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13 killed in...

the loss of lives in the cloudburst.

"My condolences to the bereaved families. Relief and rescue measures are in full swing to provide succour to those stranded. I pray and hope that the yatra be soon resumed," Kovind tweeted.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish over the incident.

"Anguished by the cloud burst near Shree Amarnath cave. Condolences to the bereaved families. Spoke to @manojsinha_Ji and took stock of the situation. Rescue and relief operations are underway. All possible assistance is being provided to the affected," he said in a tweet.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah directed central forces and Jammu and Kashmir administration to ensure swift rescue operations.

Shah said in a Tweet in Hindi that he has spoken to J&K LG Manoj Sinha to take stock of the situation.

"NDRF, CRPF, BSF and local administration are engaged in the rescue work. Saving people's lives is our priority. I wish all the devotees well," the minister said.

Sinha said he is closely monitoring the situation and instructed all concerned to provide necessary assistance to the pilgrims.

"Deeply pained by unfortunate incident of cloudburst at Shri Amarnathji holy cave, in which precious lives have been lost. I send my heartfelt condolences to bereaved families. Rescue operation by NDRF, SDRF, BSF, Army, JKP & Shrine board admin is in progress," he tweeted.

Lieutenant Governor said that he has spoken to the Prime Minister and the Home Minister and briefed them about the incident and on-going rescue operation. The centre is extending all the assistance.

"Our priority is to save the lives of people. Instructions have been issued to provide all necessary assistance to pilgrims. I am closely monitoring the situation", the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor expressed grief over the loss of lives in the tragic incident.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has set up four helpline numbers where people can get information about the cloudburst.

The 43-day Amarnath yatra began after a gap of three years. In 2019, the yatra was cancelled midway ahead of the Centre abrogating Article 370 provisions of the Constitution. The pilgrimage did not take place in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid pandemic.

Two washed away...

and locals launched the operation to trace the two people who were washed away in the flash floods near Darhali Nallah, they said.

The body of Sajad was recovered and efforts are on to trace the other person, Ibrar, the officials added.

Meanwhile, a 60-year-old man was killed when a house collapsed after being hit by a landslide in Poonch, officials said.

The incident took place in the mountainous Mandi area of the district, they said.

The man was buried under the debris and his body was recovered by the locals, the officials said. Authorities announced an assistance of Rs 10,000 to the family of the deceased from the Red Cross fund, they said.

One-way traffic...

one way of the highway has been restored and Amarnath Yatra pilgrims taking the Baltal route, who were stranded at Chanderkoot in Ramban since morning, have been allowed to move," an official said.

The landslides and mudslides have been cleared, he said.

The 270-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with rest of the country, was blocked by shooting stones, landslides and mudslides at places in Ramban district, they said.

Earlier, Deputy Superintendent of police (headquarters) Ramban, Pardeep Sain, who is also the yatra officer at Chanderkoot, had said that heavy showers lashed the Ramban sector between 3 and 4 am.

He had said that the highway was closed at Mehaar, Cafeteria Mode, Chamba, Anokhifall, Kelamode, and Pantiyal.

AC approves renaming...

operations which will make their implementation and monitoring easier.

In yet another decision, the Administrative Council accorded administrative approval to the Jhelum flood protection works by Jal Shakti Department in Kashmir division.

The Administrative Council approved the Project-Comprehensive Plan for River Jhelum and its tributaries, Phase (II) Part (A), amounting to Rs 1623.43 crore under the PM's Development Package.

The proposed works are based on the existing site conditions and issues of the main Jhelum downstream of Sangam upto Wular Lake, flood spill channel and outfall channel including tributaries in order to safely mitigate a flood threat of 1700 Cumecs (60000 cusecs). Channel improvement and protection works at vulnerable spots in river Jhelum, flood spill channel and outfall channel have been proposed to tackle the drainage congestion issues for safe passage of flood waters and to minimize the loss to life and property.

The project comprises various components including improvement in discharge carrying capacity of river Jhelum to 1700 cumec, bank / toe protection works; raising of bunds/ embankments; re-sectioning/channel improvement of main Jhelum and flood spill channel; re-modeling / renovation of bridges at various RDs in the OFC; measures to check erosion at vulnerable reaches of main Jhelum, outfall channel and flood spill channel and its tributaries; and dredging/widening of outfall channel including navigation channel at Sopore.

Besides enhancing the carrying capacities of river Jhelum and outfall channels, the project will also regulate silt input from tributaries by anti-erosion works proposed at absolutely critical spots and rejuvenate/ increase the life of the water bodies like Hokarsar and Nowgham by re-sectioning of the cunettes / inside channels and construction of inlet/ exit regulating gates.

The project will protect the flood-prone areas along Jhelum in Srinagar, Budgam, Baramulla, Anantnag, Pulwama and Bandipora districts and will generate 119 Lac man-days employment for skilled and 381 Lac man-days employment for unskilled workers, respectively. It will be completed in three years.

J&K logs 101 new COVID cases; Ladakh 4

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir's COVID-19 tally increased to 4,55,807 on Friday as 101 more people tested positive for the viral disease, officials here said.

The death toll remained unchanged at 4,757, they said.

While 56 fresh cases were reported from the Jammu division of the union territory, 45 were reported from the Kashmir valley, the officials said.

There are 692 active COVID-19 cases in Jammu and Kashmir. The number of recoveries stands at 4,50,358, they said.

Meanwhile, four fresh Covid infections were reported in Ladakh in a day, taking the case tally in the Union territory to 28,543, officials said.

All the new cases were reported from Leh. Also, six people have recuperated from the disease and discharged from a hospital in Leh, taking the total number of recoveries to 28,190.

So far, 228 people have succumbed to COVID-19 in Ladakh, of which 168 deaths were reported in Leh and 60 in Kargil, they said.

The officials said there were 125 active cases in the Union Territory and all of them were

in Leh.

A total of 174 samples were tested for COVID-19 in Ladakh, of which 145 in Leh and 25 in Kargil were found to be negative, they said.

As many as 2,058 passengers were screened at the Leh airport while 770 people, including drivers and helpers of truck and light motor vehicles were screened in Leh's Khatlase, and 225 people were screened at the Upshi check-post on the Srinagar-Kargil-Leh highway, the officials said.

The officers who accompanied the DC during the visit included ADC, Sachin Dev Singh; ACR, Imran Rashid Kataria and AC Defence, Saleem Qureshi.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

THANNAMANDI: Dept of Botany and career counsellor cell of Govt. Degree College Thannamandi jointly organized one day awareness programme on theme "Biodiversity: Is the only hope for future survival on the eve of Van Mahotsav 2022. The programme was organized under the supervision of officiating Principal Dr. Nahim-Un-Nisa.

Dr. Khalid Rayaz, Head, Department of Geography, GDC Thannamandi was the invited speaker on the occa-

DC Rajouri tours district in view of excessive rains; supervises rescue mission

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: To take first hand assessment of the situation that arose due to incessant rainfall during the intervening night in the district, Deputy Commissioner, Vikas Kundal undertook a whirlwind tour of the district on Friday.

He was accompanied by senior officers who were directed to arrange all requisite men and machinery at vulnerable spots, besides taking measures to tackle challenges from the prevailing weather situation to prevent any loss of life and property.

The officers were instructed to take all possible measures to mitigate public suffering.

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sion who said that there was no life without biodiversity and there is no life without it and even it will be impossible to survive without biodiversity in future also. The other speaker of the event was Dr. Tahir Hussain Shah from Department of Zoology. Earlier the programme was started with the welcome address by Dr. Tajinder Singh Head, Department of Botany and organizer of the event. In his welcome address he focused on implication and conservation of biodiversity for

future generation and advised to students to plant at least one plant in their life. Dr. Nahim-Un-Nisa while interacting with students appreciated the efforts of organizers and enlightened them with her valuable thoughts. All the faculty members and a good number of students attended the programme. The proceeding of the programme was conducted by Ms. Neha and the programme was ended with the vote of thanks by Dr. Mudassir Qadir, Lecturer Department of Botany.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: District Development Commissioner, Inder Jeet on Friday chaired a brief meeting of the district/sectoral officers to review the implementation of Online Services and CAPEX Budget 2022-23 at the Conference Hall of DC Office today.

DC Inder Jeet briefed the DDC that roughly 229 online services are available to the public. The latter directed the concerned officers to provide the URL of all services for further integration with RAS. He also directed the officers to issue a reasonable rate list for uploading of these services to avoid overcharging by the cyber cafe owners/shops.

The DDC informed that all services must be transferred to online mode by 15 July as per the instructions of the Chief Secretary.

He later reviewed the status of ongoing works under CAPEX budget 2022-23 which includes DDC, BDC, PRI grants, and works of other allied sectors health and education. He also reviewed works of RDD, Jal Shakti, R&B, Health, School Education, Irrigation and Power Development in detail.

All executive agencies were directed by the DDC to complete all the tendering processes within the stipulated time frame. He directed the executing agencies/ departments to provide the list of defaulted contractors without further fail. He further issued strict instructions to utilise all the allotted funds without lapses. The DDC also sought progress reports twice a week of every scheme in the plan from the officers.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Contributing to the Green India Initiative, the Department of Floriculture Parks & Gardens Jammu, on Friday celebrated Vanmahotsav in various parks of Akhnoor. Speaking on the occasion, District Floriculture Officer, Vikrant Sharma laid emphasis on conducting more plantation drives as well as on taking care of the existing green cover. The plantation drive was conducted under the guidance of Director Floriculture Jammu, Jatinder Singh.

Shoukat Ali, Asstt. Floriculture Officer and other statutory officers and the departmental staff along with prominent citizens of the locality planted saplings of Silver Oak, Saraca Indica, Ficus, Hibiscus, Plumeria, Oleander, Bottlebrush and Jasminum on the occasion.

NC set to...

out to wider sections of society across Jammu and Kashmir.

He said that for the NC to deepen its roots ever more than before, "it is imperative for our functionaries to value the party workers".

"Strengthening of the bottom-up model holds the key towards making the party stronger to take on the challenges in the future", he added.

On Thursday, Union minister Jitendra Singh said it was for the Election Commission (EC) to decide when assembly polls would be held in Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is ever ready for elections.

The EC has set in motion the preparations for holding assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir, the first since the Centre revoked its special status and made it a Union territory in August 2019.

The Election Commission will publish the finalised electoral rolls of Jammu and Kashmir on October 31, the Union Territory's first voters' list after the boundaries of the assembly seats were redrawn.

Four JKAS officers...

As per another order, Rimpay Ohri, JKAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the GAD, has been posted as Joint Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation vice Pankaj Gupta, JKAS, who has been transferred and posted as Managing Director, Jammu and Kashmir Medical Supplies Corporation.

Court rejects bail...

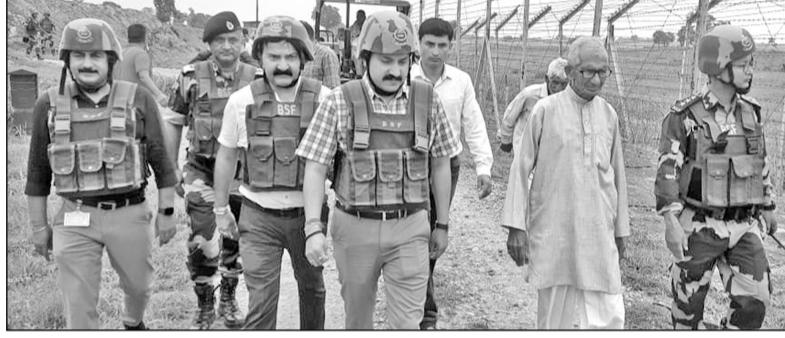
trap and caught Ashok Sharma Naib Tehsildar, red-handed, while accepting a bribe of Rs 1.5 lakh.

Special Judge Anti Corruption Jammu, Ritesh Dubey after listening to APP Irshad Ahmed for ACB, while rejecting bail applications, observed that in present case, the investigation is still incomplete, and accusations especially in view of alleged conduct of accused, whereby such a huge amount was demanded for issuance of a simple Fard, are quite serious. With these observations, the bail pleas were rejected.

After 22 years...

economy," Deputy Commissioner, Kathua, Rahul Pandey said.

"It will benefit farmers. It is a moment of happiness," he added.



DC Kathua Rahul Pandey along with Director Agriculture Jammu KK Sharma after inaugurating maiden sowing of Mash crop at Zero Line.

Japan's ex-PM...

investigators he had plotted to kill him because he believed rumours about the former leader's connection to a certain organisation that police did not identify.

Dramatic video from NHK showed Abe standing and giving a speech outside a train station in Nara ahead of Sunday's parliamentary election. As he raised his fist to make a point, two gunshots rang out, and he collapsed holding his chest, his shirt smeared with blood as security guards run toward him. Guards then leapt onto the gunman, who was face down on the pavement.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and his Cabinet ministers hastily returned to Tokyo from campaign events around the country after the shooting, which he called dastardly and barbaric." He pledged that the election, which chooses members for Japan's less-powerful upper house of parliament, would go on as planned.

I use the harshest words to condemn (the act), Kishida said, struggling to control his emotions. He said the government planned to review the security situation, but added that Abe had the highest protection.

Even though he was out of office, Abe was still highly influential in the governing Liberal Democratic Party and headed its largest faction, Seiwaikai.

Opposition leaders condemned the attack as a challenge to Japan's democracy. In Tokyo, people stopped on the street to grab extra editions of newspapers or watch TV coverage of the shooting. Bouquets to Abe were placed near the scene of the killing.

When he resigned as prime minister, Abe said he had a recurrence of the ulcerative colitis he'd had since he was a teenager.

He told reporters at the time it was difficult to leave many of his goals unfinished, especially his failure to resolve the issue of Japanese abducted years ago by North

DC Poonch reviews online services, CAPEX

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Korea, a territorial dispute with Russia, and a revision of Japan's war-renouncing constitution.