

02 Mother dies, daughter injured in scooter-car collision

03 Separate Jammu State the only lasting solution: Ankur

06 Progressing J&K: J&K registers hike of 3.7 pc in GGI from 2019 to 2021

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MPs, MLAs to elect President today; Murmu has clear edge over Sinha

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Nearly 4,800 elected MPs and MLAs will vote on July 18 to elect the 15th President of India, with National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate Droupadi Murmu having a clear edge over the Opposition's Yashwant Sinha as over 60% of votes are expected to be cast in her favour.

The polling will take place in Parliament House and state legislative assemblies between 10 am and 5 pm for which ballot boxes have already reached their destinations.

The counting of votes will take place at Parliament House on July 21 and the next President will take oath on July 25.

With the support of regional parties such as the Bharatiya Janata Dal (BJD), Yuva Jana Samiksha Rytlu Congress Party (YSRCP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Janata Dal Secular (JD(S)), Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Shiv Sena and now Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Murmu's vote share is likely to reach nearly two-thirds and she is set to

become the first woman from the tribal community to occupy the top constitutional post.

The NDA nominee now has over 6.67 lakh votes after the support of various regional parties, out of a total of



10,86,431 votes.

The electoral college which elects the President through the system of proportional representation comprises elected MPs and members of state legislative assemblies. Nominated MPs and MLAs, and members of legislative councils are not entitled to vote in this election.

The system of secret ballot is followed and parties cannot issue whip to their MPs and MLAs with regard to voting.

The value of the vote of a member of Parliament has gone down to 700 from 708 in this presidential poll due to the

absence of a legislative assembly in Jammu and Kashmir.

The value of vote of an MLA varies in different states. In Uttar Pradesh, the value of the vote of each MLA stands at 208, followed by 176 in Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu. In Maharashtra, it is 175. In Sikkim, the value of vote per MLA is seven, while it is nine in Nagaland and eight in Mizoram.

Before naming Sinha, a former Union minister and BJP leader, the opposition camp had approached Gopalkrishna Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and a former governor of West Bengal; Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) supremo Sharad Pawar; and National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah to contest the poll.

After their refusal to be part of the electoral battle, Sinha, then Trinamool Congress vice president, was named as the Opposition's candidate.

The election of the President is held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote.

In accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable

J&K reports 203 fresh COVID cases, Ladakh 14

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday recorded 203 fresh Covid cases-- 111 from the Jammu division and 92 from the Valley, thus taking the total number of positive cases in the Union Territory to 457032.

According to the daily Media Bulletin, out of 457032 positive cases, 1044 are Active Positive, 451230 have recovered and 4758 have died-- 2333 in

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

250 Kg poppy husk seized from truck in Samba; 1 held

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Sunday seized 250 kilogram of poppy husk from a truck and arrested a man in Samba district, officials said.

A police party intercepted a truck at Vijaypur on the Jammu-Pathankot highway, they said.

During checking, around 250 Kilogram of poppy husk hidden in 11 plastic sacks was seized from it, the officials said. Truck

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Ensuing people's involvement in strengthening participatory governance in J&K: LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Noting that Jan Bhagidari has been transformed into a movement in Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday complimented the District level administrations for invoking the spirit of public-participation in the government working among the masses.

In his 16th edition of 'Awaam Ki Awaaz' programme, dedicated to the citizens, who are working for the betterment of the society and nation building, the Lt Governor mentioned that District Budgam has ensured that the locals become equal stakeholders in strengthening the pillars of participatory governance.

Jan Bhagidari, Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Good Governance, Police-public Cooperation, Reviving Heritage, Women



Entrepreneurs were among the focus areas of this month's episode of Awaam Ki Awaaz programme which was aired today on all local and primary channels of All India Radio (AIR) in the UT and also broadcast on DD Kashmir.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

provides the perfect opportunity for new dreams, new resolve to bring about peace, prosperity and all-round progress in the country. As the cradle of civilization, we are determined to further enhance the country's position at the world stage, the Lt Governor said. District Udhampur is promoting benefits of Beams Empowerment portal and District Kishtwar is becoming synonymous with

Youth-Powered Padyatras. These initiatives are aimed at equipping the locals with information and bridging the gap between the administration and public, the Lt Governor added.

The Lt Governor also commended the employees

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

5,284 pilgrims leave for Amarnath cave shrine from Jammu



Jubilant pilgrims at Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu before departure to Amarnath cave Shrine on Sunday. (Pic by Shilpa Thakur)

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The 18th batch of over 5,200 Amarnath pilgrims left from here on Sunday for twin base camps in south Kashmir Himalayas

for 3,880-metre-high cave shrine of Amarnath, officials said. A total of 5,284 pilgrims left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas here in a

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Workshop on EVMs, VVPATs likely by month end in Srinagar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The election machinery is gearing up for the conduct of assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir as the first-level checking (FLC) of EVMs and VVPATs will be held at a workshop here later this month, officials said on Sunday.

They said deputy commissioners of all ten districts of the Valley and a team of the Election Commission of India (ECI) will participate in the workshop.

"The preparations for the assembly elections are underway. However, the final dates for the conduct of the polls will be decided by the ECI,"

an official said.

Jammu and Kashmir has been without an assembly since November 2018 when the then legislative assembly was dissolved by then governor Satya Pal Malik after the PDP-BJP coalition government fell apart earlier that year.

The Centre as well as the Lieutenant Governor administration here have been saying that the assembly elections in the UT would be conducted after the process of delimitation and electoral revision is completed.

The delimitation of constituencies was completed earlier this year and the Election Commission began

the process of electoral rolls revision in the union territory last month -- an exercise taking place after a gap of three years and for the first time since the abrogation of J-K's special status in August 2019.

The officials said there are indications that polls could be held in the UT after the electoral rolls revision is completed.

They said the preparations for the polls were in full swing.

The delimitation has been completed. The electoral rolls revision is on and is likely to be completed soon. The EC has set October 31 as the final date for publication of

the revised electoral rolls, the official said.

The process of rationalisation of polling stations was also going on and is likely to be completed by the end of this month.

Some of the deputy commissioners who are designated as district election officers have released list of draft polling stations after rationalisation, while others are in the process of doing so, the official said.

The rationalisation of polling stations was necessitated because of the creation of seven new assembly constituencies as well as change in boundaries of many

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

India crosses 200-crore COVID vaccine doses mark

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India achieved a major milestone in its vaccination programme against COVID-19 as the cumulative doses administered surpassed the 200-crore mark on Sunday, 18 months after it began the drive to combat the deadly epidemic that has claimed over 5.25 lakh lives in the country so far.

In a tweet, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the people of the country on bringing about this significant feat. He called India's vaccination drive unparalleled in scale and speed.

The UNICEF termed it a phenomenal accomplishment and a testament to the grit and dedication of India's health workers, while the WHO too praised the effort.

"India has set a new record by completing the target of 200 crore vaccinations in just 18 months. Hearty congratulations to all countrymen on this

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

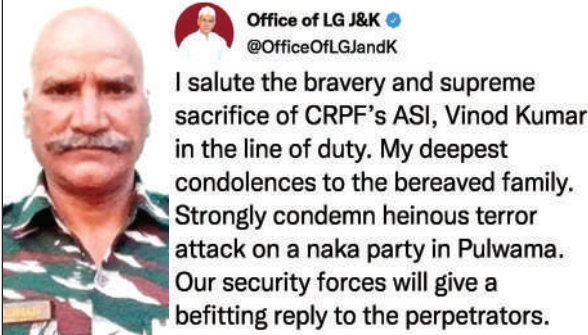
CRPF officer martyred in Pulwama terrorist attack

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A CRPF officer was martyred in a terror attack in Pulwama district on Sunday, police said.

A police spokesman said at about 2:15 pm, terrorists fired at a checkpoint jointly manned by police and CRPF at Gangoo crossing area of Pulwama. In the terror incident, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of CRPF Vinod Kumar was critically injured and was immediately shifted to a hospital, where he succumbed to injuries and attained martyrdom, he said.

Senior police officers, along with reinforcement, reached the spot and the preliminary investigation revealed that



terrorists taking advantage of nearby apple orchards fired indiscriminately upon the security forces near Gangoo crossing area of Pulwama in south Kashmir, the spokesman said.

He said a case has been registered and investigation

initiated.

Meanwhile, the officers continued to work to establish the full circumstances of the incident. The whole area, including orchards, has been cordoned off and a search operation is in progress, the spokesman said.

Remain grounded, ensure no citizen turned away empty-handed: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Sunday asked newly inducted Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers to remain grounded and to ensure that no citizen, who needs their intervention, is turned away empty handed from their office.

Addressing the newly-inducted officers, he said it is important to use technology to bring definite improvement in the governance and to make it citizen-centric.

The minister exhorted the young bureaucrats to remain grounded and added that



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh addressing the 2020 batch IAS officers, at Civil Services Officers Institute, New Delhi on Sunday.

their attitude to the common citizen who comes to the doorstep of the government is going to be one of the most important factors in shaping

citizen's satisfaction from government services, according to a Personnel Ministry statement.

Once the attitude is sup-

portive and full of empathy, the attitude of those who are working with civil servants is bound to change and therefore they should strive for being the role model in this attitude changing mission, he added.

Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel, also advised the young officers to adopt a very respectful attitude towards public representatives and listen to them patiently and promptly examine their suggestions in the light of policy framework.

He said, wherever feasible or desirable, we may

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Search operation launched along border areas in Samba



Security forces carrying out search operation in Samba sector.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Search operation was launched by police and security forces in border areas along Indo-Pak border after some light-emitting flying object was spotted along International Border (IB) in Samba district, official sources said.

The search operation was

launched in areas along IB in Manguchak belt, they said. The people saw a light emitting flying object on Saturday night suspecting it to be a drone, triggering panic in the area.

However, police said it was an Indian private commercial night flight that

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 33.3°C Min: 24.9°C

Humidity

Max : 88 Min : 63

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 29.0°C Min: 18.0°C

Humidity

Max : 87 Min: 59

Sunset : 19:39 Hours

Sunrise : 05:37 Hours