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Amarnathji Yatra: LG...

in the last three years to take J&K UT to new heights of success. We are ready to welcome pilgrims and hope they will go back to their respective states as brand ambassadors of J&K," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor highlighted the significant role of members of civil society groups, elected representatives, spiritual leaders and all the stakeholders in bringing the people together on the path of peace, progress and prosperity.

Let us all walk together, let our thoughts and resolve be one, and work together for the progress of the society with one mind and with the spirit of oneness," he said.

Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra provides social, economic and spiritual opportunity to the people. Under the intellectual leadership of prominent citizens of society, people get a chance to discuss new ideas and reforms, the Lt Governor added.

Every citizen of J&K UT is a stakeholder of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra. All the suggestions and inputs are welcomed to make the pilgrimage more memorable for the devotees, he further added.

The meeting also discussed arrangements for the upcoming Eid-ul-Adha festival and celebration of Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. The Lt Governor informed the prominent citizens that a district-wise review was conducted recently to monitor preparations and ensure all the arrangements for Eid festival.

Junaid Azim Mattu, Mayor SMC; Dr Darakhshan Andrabi, Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board; DDC Chairpersons, civil society members, representatives of various organizations, religious heads, community leaders shared their valuable suggestions and assured support and cooperation to the administration in the peaceful and smooth conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

Responding to the demands and issues projected during the interaction, the Lt Governor assured that the appropriate steps will be taken to meet the developmental needs of the people.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; RK Goyal, ACS Home; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, CEO, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board; Administrative Secretaries, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, senior officials of Police and Civil Administration were also present during the meeting.

Nation proud of...

promote sports culture in the J&K UT. Sport as a universal language brings together all sections of society and unites people. It is the most powerful tool for holistic development and helps in achieving broader goals, the Lt Governor observed.

He lauded the Jammu Kashmir Police for inspiring youth and providing them opportunity to realize their aspirations through its unique initiative like Civic Action programme.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; R K Goyal, ACS, Home Department; Dilbag Singh, DGP; SJM Gillani, ADGP J&K Armed Police, senior officers of Police and Civil Administration; members of J&K Cycling Association, prominent sports personalities attended the felicitation ceremony.

Senior Men above 17 years (ATB) Professional cyclists: Adil Altaf (Srinagar), 1st, Adnan Bashir (Sopore), 2nd, Waheed Ahmad (Budgam), 3rd, Ritesh (Haryana), 4th and Suhaib ul Mehraj (Srinagar), 5th.

Senior Men above 17 years (MTB) cyclists: Mohd Akbar Khan (Magam), 1st, Ronel Kh (Manipur), 2nd, Avneshi Pareek (Rajasthan) 3rd, Parwez (Budgam), 4th, and Prithvi Raj Singh (Madhya Pradesh) 5th.

Senior Girls above 17 years (MTB) cyclists: Prabhjyot Kour (Haryana), 1st, Mehak Gupta (Amritsar), 2nd, Sara (Srinagar), 3rd, Priyanka (Haryana), 4th and Wafa Arif (Srinagar) 5th.

Junior Girls under 17 years (MTB) cyclists: Zoobiya Tariq (Lal Bazar), 1st, Soliha Zahoore (Ganderbal), 2nd, Madeha Mukhtar (Chattabal), 3rd, Adika Zehra (Srinagar), 4th and Farheena Afroza (Kulgam), 5th.

Junior Boys under 17 years (MTB) cyclists: Jehangir Ahmad Ahanger (Budgam), 1st, Parvaiz Ahmad Mir (Budgam), 2nd, Moin Nabi Bhat (Srinagar), 3rd, Wasif Ahmad Bhat (Srinagar), 4th and Umar Mohi Ud Din, 5th.

Sub Junior Boys under 14 years (MTB) cyclists: Arfat Bashir (Baramulla), 1st, Tajamul Rashid (Budgam), 2nd, Ikhlak Hussain Mir (Budgam), 3rd, Shah Sahil Manzoor (Srinagar), 4th, Yasir Furqan (Budgam), 5th, Faisal Gull (Budgam), 6th, Kirtan Singh (Jammu), 7th, Aakif Noor (Budgam), 8th, Haseeb Jan (Srinagar), 9th and Muntazir Ali Matoo (Srinagar), 10th.

Sub Junior Girls under 14 years (MTB) cyclists: Yumma Parvaz (Srinagar), 1st, Farah Ahad (Srinagar), 2nd, Nabila Khan (Srinagar), 3rd, Syed Mania (Srinagar), 4th, Taqwa (Srinagar), 5th, Muntaha Javaid (Srinagar), 6th, Rayeesa Zehra (Srinagar), 7th, Sifah Showkat (Srinagar), 8th, Wani Insha (Ganderbal), 9th and Wani Iqra (Ganderbal), 10th.

Raffle draw winners include Azan Ashiq of Srinagar, first, Irfan Ali Kanoo of Srinagar, second and third prize went to Mumin Nabi Bhat.

Missing Reasi resident...

in connection with the murder, Reasi Senior Superintendent of Police Amit Gupta said. According to police sources, Paramjeet Singh was allegedly abducted and taken to a house where he was tied with ropes, gagged, and beaten to death by his son and his associates.

They then took his body in a car and buried it in a field near Serla Bhaga village on March 27.

The SSP said a decomposed body of Paramjeet Singh, who lived in Reasi's Tote-Bhomag village, was exhumed at the instance of the people arrested in presence of a magistrate on Saturday.

Singh's brother Dalip had on March 30 lodged a missing person report at Reasi Police Station.

Police have arrested Singh's son Vikas Thakur, and his two associates, Sushil Chander and Vipam Kumar, aged 28 and 24.

Hunt is on for the fourth accused, Seeta Ram, police said.

The body of the victim has been taken to Government Medical College hospital, Jammu, for post mortem, police said.

PM visits Egypt's...

heritage and culture," he tweeted in both Arabic and English.

Prime Minister Modi also met the leaders of the Bohra community, who are actively involved in the upkeep of this Fatimid era Shia mosque and highlighted the strong people-to-people ties between India and Egypt, the MEA said in a press release.

The mosque mainly performs Friday prayers and all five obligatory prayers.

"The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India @narendramodi today visited the historic Al-Hakim Masjid in Cairo, Egypt. Shahzada Husain Burhanuddin, son of Sultan al-Bohra Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, was present at the occasion to warmly receive the @PMOIndia," according to the official Twitter page of the global Dawoodi Bohra communities.

Over a thousand years old, al-Hakim is the fourth oldest mosque in Cairo and the second Fatimid mosque to be built in the city. The mosque covers an area of 13,560 square metres, with the iconic central courtyard occupying 5,000 square metres.

The Bohra community, which is settled in India, originated from the Fatimids. They renovated the mosque from 1970 onwards and have been maintaining it since then, India's Ambassador to Egypt Ajit Gupte earlier said.

"The Prime Minister has a very close attachment to the Bohra community who have also been in Gujarat for many years and it will be an occasion for him to again visit a very important religious site for the Bohra community," Gupte added.

The historic Mosque has been named after Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah, the 16th Fatimid caliph and is an important religious and cultural site for the Dawoodi Bohra community.

The Dawoodi Bohra Muslims are a sect of followers of Islam who adhere to the Fatimi Ismaili Tayyibi school of thought. They are known to have originated from Egypt and later shifted to Yemen, before establishing a presence in India in the 11th century.

Prime Minister Modi has a long-standing and warm relationship with the Dawoodi Bohras even before he became Prime Minister.

Congress which imposed...

the BJP government of suppressing democracy..if the BJP was strangulating democracy then how was it possible for the Congress to form governments in states like Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan," he said.

He said the Congress and other opposition parties are coming together with the singular motive of defeating Prime Minister Narendra Modi and grabbing power.

Highlighting various achievements of the Narendra Modi government in its nine years, Singh said India has now become a powerful country and all nations across the globe look towards it for solutions to various issues.

"Every Indian felt proud when PM Modi addressed a joint session of of the US Congress. It was an honour for the nation," he said.

Before Modi came to power in 2014 the Indian economy ranked 11th globally but in nine years since it has become the fifth largest economy in the world, he said.

He also highlighted the evacuation of Indian nationals from Ukraine during its war with Russia and India supplying COVID-19 vaccines to several countries during the pandemic.

Nearly 1,500 special...

taken by the Modi-led government for strengthening its defence mechanism after coming to power in 2014.

Defence experts, retired decorated army officers, academicians, doctors and think tanks, besides youths, will be attending the conclave which will start at 10.30 am, Raina said.

He said that Singh will discuss the security and other important issues with the participants and also share the strong position of India in defence and other matters concerning the nation's security and safety of the citizens residing along the borders.

The BJP leader said all necessary arrangements have been finalised for the visit of the defence minister.

According to Raina, after addressing the conclave, the minister will chair a meeting of senior BJP leaders at the party headquarters at Trikuta Nagar to review the prevailing political situation and also discuss the organisational matters.

PM has ushered...

There was only bloodshed, while under PM Modi Jammu and Kashmir has become the centre of tourism activities. Since BJP's rule Jammu and Kashmir has only seen peace, development and progress," he said.

He also said that due to shrinking space for politicians in Jammu and Kashmir, they are now visiting Bihar to address press conferences. "This shows how people of Jammu and Kashmir have rejected them. They don't find any space here to talk about anything," he said.

Chugh said that it is because of pro-people policies of PM Modi that Jammu and Kashmir is seeing a new dawn of development and progress and tourism is flourishing here, while during three families' rule only terrorism flourished.

Vitasta Cultural Fest...

profound impression. Adding to these mesmerising programmes, the audience was enthralled by a special presentation of Tigulbandi, which beautifully merged Kashmiri instruments like santoor, rabab, and guitar in a harmonious fusion. Moreover, the programme was graced by the captivating qawwali performance of Ustad Shafi Sopori, who is renowned for his exceptional musical prowess. Additionally, the Bollywood orchestra delivered a captivating rendition of songs filmed in the scenic locales of Kashmir, further enhancing the overall experience.

On this occasion, Banwari Lal Purohit, Governor of Punjab and Chairman of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala, expressed immense pride in being a part of the ongoing celebration of this festival. Highlighting the significance of this glorious occasion, where diverse cultures from across the country converge in the heavenly land of Kashmir, he said that the festival 'Vitasta' serves as a unifying thread, weaving diverse cultural blooms into a splendid garland. Purohit extended his heartfelt congratulations to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, for organising this grand and folk culture-centric event. Additionally, he lauded the dedicated efforts of Furkan Khan, the diligent director of the North Zone Cultural Centre, for orches-

trating this marvellous occasion.

Purohit said, "As the Chairman of the North Zone Cultural Centre, I take immense pride in the trust placed upon us to host this remarkable event. I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Director of the Centre, Furkan Khan, and his dedicated team for the resounding success of this event. I am grateful to the Government of India, particularly the Union Ministry of Culture and its officials, for providing us with this valuable opportunity. Additionally, as the Chairman of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala, I wholeheartedly express my gratitude to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir and the local administration for their unwavering cooperation in organising this grand cultural extravaganza."

During the event, Governor of Tamil Nadu, R N Ravi expressed his thoughts on the significance of Vitasta Fest as a remarkable initiative towards the vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (One India, Great India). He conveyed his immense delight at having attended the inaugural edition of this event when it was held in Tamil Nadu, and he expressed his joy at being present once again for its conclusion in the enchanting city of Srinagar.

He emphasised the profound spiritual significance of Kashmir, stating that it holds a prominent place as a centre of spirituality. He cited the transformative power of the region, exemplified by historical figures such as Milander, who, even as an invader, underwent a spiritual transformation and became known as Milind. Governor RN Ravi expressed his belief in the emergence of a new India, where the rich cultural heritage of the nation plays a pivotal role. He enthusiastically announced his commitment to invite artists from Jammu and Kashmir to participate in future cultural festivals held in Tamil Nadu, fostering cultural exchange and collaboration between the two regions.

The event commenced with a warm welcome extended to the esteemed guests, accompanied by the melodious strains of the Wunwan song, a traditional Kashmiri composition. Chief Guest, Mr. BL Purohit, Governor of Punjab, and Guest of Honour, Mr. RN Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu, were honoured with mementos by Uma Nanduri, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Culture. Srinivasa Rao, Secretary of the Bharatiya Sahitya Akademi, presented both Governors with a book published by the Academy. During her welcome speech, Mrs. Uma Nanduri provided an overview of the exciting programmes lined up for the 'Vitasta' festival, enlightening the audience about its diverse offerings.

In addition to the distinguished guests, Chief Secretary, Arun Kumar Mehta, spoke passionately about the event, expressing admiration for the beauty of Kashmir and the essence of Kashmiriyat-the unique cultural ethos of the region. Siddharth Kak, the programme's knowledge partner, shared valuable historical insights pertaining to the significance of 'Vitasta', providing the audience with a deeper understanding of the festival's roots and importance. Their contributions added depth and context to the overall experience of the event.

During the event, several individuals were recognised and honoured for their significant contributions to the success of this grand occasion. Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta, Tourism and Cultural Secretary Dr Abid Rashid Shah, SKICC Director Javed Bakshi, Knowledge Partner Siddharth Kak, Sahitya Akademi Secretary K. Srinivasa Rao, Jammu and Kashmir Art Secretary Bharat Singh Manhas, and Furkan Khan, Director of the North Zone Cultural Centre, were all presented with mementos by both Governors as a token of appreciation for their efforts. Their dedicated work played a vital role in ensuring the smooth execution of this remarkable cultural extravaganza.

Concluding the ceremony, Furkan Khan, the Director of the North Zone Cultural Centre, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the chief guest, guest of honour, and all individuals who played a part in the successful organisation of 'Vitasta'. He extended his appreciation to everyone involved, recognising their valuable contributions and dedication to bringing this cultural event to completion.

It is worth mentioning that the festival was organised by the Union Ministry of Culture through the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala. The preceding two editions of this festival were successfully held in Chennai (Tamil Nadu) and Pune (Maharashtra). This festival, named after the ancient Vedic name of the Jhelum River, aimed to bring to life Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (One India, Great India) under the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative. Prior to the three-day grand event from June 23 to 25, a series of pre-event programmes from June 16 to 21 at approximately two dozen locations in Srinagar and the surrounding districts were organised with the aim of serving as a platform for artists representing diverse art forms of Kashmiri folk culture. It provided them with a valuable opportunity to display their skills while contributing to the preservation and promotion of the illustrious artistic heritage that characterises Kashmiri folk culture. These vibrant presentations included various forms of folk art such as Dhambali, Kud dance, Jagran, Bach Nagma, Rauf, Chakri, Geetru, Dogri, and more. Guest artists from different states also participated in these programmes and presented cultural performances representative of their respective regions. Furthermore, a painting and calligraphy camp was organised in Srinagar through collaboration between the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala, and the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages. These camps provided artists with a dedicated space to showcase the beauty of Kashmir through their artistic creations.

Traffic Deptt asked...

also inspected community kitchen sites along the highway besides inspected national highway works, an official spokesman said.

The 250-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with rest of the country, was closed for traffic on Friday for necessary repair and maintenance work as part of the efforts to ensure smooth flow of traffic. Travellers on the highway claimed it took them more than 12 hours to complete their journey from Jammu to Srinagar owing to massive and frequent traffic jams between Nashri tunnel and Banihal. The spokesman said the divisional commissioner directed officers of NHAI to complete the maintenance work to provide safe passage to commuters. He stressed on expeditious maintenance of the highway, traffic regulation, lane enforcement and surface maintenance. The Divisional Commissioner also chaired a meeting and emphasized upon the stakeholder departments to synergize efforts to make adequate arrangements well in advance for smooth conduct of the Yatra, the spokesman said. He also asked the district administration Ramban to ensure the availability of water, power and toilets at each lodgement centre.

Modi Govt transformed India into self-reliant country: Jugal



MP Jugal Kishore and Senior BJP leaders Yudhvir, Masoom conducting door-to-door campaign in Jammu East under Jan Sampark Abhiyan

India into a self-reliant country has been incredible. He urged the people to continue their support to the BJP Government and pledged to work towards strengthening the party's base in the region.

He also stressed upon party workers to educate people about the successes and achievements of the Prime Minister during the last nine years.

Yudhvir Sethi, J&K BJP Vice President, in his address, said, "The Modi Government's achievements over the last nine years are a testament to the Bharatiya Janata Party's vision and leadership. We are committed to maintaining the momentum and working together

to make India stronger than ever before." Sethi added "BJP's Maha Jan Sampark Abhiyan aims to reach out to millions of people across India and take the Modi Government's achievements to the masses. The party leadership and workers are determined to continue working tirelessly towards achieving their vision of a stronger, more prosperous India."

Councillor Anil Masoom, said, PM Modi has removed all the hurdles and paved way for the development, peace, prosperity and progress of J&K in the last nine years and the work is still on making it imperative to highlight all this in an

ostentatious manner to convince one and all to support the party for pacing up the progress of the region and allowing the Modi Govt to start working full throttle. Those who were present include Gurdas Sharma, Krishan Lal Sharma, Vishaw Partap Singh, Ram Parkash, Vinay Chopra, Karan Khajuria, Rajeev Sharma, Nipun Malhotra, Ajeet Yogi, Ashwani Chadak, Sat Pal Singh, Ricky, Lovely Kumar, Shardha Devi, Prabha Slathia, Shashi Vema, Tarun, Kuldeep Raj, Viju, Rinku, Kewal Krishan, K.K Sharma, Gourav, Lucky, Darshan Singh and Rajesh Gupta General Secretary Parbhari Jammu East.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Vikramaditya Singh, Chairman of Shri Sarthal Devi ji Trust, Kishtwar and former MLC, has extended his warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Sarthal Devi Yatra commencing from June 26th.

The Annual Yatra at Sarthal Devi Temple is managed by the Shri Sarthal Devi ji Trust, Kishtwar.

In a statement issued here today, Vikramaditya Singh said that the Sarthal Devi Yatra is an important event in the cultural and religious calendar of Jammu and



Kashmir. He termed this Yatra as a symbol of the rich cultural, religious, and spiritual heritage of the union territory. He emphasized the need to preserve and promote the cultural and religious heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. The former MLC

'BalidanStambh' at Pratap Park Unfortunate that sacrifices of our soldiers remained unsung for decades: Suri

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K Executive Member Raman Suri on Sunday said that BalidanStambh (Martyrs' Memorial), the foundation of which has been laid by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Pratap Park in the heart of Srinagar, will continue to inspire youth and show them the right path instead of misleading them towards gun culture. The memorial, he said, was much awaited but the previous governments ignored such an important task.

Shah, along with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, laid the foundation stone at the park near Lal Chowk city centre, the commercial hub of Srinagar city.

Suri said that the memorial, a project under the Srinagar Smart City, is a tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the nation. He said, this is unfortunate that for decades together sacrifices of our soldiers remained unsung and governments like those of Congress, NC or PDP ignored this subject and didnot honour the martyrs.

wished all the devotees a safe and auspicious Sarthal Devi Yatra. He also appreciated the efforts of Vice Chairman, Sanjeev Parihar; Members of the Trust, District Administration Kishtwar, Police and the local community for organising and making arrangements for the smooth conduct of the Yatra.

Pertinent to mention that the temple of Sarthal Devi Mata is located in Sarthal town of Kishtwar district amidst the mountains of the Pir Panjal range. Sarthal Devi Yatra is an annual pilgrimage, which attracts thousands of devotees from various parts of the state and the

neighboring states. The devotees believed that Sarthal Devi is the Hindu Kuldevi residing in Kishtwar and have held her in high reverence.

Azad condemns Pulwama Mosque incident

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) Chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday condemned the alleged Pulwama Mosque incident and urged the government to investigate the matter. Azad said that such things are neither in our culture, nor allowed under the law.

"I strongly condemn reports of the alleged Pulwama mosque incident. At this point these are allegations but we must immediately get to the bottom of this matter. Such things are neither in our culture, nor allowed under the law. Urging the govt to investigate the incident and take strictest action against those responsible!," Azad said.

