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Zero tolerance policy towards drugs showing results: Amit Shah

J&K LG Manoj Sinha, Chief Secy A K Mehta, DGP Dilbag Singh attended conference

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

CHANDIGARH: The Centre's zero-tolerance policy towards narcotics is showing results, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday, noting that there were seizures of 3.3 lakh kg drugs and a 260 per cent increase in arrests in the 20014-21 period compared to 2006-13.

Stating that the drug problem was "more" in Punjab, a border state, Amit Shah while addressing at the national conference on drug trafficking and national security organised by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), asserted the Centre stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the state government in the fight against the drug menace.

The conference was organised by Narcotics Control Bureau wherein Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit, J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Haryana Chief Minister

Manohar Lal Khattar and Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann, Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla and NCB chief SN Pradhan participated. From J&K, Chief Secretary A K Mehta and DGP Dilbag Singh also attended the conference.

Shah said the government is holding talks with all stakeholders to make laws more stringent and has taken a proactive approach to connect with the states in the anti-narcotics efforts. Shah also spoke about the establishment of fast-track and exclusive courts for drug-related matters.

Eliminating the scourge is necessary to achieve the objective of a healthy society and prosperous nation. Also, it was important from the security point of view as "the dirty money generated from the drug trade is used in activities against the country", the minister said.

Shah was speaking after inaugurating a two-day



Home Minister Amit Shah, along with Chief Ministers, Governors and J&K LG Manoj Sinha posing for a group photograph after inaugurating national conference on drug trafficking and national security at Chandigarh.

national conference on drug trafficking and national security organised by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

"Everyone says the drug

problem is more in Punjab, which is a border state. Therefore, we will have to make more efforts.

"If the state government allots land, the Centre will

set up a forensic lab in Amritsar and a small centre of NCB for training purposes," he said.

"...We have to make joint efforts to fight this problem...

The Government of India stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the Punjab government to fight the drug menace. We have to pull out the youth of Punjab from the drug men-

ace," said Shah.

Shah said when Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014, the Centre adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards narcotics.

The fight against drugs, which was progressing swiftly and in the right direction, has started showing results, he said,

Shah said 1.52 lakh kg drugs were confiscated during 2006-2013 while 3.3 lakh kg drugs were seized in the 2014-2021 period.

Between 2006-2013, Rs 768 crore worth of drugs were seized while between 2014-21, Rs 20,000 crore worth of drugs were seized, he said.

Shah said there has been a 200 per cent increase in the number of cases registered. During the past seven years (2014-2021), there has been a 260 per cent increase in arrests made, he said.

"In this fight, bringing states together and taking on this scourge with synergy is

very important," he said.

He said that the drugs have an adverse impact not only on those consuming them but also on society, the economy and the country's security.

"We have to weed it out completely," he said.

Coinciding with the conference, nearly 31,000 kg drugs were destroyed by the NCB teams in Delhi, Chennai, Guwahati and Kolkata.

Shah said various ministries, including Home, Education, Social Justice and Empowerment and Health, in coordination with various agencies, including the NCB, have joined hands in the battle against drugs.

He said the Home Ministry has adopted a multi-pronged approach to prevent inimical forces from using "the dirty money" generated from the drug trade against anti-India activities.

"We have adopted a proactive approach to connect the states with it (the

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900 devotees leave for Budda Amarnath in Poonch: Officials

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Amid tight security, another batch of over 900 pilgrims on Saturday left for Budda Amarnath shrine in Poonch district from the base camp in Jammu, officials said.

The Buddha Amarnath Yatra resumed on Friday after a gap of two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

A batch of 950 pilgrims, comprising 763 men, 185 women and 4 children, left in 22 vehicles from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for the shrine amid tight security, they said.

The yatra will culminate on

August 8 with the departure of Chari Mubarak' from Shri Dashnami Akhara Poonch. The temple of Baba Buddha Amarnath dedicated to Lord Shiva is also known as "Chattani Baba Amarnath temple" and is located 290 kilometres North-West of Jammu.

Standing 4,600 feet above sea level, the shrine is located amid picturesque surroundings.

Multi-tier security has been put in place at the shrine and en route to ensure an incident-free yatra this year, officials said. The Yatra is being held in the backdrop of

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703 new COVID cases in J&K, 10 in Ladakh

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir registered 703 fresh COVID-19 cases on Saturday, taking the infection tally in the union territory to 4,64,062 and death toll to 4,770 as two new fatalities due to the Coronavirus were reported, officials said here.

While 209 cases were reported from Jammu division, 494 cases were reported from Kashmir valley, the officials said.

There are 4,711 active cases of the disease in the union territory, while the number of recoveries has reached 4,54,581, the

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Kargil war: Point 5140 named as Gun Hill

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: To commemorate the victory of Indian armed forces and pay tribute to the supreme sacrifice of the gunners in 'Operation Vijay', Point 5140 at Drass in Kargil has been christened as Gun Hill', a defence spokesman said on Saturday. The Regiment of Artillery, with lethal and accurate firepower, was able to have a telling effect on the enemy troops and their defences, including Point 5140, which was the key factor in the early completion of operations in the 1999 Kargil war, he said.

On July 26, 1999, the

Indian Army announced the successful culmination of Operation Vijay', declaring victory after a nearly three-month-long battle with Pakistani troops on the icy heights of Kargil in Ladakh.

On behalf of the Regiment of Artillery, a wreath was laid by Lieutenant General T K Chawla, Director General of Artillery, at Kargil War Memorial, Drass, the spokesman said, adding veteran gunners who had participated in the operation were present on the occasion. Lieutenant General Anindya Sengupta, General Officer Commanding of

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Terrorist killed in Baramulla; 3 security personnel including cop injured

Two hybrid ultras of LeT arrested in Sopore



Two hybrid ultras of LeT in police custody at Sopore.

The official said the identity and group affiliation of the slain terrorist was being

ascertained. Meanwhile, Police along with security forces have

arrested two hybrid terrorists, linked with proscribed terror outfit LeT at Sopore.

Arms and ammunition have been recovered from their possession.

According to a police spokesperson, a Jint naka was established by Police along with Army (32RR) and CRPF (92Bn) at Hadipora Rafiabad in the jurisdiction of Police Station Dangiwaacha. During checking, the joint party intercepted two suspicious persons, coming from Loriahama Link Road towards Haddipora, who on seeing joint naka party tried to escape

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Fighter pilot Advitiya Bal cremated with full military honours in R S Pura

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

R S PURA: Flight Lieutenant Advitiya Bal (27), martyred in the MIG-21 crash, was cremated with full military honours in his native hamlet in Jammu and Kashmir's R S Pura border belt on Saturday.

Thousands of locals, Indian Air Force (IAF) officers, members of the armed forces, police officers, bureaucrats and politicians cutting across political parties gathered to salute the braveheart as his family members bid a tearful adieu. The IAF personnel offered a three-gun salute as his



Air Force officials carrying the coffin of Martyr Flight Lieutenant Advitiya Bal. (More pics on page-9)

mortal remains was consigned to flames at his native Jinder Mehlu amid high

pitched slogans - 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Advitiya

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Over 500 Amarnath Yatra pilgrims leave Jammu base camp

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Over 500 more pilgrims on Saturday left here for the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said.

A total of 597 pilgrims of the 30th batch left base camp Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in the city in a convoy of 30 vehicles amid heavy CRPF security in the morning, they said.

The officials said 155 pilgrims heading for Baltal base camp were the first to leave in eight vehicles, followed by the second convoy of 22 vehicles carrying 442 pilgrims for the Pahalgam

base camp of the annual pilgrimage.

The number of pilgrims visiting the cave shrine has drastically fallen in the past three days mostly due to bad weather conditions, they said, adding Saturday's was the lowest batch of pilgrims in past one week.

While 3,862 pilgrims left for the cave shrine from Jammu on Monday, 2,189, 1,147, 1,602 and 835 devotees and left for the pilgrimage from here on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, respectively, the officials said. The annual 43-day Amarnath Yatra

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Speed up release of undertrials: Modi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday stressed that ease of justice was equally important as ease of doing business and ease of living, as he urged the judiciary to speed up release of undertrials awaiting legal aid and languishing in jails.

The urgent need to address the plight of the undertrial prisoners by providing legal aid was also underlined by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana and Law Minister Kiren Rijiju at the first All India District Legal Services Authorities Meet here.

According to the 'Prison Statistics India' report published by the National Crime Records Bureau in 2020, there were 4,88,511 prison inmates of whom 76 per cent or 3,71,848 were undertrials.

In his address at the meet, the prime minister also praised the use of technology in India's judicial system, adding citizens have immense faith in the judiciary and that access to the judicial system is equally important as the delivery of



justice for any society.

"This is the time of 'Azadi ke Amrit Kaal'. This is the time for the resolutions that will take the country to new heights in the next 25 years. Like Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Living, Ease of Justice is equally important in this Amrit Yatra of the country."

The Supreme Court has spoken on several occasions on the need to be sensitive towards the humanitarian issue of undertrial prisoners, he said and added that the District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs) can take up the responsibility of providing legal aid to

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Five-letter word 'shame' has lost meaning for so-called mainstream leaders in J&K



DOST KHAN

JAMMU: Kashmir's two middle-aged former Chief Ministers are too fond of twitter. They take to it quite often to corner the Centre, the forces, the BJP and all that concerns the Indian nation. Hardly there must be a day when they don't tweet.

However, browsing twitter of the past few days won't show a single post in appreciation of the army in saving the lives of the people, rescuing some from inundated or flashflood hit areas or helping many in seeking timely medical attention.

Two days back, the Army rescued 26 persons of several families trapped in flash floods in Chandak Bela area of the Poonch district while an ambulance carrying a 20-day-old baby with congenital heart disease got stuck at Ramban due to landslides, the alert jawans of the armed forces immediately rushed to

the stop and brought the child to the other side safely amid shooting stones. They also arranged oxygen for the ambulance that was running short of the life saving facility. Around this point of time Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah were discussing Har Ghar Tiranga issue and had no time to acknowledge the services of the Army personnel

Shame is a five-alphabet word which has lost its meaning for politicians in Kashmir. The public memory is still afresh how the politicians including minister and senior bureaucrats had vanished into oblivion during September-October 2014 floods in the Valley and surfaced only when situation showed semblance of normalcy due to heroic relief and rescue operations by the Army. Till then, when parts of the Valley were completely marooned these politicians owing allegiance to the Congress, National Conference, Peoples Democratic Party and even the most vocal secessionists had not shown up to help

their brethren, who faced the initial brunt of natural calamity.

The only visible Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had made a frank admission that the government was nowhere. He had become part of the army rescuers to run helter-skelter, as civil assistance was totally missing. Those who had dominated the scene were actually the valiant personnel of the Indian Air Force, Army and the National Disaster Management Response Force. The pampered politicians and bureaucrats had shown high degree of apathy towards the people. While many bureaucrats remained awfully busy in ensuring safety of their families, some were reportedly pushing for priority in getting their 'friends' evacuated from the marooned areas. When situation has returned back to normal, the PDP and the Congress leaders, who failed to rise the occasion, started crying hoarse over the central packages and fair distribution of relief material.

The then government had failed to such an

extent that there was no arrangement of langer for the uprooted families or visiting people from across the country. This should not have been difficult as the majority of Kashmir localities had not been affected by the floods. Had there been any administrative mechanism in place, the manpower and other logistics could have been mobilized from Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora and Budgam districts. But the administration had drowned before the flash floods submerged posh Srinagar localities.

The huge material brought by Indian Air Force in its transport carriers and stocked at the Srinagar Airport remained undistributed due to non-availability of volunteers for several days. The Army personnel, along with some local volunteers, worked round the clock to ease the life of sufferers.

With the situation stabilizing, the politicians and separatists appeared on the scene for photo ops. Eyewitnesses watched with disgust and disbelief Yasin

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