

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !! Terror in J&K...

its decisive phase and the recent incidents show that terrorism has been forced to shrink from highly organised acts of violence to a mere proxy war, the minister said.

In a subsequent meeting, Shah also reviewed the preparations for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage, which is scheduled to begin on June 29.

The officials said the Home Minister was given a thorough briefing on the prevailing situation in Jammu and Kashmir where security forces are expected to intensify counter-terrorism operations in the coming days.

The operations against terrorists will be carried out in line with the prime minister's directive, they said.

Shah presided over the high-level meeting, three days after Prime Minister Modi held a similar meeting where he directed officials to deploy the "full spectrum of counter-terror capabilities" after a spate of terror incidents, including an attack on a bus carrying pilgrims in Reasi district of the Jammu region.

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha, Army Chief General Manoj Pande, Army Chief-designate Lt. General Upendra Dwivedi, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, Director of Intelligence Bureau Tapan Deka, CRPF Director General Anish Dayal Singh, BSF Director General Nitin Agarwal, Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police R R Swain and other top security officials attended the meeting.

In a meeting on Friday last, Shah was briefed about the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir; the deployment of forces along the International Border and the Line of Control, infiltration attempts, the status of ongoing anti-terror operations and the strength of terrorists operating in the Union Territory, sources said.

Terrorists struck at four places in Reasi, Kathua and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir within four days last week, killing nine pilgrims and a CRPF jawan and leaving seven security personnel and several others injured.

Two suspected Pakistani terrorists were also killed in an encounter with security forces in Kathua district.

On June 9, terrorists opened fire on a 53-seater bus carrying pilgrims when it was en route to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra from the Shiv Khori temple. The bus, ferrying pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi, plunged into a deep gorge following the gunfire, killing nine people and injuring 41 others.

On June 11, terrorists fired at a joint checkpoint of the Rashtriya Rifles and police at Chattergalla in Bhadrawah while a search party in the Gandoh area of Doda district was attacked on June 12, resulting in injuries to seven security personnel, including a policeman.

Prime Minister Modi spoke to the home minister on June 13, and discussed the deployment of security forces and counter-terror operations.

Modi also spoke to the Jammu and Kashmir lieutenant governor as well and took stock of the situation in the Union Territory.

Sinha briefed him on the efforts being undertaken by the local administration. In the meeting, the prime minister was given a full overview of the security-related situation in the region and was apprised of the counter-terror efforts being undertaken.

The attacks took place ahead of the annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Amarnath, located at a height of 3,880 metres in the south Kashmir Himalayas, which will begin on June 29 and will continue till August 19. The Amarnath pilgrims travel through two routes -- Baltal and Pahalgam -- in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sources said last year over 4.28 lakh people visited the shrine and the figure could go up to five lakh this time.

## IAF's Rafale aircraft...

Flag exercise for the IAF included insight on interoperability with international partners and a collaborative understanding of missions in a multinational environment, the defence ministry said on Sunday.

The IAF contingent participated in the exercise from June 4 to 14.

Besides the Indian Air Force (IAF), the exercise witnessed the participation of the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF), the UK's Royal Air Force (RAF), the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf), the German Luftwaffe, and the US Air Force (USAF).

"The transatlantic ferry of Rafale fighter aircraft was enabled by the IL-78 air-to-air refuellers while the transportation of personnel and equipment was undertaken by C-17 Globemaster aircraft," the ministry said.

Red Flag is an air exercise conducted with multiple scenarios designed to provide realistic combat settings.

This was the first time the IAF Rafale aircraft participated in this exercise. The Rafale jets operated alongside F-16 and F-15 aircraft of the RSAF and the USAF respectively.

The missions included Beyond Visual Range (BVR) combat exercises as a part of large force engagements (LFE) in offensive counter air-and-air defence roles, the defence ministry said in a statement.

It said the IAF crew members were actively involved in mission planning and also assumed the role of mission leaders for designated missions during the exercise. "In spite of the challenging weather and almost sub-zero temperatures, the IAF maintenance crew worked diligently to ensure serviceability of all the aircraft throughout the duration of the exercise and all assigned missions could be undertaken with more than 100 sorties being flown during the exercise," the ministry said.

"Key takeaways from the exercise included insight on interoperability with international partners and a collaborative understanding of employment philosophy in a multinational environment," it said.

"Experience of ferrying long distances, while undertaking air-to-air refuelling enroute, was both an enriching and thrilling takeaway, especially for the younger crew," it said.

The ministry said undertaking its return journey, the contingent split enroute along with their mutual support elements to participate in exercises with air force elements of Greece and Egypt, before landing back in India on June 24.

"Enriched with the Red Flag exercise experience, the IAF keenly looks forward to hosting the participating contingents from other countries during Ex-Tarang Shakti-2024, which is the first ever Indian multinational air exercise to be held later this year," it said.

## Those behind Reasi...

stall in Doodhpathri by Budgam's Naseema Banu. He said the unique initiative is not only educating locals and tourists about our natural and cultural heritage but also inspiring other food entrepreneurs to adopt sustainable tourism practices. He appreciated the contribution of Glacial scientist Ulfat Majeed in the field of glacier-glacial lake-climate relationships research. She has emerged as a trailblazer in dealing with the challenges of climate change, the Lt Governor said. The Lt Governor commended Malik Shughfa Nabi of Ganderbal for helping women in distress, bringing hope in their lives and inspiring others.

Sharing the life's journey of Udhampur's Rita Devi, Kathua's Tripta Devi and Naina Gupta from Ramban, the Lt Governor said the women achievers are the source of inspiration for women entrepreneurs in rural areas.

The Lt Governor made a special mention of Jammu's female biker, Preeti and Divyavasu Sharma, an IT expert from Jammu.

Preeti is on a mission to educate and empower young daughters towards a glorious career in the armed forces. Divyavasu Sharma regularly educates the public about cyber threat, prudent use of technology for greater good and guides people to navigate ever-evolving technology landscape, he said.

The Lt Governor also mentioned about Ruhail Maqbool Sheikh, known as Water Warrior of Pulwama and Jammu's Ritu Salathia, who has emerged as the brand ambassador of J&K's gaming industry.

The Lt Governor shared the suggestions of Rajinder Singh from Majalta and Manzoor Ahmad from Baramulla regarding Swachh Abhiyan, rural health, and waste management. He also voiced the valuable inputs received from Anantnag's Tabasum Zehra on girl child education; Ahmad Thoker from Rajouri and Munish Badyal from Jammu on water conservation and assured necessary action by the concerned departments. The Lt Governor called upon the enlightened citizens to come together to welcome the pilgrims of Shri Anarnath Ji Yatra, the annual pilgrimage to holy shrine, which will commence on June 29.

## Col Manpreet Singh...

Singh, Major Aashish Dhonehak, J-K Police Deputy Superintendent Humayun Bhat and Sepoy Pardeep Singh made the ultimate sacrifice, leaving a void in the hearts of those who knew and admired them.

A revered Commanding Officer of the 19 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) unit, Colonel Singh is remembered as a hero in the worst terrorism-hit areas of Larkipora, Zaldooora and Kokernag in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Many locals remember him as a symbol of bravery, leadership and selfless sac-

rice in these areas that are mainly the Area of Responsibility, or AOR in army parlance, of the 19 RR. His legacy lives on in the hearts of people.

The absence of Colonel Singh weighs heavy on his family members, particularly his wife Jagmeet who vividly recalls the time when he planted two Chinar trees and affectionately named them after their children -- Kabir and Vani.

"He had said that we will return after 10 years to see these trees again. But now..." said Jagmeet, her trailing off voice encapsulating the uncertainty and sorrow that has befallen the family.

Jagmeet shared with PTI over phone from Mohali in Punjab how deeply passionate Colonel Singh was about improving the lives of people in Kashmir and also spoke about the difficulties in making her own children understand that he won't return.

"Often Mann (Colonel Manpreet) would get calls in the dead of night and he would promptly ensure that help was provided to them," she said, adding that the help could be to resolve a personal dispute or for hospitalisation, it could be for anything.

She said her martyred husband was invited by locals for marriages, to celebrate the birth of a child and Eid. "It was like one big family," Jagmeet said.

Remembering her last conversation with him, which lasted 32 seconds, Jagmeet said, "Operation mein hoon (I am in operation) were his last words before I did not hear from him ever."

Colonel Singh's dedication to the community extended beyond his military duties.

He was instrumental in rehabilitation efforts, particularly in helping those addicted to drugs find a path to recovery. Colonel Singh's impact on empowering women and fostering a sense of community through sports and education is fondly remembered by those who knew him.

Rubbiya Sayeed, a well-known women cricketer from Anantnag, recalled Colonel Singh's impact on the community. "He believed that sports played an important role in building a society. There were many drug addicts whom he sent for rehabilitation," she said.

Sayeed said Colonel Singh's focus on empowering women to be self-reliant and economically independent showcased his commitment to building a better society through sports and education.

"He actually was a healing touch to the people and the 19 RR headquarters had become the most people-friendly place where the focus was on building the youth and reasoning out with them about their better future," she said in a choked voice.

Local residents spoke of Colonel Singh's kindness and support, highlighting his gentlemanly demeanour and positive influence on the youth.

"I have never seen a gentleman officer like him. He used to treat me like his brother," Rayees said and recalled how his son would play with Kabir. "Probably, he was one of our last resort whenever we were in some problem," he said.

The Gurdwara at Zaldooora stands testament to his generosity. The 19 RR, that mainly draws its personnel from the SIKH LI, provided a generator to ensure no power cut and uninterrupted recitation of the 'Gurbani'.

## CRS to conduct inspection...

Link (#USBRL) project will be completed by year-end," Union Minister Jitendra Singh wrote on 'X'.

The 1.3 km Chenab rail bridge located 359 meters above the riverbed, 35 meters higher than the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris, forms a crucial link of the project. The Jammu and Kashmir Administration had already announced plans to develop the bridge as a 'tourist spot'.

## FM to hold...

has announced the highest-ever dividend of Rs 2.11 lakh crore for FY24.

The key policy priorities for the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government would include dealing with stress in the agriculture sector, job creation, sustaining capex momentum and pushing revenue growth to stay on the fiscal consolidation path.

Rating agency S&P has already given a thumbs up to economic policies followed by the Modi regime in the past 10 years by upgrading the sovereign rating outlook to positive. It also hinted at a possible rating upgrade in next 1-2 years provided the government sticks to its fiscal deficit roadmap.

While tax revenues seem to be buoyant, non-tax revenue remains a challenge as strategic disinvestment has almost been a non-starter with no big-ticket strategic sale, except Air India.

## Tarun Chugh takes...

of immense public importance. The Minister assured the delegation that necessary instructions would be issued to the National Highway Authority of India, keeping in view the public sensitivity over the issue.

## No need to...

textbook does not mention the Babri masjid but refers to it as a "three-domed structure". It has pruned the Ayodhya section from four to two pages and deleted details from the earlier version.

It instead focuses on the Supreme Court judgement that paved the way for the construction of a Ram temple at the site where the disputed structure once stood before it was torn down by Hindu activists in December 1992. The Supreme Court verdict was widely accepted in the country. The consecration of the Ram idol in the temple was performed on January 22 this year by the prime minister.

"We want to create positive citizens and that's what is the purpose of our textbooks. We cannot have everything in them. The purpose of our education is not to create violent citizens ... depressed citizens. Hatred and violence are not subjects of teaching, they should not be focus of our textbooks," added Saklani.

He hinted that the same hue and cry is not made about 1984 anti-Sikh riots not being in textbooks.

The latest deletions in the textbooks include: BJP's 'rath yatra' from Sonmath in Gujarat to Ayodhya; the role of kar sevaks; communal violence in the wake of the demolition of the Babri masjid; President's rule in BJP-ruled states; and the BJP's expression of "regret over the happenings at Ayodhya".

"If Supreme Court has given a verdict in favour of Ram temple, Babri masjid or Ram jammabhoomi, should it not be included in our textbooks, what is the problem in that? We have included the new updates. If we have constructed new Parliament, should our students not know about it. It is our duty to include the ancient developments and recent developments," he said.

Asked about allegations of saffronisation of curriculum and ultimately textbooks, Saklani said, "If something has become irrelevant ... it will have to be changed. Why shouldn't it be changed. I don't see any saffronisation here. We teach history so students know about facts, not for making it a battleground".

"If we are telling about Indian Knowledge System, how can it be saffronisation? If we are telling about iron pillar in Mehrauli and saying Indians were way ahead of any metallurgical scientist, are we saying wrong? How can it be saffronisation?" Saklani, 61, who was head of the ancient history department at the HNB Garhwal University before taking charge as NCERT director in 2022, has faced criticism over the changes in textbooks, especially pertaining to historical facts. What is wrong about changes in textbooks? Updating textbooks is a global practice, it is in interest of education. Revising textbooks is an annual exercise. Whatever is changed is decided by subject and pedagogy experts. I do not dictate or interfere in the process ... there is no imposition from top.

"There are no attempts to saffronise curriculum, everything is based on facts and evidence," he said. The NCERT is revising the curriculum of the school textbooks in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. From the assertion that recent studies of ancient DNA obtained from archaeological sources at Rakhigarhi, an Indus Valley site in Haryana, rule out Aryan immigration to a call for more research into whether the Harappans and the Vedic people were the same, several crucial topics have either been dropped or tweaked in textbooks. A two-page table detailing achievements of Mughal emperors such as Humayun, Shah Jahan, Akbar, Jahangir and Aurangzeb have also been removed. This is the fourth round of revision and updating of NCERT textbooks since 2014. Referring to the changes to the section on Ayodhya, the NCERT had said in April -- "Content is updated as per latest development in politics. Text on Ayodhya issue has been thoroughly revised because of the latest changes brought by the Supreme Court's Constitutional bench verdict and its widespread welcoming reception". Saklani said that some changes have happened because the subjects were irrelevant, some to update new information while several topics were removed earlier to minimise burden on students cause by the COVID-19 pandemic and reduce duplication of content.

The new political science textbook of Class 11, now says that political parties "give priority to the interests of a minority group" with an eye on "vote bank politics", which leads to "minority appeasement".

This marks a complete shift from what was taught until the 2023-24 academic session -- that if students "think hard", they will find there is "little evidence" to suggest that vote bank politics favours the minorities in the country.

Dropping references to the demolition of Babri Masjid, the killing of Muslims in Gujarat riots and Hindutva, and tweaking the reference to Manipur's merger with India are among the changes made in textbooks this year.

# Delphic Council J&K organises Multilingual Kavi Sammelan

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Delphic Council of J&K (Registered Society), which works for promotion of Arts & Culture in J&K, on Sunday organised Multilingual Kavi Kalaanjali (Art & offerings) at Jammu Club Auditorium wherein Suresh Kumar Gupta- Principal Secretary, Department of Culture, J&K-UT was the Chief Guest and Deepak Dubey, Deputy Secretary was the Guest of Honor on the occasion.



Suresh Kumar Gupta- Principal Secretary, Department of Culture, J&K-UT lighting the ceremonial lamp.

Er. Ashok Singh, President of the Delphic Council of J&K and Secretary General of Indian Delphic Council appraised Artists of J&K that 26 episodes of the Virasat-e-Jammu & Kashmir were completed successfully wherein Padma Shri awardees, Artists, Academicians and Art lovers participated which was a great success and everyone in India appreciated it and now the Council is moving to the villages to provide the Delphic platform and lively hood to the unsung Artists of the J&K.

Suresh Kumar Gupta appreciated the role of the Delphic Council of J&K and assured full co-operation from the Department of Culture, J&K to rope in more Artists to show ease the talent of the J&K-UT to rest of the world.

Other renowned personalities associated with Arts & Culture Viz-a-Viz Anil and

Seema Selgal, Arshad Choudhary Chairman, Gurjar Desh Cheritable Trust, Jammu, Javid Rahi Secretary Kala Kendra, Jammu, Prof. Liaqat Jafri prominent Urdu poet, Vijay Puri-Advisor of the DC JK, Dr. Anita Sharma, Ajeet Singh MD DRS Kids, Jammu, Vinod Verma, Asha Kesar including Directors and Deputy Directors of the Delphic Council, J&K were present on the occasion.

Dr. Sarla Sharma, Dr. Shobha Sharma and Vipin Sharma from Uttar Pradesh recited their poetry in Hindi and Urdu. Prof. Liaqat Jafri, renowned poet, Bishan Singh Dardi, renowned Dogri Poet, Surinder Neer renowned Punjabi Poetess, Naseem Akhtar, renowned Gojri/Urdu Poetess, Kuldeep Kipi, Dogri Poet and Meenakshi Kesar, Dogri Poetess recited their poetry.

Ramesh Prasana,

Secretary General, International Delphic Council, Sreya Guha, President of the Delphic Council of Rajasthan and Dr. RK Swarankar and President, Delphic Association of UP were connected from other Delphic States of India via Hybrid Mode.

Ayash Arif, Vice president, Er. NN Thussu, Treasurer, Dr. Gharo Choudhary, Vinod Verma, Balvinder Singh, Sheetal Verma (AD Media), Ajeet Singh, Managing Director of DRS Kids and more than 150 Artists of J&K attended the Kavi Sammelan.

Ritu Sharma, Naseem Akhtar and Dr. Amrish Sarup Kohli moderated the event. The vote of thanks was presented by Vijay Puri, Delphic Advisor who thanked the Chief guest and Artists of the Country for attending the event.

# 'Sweeping generalisation': BJP counters Elon Musk over EVM remark

## STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Sunday accused billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk of making a "huge sweeping generalisation" by calling for eliminating EVMs, saying his views may apply to the US but not to India.

In a recent post on X, Musk had said, "We should eliminate electronic voting machines. The risk of being hacked by humans or AI, while small, is still too high."

Countering the Tesla CEO's criticism of EVMs, BJP leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar said, "This is a huge sweeping generalization statement that implies no one can build secure digital hardware. Wrong. Elon Musk's view may apply to the US and other places - where they use regular compute platforms to build Internet connected Voting machines."

"But Indian EVMs are custom designed, secure and isolated from any network or media - No connectivity, no bluetooth, wifi, Internet. ie there is no way in. Factory pro-

grammed controllers that cannot be reprogrammed," the former minister of state for information technology said on X.

Chandrasekhar also said EVMs can be architected and built right as India has done. "We would be happy to run a tutorial Elon," he added.

BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya said Musk or whoever else thinks they can hack the EVM should approach the Election Commission of India and take a shot at it.

He also took a swipe at Rahul Gandhi after the Congress leader raised Musk's comments to flag "concerns" about electoral process.

Malviya said, "But why is Rahul Gandhi complaining about Indian democracy to Musk? What can Musk do? Or is crying before the world and demeaning India part of Congress's DNA? We just had an election and people of India rejected this dynasty for a third time in row. But he still does not get it."

# Non-Teaching Association SKUAST Jammu organizes interaction meeting with newly appointed staff members



## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Non-Teaching Association SKUAST Jammu organized an interaction meeting with the newly appointed staff members from various cadres of the university. The meeting aimed to welcome the new appointees and address their concerns.

The meeting was graced by the presence of prominent office bearers of the association, including KD Singh (President), Zameer Ul Haq (General Secretary), Varun Dubey (Joint Secretary), Seema Bhat (Secretary), and Kewal Saroop

(Treasurer).

Zameer Ul Haq welcomed the newly appointed staff and encouraged them to work diligently and with dedication. He emphasized the importance of their roles in contributing to the university's success. During the session, the President of NTEAJ SKUAST Jammu, S. KD Singh, extended his gratitude to the Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-Jammu for the recruitment of new staff members, recognizing it as a positive step towards the growth and efficiency of the university.

Several issues were

brought to the forefront during the meeting, with the primary concern being the pending salaries of the newly appointed staff. The President urged the Vice Chancellor to expedite the release of the pending salaries of New Recruiters as their CID Clearance has been received by the University. The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the association's commitment to support the staff and ensuring their issues are addressed promptly and effectively and also taking the University to the new heights.

# Centre warns of strict action against its employees for tardiness

## STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Centre has warned of strict action against its employees for tardiness and said that habitual late attendance and early leaving from office should be viewed seriously by the authorities concerned. The move comes after it noticed that several employees were not registering their attendance in an Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS)

and "some of the employees have been coming late on a regular basis".

In an order, the Personnel Ministry suggested use of a mobile phone-based face authentication system that provides "live location detection and geo-tagging" among others as well. The matter of strict implementation of AEBAS has recently been reviewed and taking a serious note of the laxity in its imple-

mentation, it is "reiterated that all MDOs (ministry/department/organisation) will regularly monitor the attendance reports", according to the order.

"Habitual late attendance and early leaving of office should be viewed seriously and be essentially discouraged. Strict action against the defaulters may be initiated under the extant rules," it said.