based reserved categories employees association', the protesters said they will not resume their duties as the government has failed to stop targeted killings and provide a secure atmosphere to them.

Nearly 8,000 employees from different districts of Jammu are working in Kashmir under inter-district transfer policy and we are not going to return and resume our duties in the present atmosphere. We are serving there for the last 15 years but are feeling insecure and tense in view of the spurt in the targeted killings, Ramesh Chand, a teacher posted in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, told reporters. He said they have also come to pay homage to ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

National Conference and the BJP.

Kumar had joined the Kulgam branch only a week ago. He had earlier been working in the Kokernag branch of the bank, co-owned by the Central government, the Jammu and Kashmir administration and the State Bank of India.

The SBI issued a statement saying the bank remains committed to ensure the safety and well-being of all its employees, including those posted in the Valley.

The EDB shall ensure that the bereaved family is provided with neces-

sary support - financial and otherwise on priority, it said

Condemning the act, All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) general secretary C H Venkatachalam said it is a matter of serious concern to all in the banking sector.

"Every now and then we get such disturbing news from one state or the other. Lot of very qualified youngsters are joining the banks for their career and better prospects. It is a pity that

Santoor maestro Bhajan Sopori is no more

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Santoor maestro Bhajan Sopori, often referred to as the 'saint of santoor' and

king of strings for his mastery over the instrument, died on Thursday at a Gurugram hospital following a battle with cancer. He was 73. Sopori is sur-

vived by his wife and two sons Sorabh and Abhay, who also plays the santoor.

"He was diagnosed with colon cancer last year in

Seven new COVID-19

cases reported in J&K

Court frames corruption charges against **Ex-Manager, Dy GM JKPCC**

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Anticorruption Ritesh Dubey on Thursday framed corruption charges against Dalip Thusu, the then Manager JKPCC and Harkewal Singh the then Dy. General Manager JKPCC, for the collapse of 17 pillars of Devak Bridge at Utter Behani in Jammu.

formed. I don't know how my life is going to without him," the grieving son added. The last rites will be held at the Lodhi Road ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

have

June. We admitted him to

Fortis, Gurugram, three

weeks back for immunother-

apy treatment. It didn't work

for him and

deteriorated,"

his son Abhay

"Papa has

been with me

whenever I

told PTI.

health

Special Judge Jammu

According to the ACB, the case was registered on the outcome of a verification conducted by the Vigilance Organisation (now ACB) to inquire into the allegations of collapse of 17 pillars of 151meter Devak bridge at Utter

Behani due to faulty design and poor earthwork. The verification reveals that the bridge was damaged due to heavy rains on August 11 and 12, 2011 after only 5 years of its completion. "The verification further reveals that the bridge was constructed by \mathbf{A} Construction at the approved rate of JKPCC. The R&B department had authorised JKPCC to start the work without prior vetting and proof check from the Design Directorate. No administrative approval and pre-requisite technical sanction was obtained before starting work," officials said. The spot inspection and scrutiny of the records revealed that in the construction of bridge, the basic and obligatory requirement of investigation - bridge foundation investigation, FBI hydrology, sub soil exploration, bearing strength of soil and discharge of river had been completely ignored prior to design and execution of work which had led to construction of unstable bridge structure. The investigation conducted had revealed that a criminal conspiracy was hatched by the accused Thusu and Singh. In pursuance to that, the

that the offences under

project and construction of the bridge was undertaken without prior vetting of the design fromDesign Directorate, Jammu. The technical aspects were ignored prior to its execution leading to failure of the bridge. The exercise of construction of such a bridge was found futile. It failed to serve the purpose, thereby rendering the entire expenditure wasteful and causing loss to the state exchequer.

After hearing both the sides, the Special Judge Anticorruption observed

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Looking forward to next round of military talks soon: MEA on eastern Ladakh row STATE TIMES NEWS date," Bagchi said.

NEW DELHI: India on Thursday said it is looking forward to the next round of military talks with China at an early date for the resolution of the remaining issues in eastern Ladakh.

The comments by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi came two days after the two sides held diplomatic talks on the lingering border standoff.

"I am not aware of any particular date that I can share with you at this point, but I would like to emphasise that we look forward to this commanders' meeting at an early

In the diplomatic talks on Tuesday, India and China

agreed to hold the next round of the Senior Commanders meeting soon to achieve complete disengagement from all friction points in eastern Ladakh.

After the talks, the MEA said it was agreed to hold the next round of military talks at an early date to achieve the objective of complete disengagement from all friction points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in accordance with the existing bilateral agreements and protocols. The

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9 Maha ATS arrests man in Kishtwar for

Targeted killings conspiracy by Pakistan to

STATE TIMES NEWS SRINAGAR: Jammu and

Kashmir reported seven new coronavirus cases on Thursday, taking the infection tally in the union territory to 4,54,262, officials said here. Four cases were reported from Jammu district while

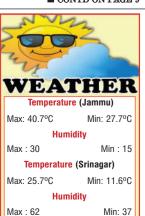
two cases were detected in Srinagar district, the ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Take steps to restore peace in Kashmir, Rahul tells Modi STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take immediate steps to restore peace in Kashmir, saving innocent people are being killed in the valley and Kashmiri Pandits are fleeing.

"Bank manager, teacher and many innocent people are getting killed every

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Sunset: 19:34 Hours

Sunrise: 05:26 Hours

sabotage peace in J&K: Kavinder Raina STATE TIMES NEWS

Jammu Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina

Thursday said the recent targeted killings in the Valley is a conspiracy by Pakistan to create fear and sabotage the Centre's efforts to restore peace and normalcy in the Union Territory. Raina asserted that the

conspiracy by the neighbouring country will be thwarted as teh police and other security agencies are neutralizing Pakistan-supported terrorists under operation 'all out' to provide a

"As Jammu and Kashmir is



progress under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi led government with major developmental projects gaining

the Pakistan and its supported moving towards peace and terrorists hatched a conspiracv to sabotage the government efforts by creat-

ing fear among the people," Raina told reporters He claimed the targeted killings is part of the conspiracy jointly chalked out by Pakistan's Inter-Intelligence

(ISI), its army and terrorist groups based in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

"They have named this conspiracy 'operation Red

Three soldiers injured in blast in Shopian

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Three soldiers were injured in a blast inside their private hired vehicle in Shopian district Thursday, police said.

The nature of the blast is being investigated, Inspector General of Police, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said.

"A #blast took place inside a private hired vehicle at Sedow, #Shopian. 03 soldiers injured & shifted to Hospital," Kumar said on Twitter. The nature and the source of the blast -- whether it was due to a grenade or already planted IED inside the vehicle or malfunctioning of battery -- is being investi-

■ STATE TIMES NEWS MUMBAI: The Anti-

Terrorism Squad (ATS) of the Maharashtra police on Thursday arrested a man at Kishtwar in Jammu for his alleged links with Junaid Mohammed, accused of recruiting terrorists for the banned outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), an official said.

The ATS had arrested 28vear-old Junaid Mohammed on May 24 from Pune's Dapodi area, following which he was remanded into the agency's custody till June 3. He was allegedly in touch with the active members of Pakistan-based LeT's terror

network through media platforms, officials have said.

ofteam Maharashtra ATS has been in Jammu and Kashmir since the last few days for investigation about the links of a 28 year old Junaid Mohammed. While investigating the links in the case, the ATS team received information about a man, who was in touch with Junaid via social media and other platforms," he said.

"Accordingly, the state ATS team went to Kishtwar and nabbed the accused," he said, adding that he is being

alleged links with LeT recruiter brought to Mumbai

Junaid Mohammed was assigned the task of recruiting new members for the LeT from various states, the official said, adding as part of his mandate he tried to take fresh recruits to Jammu and Kashmir to train them to carry out terror activities in the country. He would receive money from his handlers for completing the given task During his interrogation, it came to light that the terror suspect had received Rs 10,000 from a Jammu and Kashmir-based

account. Based on the ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Centre to set up 'PM Shri Schools' to prepare students for future: Education Minister

STATE TIMES NEWS

DELHI: Union Minister Education Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday said the Centre is planning to set up "PM Shri Schools" which will be aimed at preparing students for future and will be the laboraof new National Education Policy (NEP).

Pradhan was addressing two-day National Education Minister's Conference in Gujarat.

"School education is the foundation on which India will become a knowledgebased economy and the National Education Policy (NEP) is a knowledge document that aims to promote all-round development and make education accessible to process of establishing 'PM Shri schools' which will be fully equipped to prepare stufor the future, Pradhan said in his address.

He said these state-of-theart schools will be the "laboratory of NEP 2020". "We cannot deprive our new

generation from 21st century knowledge and skills. I also encourage and solicit suggestions and feedback from all our states and Union Territories and the entire education ecosystem for creating a futuristic benchmark model in the form of PM Shri schools." he added. The National Education

Ministers' Conference began

in Gujarat's Gandhinagar on

Wednesday with a focus on

implementation of the new The minister said the 5+3+3+4 approach of the

NEP covering pre-school to secondary school, emphasis on Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE), teacher training & adult education, integration of skill development with school education and prioritising learning in the mother tongue are steps for preparing global citizens of the 21st century.

"The next 25 years are crucial to establish India as a knowledge economy that is committed to global welfare. We all have to collaboratively work together, learn from each other's experiences and successes to make learning

more vibrant and take India to greater heights.

"I encourage Education Ministers of all states and Union Territories and also seek active participation from all stakeholders for developing our National Curriculum Framework as well as developing quality econtent for expanding the reach of digital education and for universalising educa tion," Pradhan said.

The minister said best practices in education coming from different states and Union Territories will act as a cumulative force in transforming India's youth as 'Vishwa-Manavs' (global citizens). "The education fraternity can immensely benefit from models of Karnataka

Uttar Pradesh, Bihar. Gujarat and Harvana.

"Today, at a time when we celebrating Mahotsav, the National Achievement Survey 2021 has instilled confidence and has reaffirmed the sincere efforts of all our states and Union Territories in improving learning outcomes and in further strengthening access to quality education," he added.

The conference witnessed deliberations on strengthening the education ecosystem in the country with a focus on implementation of National Education Policy 2020. skilling in schools and digital initiatives like NDEAR

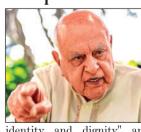
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Killing spree, fear in Kashmir belie Govt's normalcy claims: Farooq Abdullah

SRINAGAR: Targeted killings of civilians and the pervasive fear among the people in Kashmir belie the government's claims of normaley in Jammu and Kashmir, NC president Farooq Abdullah Thursday, alleging the administration has its head

in sand. "This ostrich approach will push the situation to a point of no return," said the former J&K chief minister, presiding over a meeting of the National Conference's committee (Kashmir) at Nawa-e-Subah here.

Addressing the meeting, Abdullah reiterated the party's stand to "peacefully fight for restoration of J-K's



apparent reference to J-K's special status which was revoked by the Centre on August 5, 2019. The NC president also

expressed serious concern over the "deteriorating" security scenario in the valley leading to a series of targeted killings of innocents including members of the minority communities, the party said. "I unequivocally condemn

the brutal killing of ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9