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Modi 3.0: Portfolios...

pro-tem speaker in the 17th Lok Sabha tasked with the oath-taking of members as well as presiding over the election of the speaker. He was minister for social justice and empowerment in the previous Modi government and retained the portfolio this time.

Giriraj Singh (BJP): As a member of the last Lok Sabha, he became the cabinet minister of the newly formed ministry of animal husbandry, dairying and fisheries. Later, he was shifted to the rural development ministry. Now, he has been made the minister for textiles.

Jyotiraditya Scindia (BJP): He served as the minister for civil aviation and steel in the second Modi government from 2021 after switching over from the Congress. He has been made the minister for communications and minister for Development of North Eastern Region in this BJP-led NDA dispensation.

Ashwini Vaishnaw (BJP): He was the railways and IT minister in the previous Modi government. This time, besides railways and IT, he also heads the ministry of information and broadcasting.

Kiren Rijiju (BJP): He was the law minister and later became the minister for earth sciences in the second Modi government. He now has been given charge of parliamentary affairs and minority affairs.

Jitan Ram Manjhi (Hindustani Awami Moreha (S)): He has been given the portfolio of micro, small and medium enterprises. His party is part of the BJP-led NDA.

Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh (JD-U): The leader of the BJP ally has been made the minister for panchayati raj and minister of fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying. Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu (TDP): He has been given civil aviation portfolio in the NDA government.

Cabinet approves assistance...

of houses to meet the housing requirements arising out of the increase in the number of eligible families," officials said.

The government of India is implementing the PMAY since 2015-16 to provide assistance to eligible rural and urban house-holds for the construction of houses with basic amenities.

Modi lauded the decision as a boost for "ease of living" and dignity for crores of Indians.

He said on X, "This decision underscores the government's commitment to addressing the housing needs of our nation and ensuring that every citizen leads a better quality of life. The expansion of PMAY also highlights our government's commitment to inclusive growth and social welfare."

Under PMAY, a total of 4.21 crore houses have been completed for the eligible poor families under the housing schemes in the last 10 years. All the houses constructed under PMAY are provided basic amenities like household toilets, LPG connection, electricity connection and functional household tap connection through convergence with other schemes of the central and state governments.

Bus terror attack...

The bus was ferrying pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi.

Following the attack, a joint operation was launched involving the police, the Army, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and central intelligence agencies.

Survivors of the attack are recording their statements as part of the ongoing probe into the attack, while a thorough comb-ing operation is underway to track down the perpetrators, the officials said.

The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba terror outfit, initially claimed responsibility for the attack but retracted its statement later.

Among those killed in the attack are two-year-old Titu Sawhney and his mother Pooja from Rajasthan. They were among four people from the state who lost their lives in the attack.

Three of the deceased were from Uttar Pradesh. The driver and the conductor of the bus, both from Reasi, were also among the victims.

The officials said five of the nine deceased had gunshot wounds.

They added that 41 people were injured in the attack and 10 of them had bullet injuries. Some of those injured were under-going treatment in hospitals across Jammu and Reasi districts.

Security forces suspect the terrorists are hiding in the mountainous terrains of Rajouri and Reasi, and have intensified comb-ing operations in the region.

"A search operation has been launched in the area," Senior Superintendent of Police, Reasi, Mohita Sharma said, adding that village defence committees have also been geared up.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha condemned the attack, calling it a part of a malicious scheme to dis-rupt peace in the region.

Expressing solidarity with the affected families, the administration has approved ex gratia payments of Rs 10 lakh for the families of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for those injured.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Amit Shah have been briefed on the situation, with assurances that those responsible for the attack will face justice, Sinha said.

"The attack is a despicable attempt to instigate turmoil in Jammu, but we are resolute in our commitment to safeguard the region," Sinha said during a visit to the Government Medical College to enquire after the injured.

In a related development, the separatist amalgam Hurriyat Conference condemned the terror attack and said the conglom-erate "has and will always condemn all forms of violence against humanity. The loss of precious human lives is deeply disturb-ing". Anti-Pakistan protests broke out across the Jammu region, including Katra, Doda town and Kathua district, calling for increased security measures to prevent such incidents.

Accusing Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the protesters demanded action against the neighbour-ing country.

342 posts approved...

construction of the Prison, through Police Housing Corporation, is expected to be completed by Feb 2025. The jail shall incar-cerate criminals and shall help maintain public order and prevent future crimes. It will also help in de-crowding of jails.

The Administrative Council also accorded approval to the construction of District Court Complex at Sarnal Anantnag at an estimated cost of Rs.106.69 crore under UT Capex Budget.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The project includes construction of main Court Complex, residential accommodation for Principal District & Sessions Judge, residential accommodation for Additional Session Judge, CJM & Munsiff, Lawyers Chambers and other infrastructure.

There are seven Courts functioning in the District Court Anantnag and increase in population has resulted into increase in litigation cases and judicial work load. The establishment of court complex will generate employment opportunities among youth by way of establishment of new business units like photo-state shops, food courts, stationery shops, commercial parking units, vendor shops, computer/typesewriter Institutions etc.

Attackers of pilgrims...

pilgrims martyred in Reasi terror attack. He has also approved Rs. 50,000 each for those injured.

The injured are being treated at different hospitals. A control room has been created by the district administration to provide all necessary assistance. A joint security force temporary HQ by J&K Police, Army and CRPF has been set up at the site and operation is in progress to neutralise the perpetrators of Reasi terror attack.

Later, the Lieutenant Governor also met the pilgrims injured in the Reasi terror attack, who are undergoing treatment at Government Medical College, Jammu and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital, Katra.

"Met the injured pilgrims at Government Medical College, Jammu & Narayana Hospital, Katra and wished them a speedy recovery. The entire nation stands firmly with the families of martyred pilgrims in this hour of grief", the LG posted on X.

The team of doctors briefed the Lt Governor on the health condition of the injured and the medical facilities being extended to them. The Lt Governor is closely monitoring the situation. He has directed the District and Hospital Administration for ensuring the best possible medical care and all necessary assistance to the affected families.

I am not...

to be ready for a loss as well.

"If you set aside the fact that I lost, on the whole I think the NC has a lot to be satisfied for... as far as my own seat is concerned, how can I be anything but disappointed. But that is electoral politics for you. If you are not prepared to lose, you should not file your papers. I cannot say the result was on expected lines. But it is what it is," he told PTI in an interview.

The NC leader said he will lead his party's campaign for the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

"No. I am not contesting the assembly elections. I will not fight a UT election. I am absolutely clear on that. I will help my party, I will lead the campaign, I will do whatever I have to for the NC. But I will not enter an assembly of the UT of J-K," he said.

"I will fight for our statehood to be restored to us. I will fight for a full state of J-K with no dilution. Then, if possible, I will seek an opportunity to enter the assembly and play my part there. But, I will not humiliate myself by entering a UT (assem-bly)," the NC vice president said.

Asked if he was hopeful for early restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir as the BJP did not get a majority on its own in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls, Abdullah said the prime minister and the home minister of the country have made a commitment to this effect both inside and outside Parliament.

"I would like to believe that the commitments of the prime minister and the home minister mean something. They have com-mitted to the statehood both inside as well as outside Parliament. Unless, they want the whole world to question their credibil-ity, I am sure they will fulfil what they have said," the NC leader said

On the conduct of the assembly elections, Abdullah said he would not have been so hopeful had the Supreme Court not direct-ed that the polls be held by September 30.

"I would not have been as hopeful of assembly elections and statehood even if the BJP was not reduced to a minority govern-ment or the coalition government at the Centre. The elections are happening not because the BJP wants the elections, but because the Supreme Court has ordered them," he said.

Abdullah said while he was satisfied with the NC's performance in the Lok Sabha polls, it was hard for him not to take the loss in Baramulla personally. "The biggest challenge for us right now as a party is to get a bit of morale back. The truth is that this election loss has hit us all hard, some harder than others. It is difficult for me not to take this loss personally. But it is what it is. The NC did really well, I want my party cadre to realise that we may have lost one Parliament seat, but as a party, we did a phenomenal job against the tsunami in north Kashmir, nobody could have done better," he said.

"So, I think we need to focus on the positives. The positive is that we are by far the single largest party in J-K, we have the largest vote share and we will carry this momentum to the assembly. Now, the unknown factors will be what Engineer Rashid will do, how that will translate on the ground. It is alright, we will see," he said.

Abdullah dismissed the suggestion that the outcome of the polls in Kashmir was personality driven than party agenda driv-en, saying nobody wins a parliamentary election on their personality. "You win it because of the organisation. You win it because of the campaign that you run. I think Aga Ruhullah (NC winner from Srinagar Lok Sabha seat) and Mian Altaf Ahmad (NC winner from Anantnag-Rajouri seat) would be the first people to tell you that of course they were strong candidates, but they also had a strong party behind them," he said.Abdullah said they were able to get votes from the areas that they did not expect, and in numbers that they did not expect. "So, their personalities definitely helped us, how could they not, but, it is not just the personality," he added.

Prasanna posted as...

Department, in addition to his own duties, till further orders," it stated.

"Sarah Rizvi, IPS DIG IR Jammu, shall hold the additional charge of the post DIG Armed, Jammu, in addition to her own duties, till further orders," reads a separate order issued by Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home Department.

DB quashes Civil Judge (Junior) selection under ST Category
Directs PSC to select and recommend the name of petitioner for appointment

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A Division Bench of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court comprising Chief Justice N Kotishwar Singh and Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi quashed the selection and appointment of Ambir Khan against the posts of Civil Judge (Junior Division) in the ST category.

This landmark judgment has been passed in a petition filed by Stanzin Itzes Chosket seek-ing quashment of the result of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Judicial) Examination-2023 notified vide Notification No: PSC/Exany/2024/04 dated 03.04.2024, as far as the selection of the Respondent No.5 is concerned for appointment against the advertised posts of Civil Judge (Junior Division) in the ST and also seeking a direction for issuing a writ of mandamus commanding the Respondent No.2 to select and recommend the name of the petitioner for appointment against the said advertised

posts of Civil Judge (Junior Division) in the ST category on the strength of her merit in the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Judicial) Examination-2023; and in the alternative, seeking quashing of S.O.633 dated 27.12.2023 whereby "Explanation (D)" has been added to Rule 4 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Rules, 2005 providing reservation for the STs of Leh and Kargil Districts within the ST category.

The Division Bench after hearing Sr. Adv Rahul Pant with Advocates Dhruv Pant, Anirudh Sharma and Shail Mustaq for the petitioner whereas Advocate General for the UT, observed that the respondent Commission appears to have committed an error by adopting the approach that the eligible ST candidates can be considered only in the respective areas. It is to be noted that while there is a specific reservation for the ST candidates hailing from Leh District and Kargil

District which is area specific, there is no such reservation for other STs residing in other areas i.e., other districts of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

The reservation for ST category under Rule 4 (b) is not area-specific except for the sub-category of reservation for the Districts of Leh and Kargil for which special provi-sions have been made as pro-vided under Explanation D to Rule 4. Merely because area specific reservations have been made for the STs hailing from Leh and Kargil Districts, it does not necessar-ily mean that in respect of the remaining ST posts, these are also area specific for other remaining Districts of UT Jammu and Kashmir.

Had it been so, the rule makers would have clearly mentioned that the remaining ST posts would be reserved for the STs residing in the Districts of Jammu and Kashmir other than the resi-dents of Leh and Kargil.

DB further said that in spite of the directions issued as above, the Respondent no.5 can be considered against any resultant vacancy which may arise on account of non-joining of any ST candidate against the quota for STs, but not against the vacancy available in respect posts meant for the STs of Leh and Kargil Districts, in accordance with law.

As regards the plea for quashing S.O.633 dated December 27, 2023 whereby "Explanation (D)" has been added to Rule 4 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Rules, 2005 providing reserva-tion for the STs of Leh and Kargil Districts within the ST category, is concerned, since the petitioner has not pressed, we do not consider it necessary to deal with the same and leave it open to be decided in appro-priate case, DB said.

Chemist found dead
with his throat slit

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: A 35-year-old chemist was found dead with his throat slit open near his house in Kathua district, officials said on Monday.

Amarjit Sharma's murder sparked protests by his grieving relatives and neigh-bours, who demanded immediate arrest of the unidentified culprits, they said.

Sharma was found dead outside his house in Mela village by his family late Sunday night after they started searching for him when he did not return home, the officials said.

Hundreds of people, carry-ing Sharma's body, blocked Jammu-Pathankot highway and the nearby railway track in nearby Hiranagar area around 9 am this morning, the officials said.

The protesters dispersed within two hours on the assurance of police and civil officers that a case was reg-istered and further investi-gation is on to bring the cul-prits to book, they said.

AC approves dedicated Commission for facilitating
reservations to OBCs in Local Bodies

Gives nod to draft JKSSB Bill 2024 for submission to MHA

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Administrative Council, which met here under the Chairmanship of Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor, has approved establishment of a dedicated Backward Classes Commission for facilitating reservations to OBCs in Local Bodies in view of enactment of the Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Act, 2024.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor attended the meet-ing.

The Commission shall have mandate to conduct empiri-cal study and investigation in the context of the repre-sentation of Backward Classes in all Local Bodies

before the upcoming general elections of the Local Bodies.

The recommendations regarding proportional reservation for backward classes, Local Body-wise (Urban & Rural) in ac-cordance with the amend-ments made in the Jammu & Kashmir Municipal Act, 2000, the Jammu and Kashmir Municipal Corporation Act, 2000 and the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 shall be submitted by the Commission to Government.

The tenure of the Commission shall be forty five days from the date of publication of notification to this effect. The proposal would facilitate implement-ing the reservation to OBCs in the forthcoming local body elections in due compliance with the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in

this regard.

The Administrative Council also approved sub-mission of draft The Jammu and Kashmir Service Selection Board (JKSSB) Bill, 2024 to Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India for placing before the Parliament of India. The Bill proposes appointment of Chairperson from IAS cadre (either serving or retired- Super time scale and above).

The Bill also proposes that there shall be five members (either serving or retired) from equivalent grade of special scale and above while as the Controller and Secretary shall be Special Secretary level or above.

It also suggests that the chairperson and member shall hold office for 5 years or till age of 65 years (whichever is earlier) and shall not be re-appointed.

Dulloo visits Tulmulla to review
arrangements for Mela Kheer Bhawani

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GANDERBAL: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Monday visited Kheer Bhawani Temple Tulamulla this evening to conduct a thorough appraisal of the arrangements for the upcoming annual 'Kheer Bhawani' mela, set to be observed on June 14th.

Accompanied by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Inspector General of Police, VK Birdi; Deputy Inspector General, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, SSP Ganderbal, and other senior officers from Civil Administration and Police Department.

During his visit, the Chief Secretary inspected the facilities and identified any additional requirements to ensure a smooth and pleasant experience for the pilgrims. He emphasized the impor-



tance of close coordination among vari-ous departments to facilitate a seamless celebration of the festival.

The Chief Secretary was assured that

comprehensive arrangements have been made which include transportation, accommodation, power, water, sanitation, medical aid, and security measures to provide a hassle-free experience for the devotees.

Regarding accommodation, the Chief Secretary was informed that that spec-ific amenities for a comfortable night stay for pilgrims have been established both at the shrine and at the Central University Kashmir (CUK) besides, a larger facility will be available at both locations to serve the needs of the vis-itors. The Chief Secretary expressed sat-isfaction with the preparations and directed officers to ensure that any remaining requirements are promptly addressed, reinforcing the commitment to providing a memorable and smooth experience for all devotees.

CGPWA organizes Meditation & Wisdom Sharing Session

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Central Govt Pensioners' Welfare Association, Jammu organised here today 'Meditation and Wisdom Sharing' session for senior citizens. A V Saikumar Reddy, an exponent of Meditation and Spiritualism shared 30 years of his experi-ence in meditation and wisdom sharing and conducted a 30-minute Meditation session for the participants. It was a great experience for all the partici-pants. The function was presided over by I D Soni, President of Home for the Aged and former State Commissioner of Bharat Scouts and Guides. Sai Kumar Reddy has remained attached with the founder of Chennai based Pyramid Spiritual Societies Movement, Brahmarshi Pitamaha Patiriji for 27 years and is Chief Executive of Spiritual India and Spiritual Science maga-zines. Under this mission, he has travelled to 20 countries to promote vegetarianism, medi-tation, and spiritual wisdom. The Mission has teams sta-tioned at Bangaluru, Mumbai, Cuttack, New Delhi,



Meditation & Wisdom Sharing expert A V Saikumar Reddy honoured after Meditation session organised by CGPWA.

Chandigarh, Ludhiana, besides in USA, England and Abu Dhabi. His model of Meditation is devoid of any mantra, any deity or holding breath. It can be done in any comfortable sit-ting posture with hands clasped and fingers of both hands locked with each other and eyes closed for 30-minutes.

During this period of absolute silence, the practitioner has to resist the wandering of mind and thoughts that may keep coming to his mind. These stray thoughts have to be cut, and instead focus on the breathing process that is inhal-ing and exhaling which should be soft and done easily. After the meditation, the participants put their hand on the closed eyes for a few seconds and then slowly open the eyes. It is very easy and should be done every day at any time after finishing

the work or before taking the work. Reddy said that it is not unusual that one gets encoun-tered stray thoughts while doing the meditation but these must be cut. He said over sev-enty to ninety thousand thoughts come to the human mind in 24 hours but when doing meditation, these have to be managed to focus on breath. This would give energy and help keep one healthy with breath becoming a rhythm of calm. He said that it has become a movement to make spiritual societies. It was fol-lowed by questions and answers to clarify issues related to med-itation. I D Soni, in his presi-dential address, complimented CGPWA Jammu for organis-ing this spiritual event which is useful for every human being.

Lauding the narration of Sai Kumar's personal story after he

met his Guru, Patiriji, Soni said that basically everyone, irre-spective of which religion he belongs to, remains attached to his roots and fulfils the obliga-tions cast on him. There is no substitute to noble work and quoted historic and religious scriptures to support his views on humanitarianism and spiri-tualism. Well known Naturopathy and Yoga Expert Shreyansh Jain also spoke on the occasion. Commending the philosophy of meditation as explained by Reddy, Jain spoke about the usefulness of yoga and proper and mixed diet with greater focus on fruits. General Secretary CGPWA, K B Jandial welcomed Sai Kumar and guests and said that CGPWA keeps undertaking diverse voluntary activities to contribute to the society. Earlier, Saikumar Reddy was honored by the Vice President of CGPWA Dr Sudarshan Kumar and I D Soni by J K Vaid former General Secretary CGPWA honored I D Soni. V K Sambyal who was instrumental in bringing Reddy to Jammu for the Meditation session and Jandial were also honored by Shreyansh Jain.