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LG calls for...

prove to be dividends for the higher education ecosystem of J&K UT. He further advised on strengthening the alumni network; facilitating student and faculty exchange programmes and improving rankings of the Universities and other Higher Educational Institutions. We should study successful models of other universities like Delhi University for reforms in examination, the Lt Governor said.

The meeting deliberated on a range of themes like multidisciplinary education, ecosystem for research and innovation, Indian philosophy and languages, and project based learning mode, combined with needs and challenges of society.

Prof. Dinesh Singh, Vice Chairman, J&K Higher Education Council; Prof. Umesh Rai, VC, University of Jammu; Prof. Nilofer Khan, VC Kashmir University; Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, VC, IUST; Prof. Beehan Lal, VC Cluster University Jammu; Sh Pragati Kumar, VC SMVDU; Prof. Akbar Masood, VC BGSBU; Prof. Qayyum Husain, VC Cluster University Srinagar and other members of the J&K Higher Education Council attended the meeting and also shared their valuable suggestions on 'Design Your Degree' an innovative program to be launched by the University of Jammu.

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu presented a detailed overview of the 'Design Your Degree' Undergraduate program.

Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, Higher Education highlighted the significant measures taken for reforms in education sector in the UT.

Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Prof Kavi Arya from IIT Bombay; Shobha Bagai, Director, Cluster Innovation Centre Delhi University; Dr Ravi Shankar, Special Secretary, Higher Education; Dr Yasmeen Ashai, Director Colleges J&K and Prof Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Principal Amar Singh College also attended the meeting.

Amid tight security...

Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda came to Amarnath and had a very important experience. He had a vision of Lord Shiva and for 40 years now, I have been thinking that I know this story.

"This is why we wanted to come here. It seemed like an impossible dream. Then, all of a sudden, by Bholenath's grace, everything came together and here we are after having his darshan," the other man said.

The duo said they cannot explain in words how they feel. "The emotion and feelings are too much," one of them said.

"We are seeped in gratitude and happiness to be able to have this darshan, to come for this pilgrimage," he added.

The two Americans were all praise for the arrangements made by the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board for the devotees visiting the holy cave, located at a height of 3,888 metres.

The pilgrims coming from different countries become ambassadors of hospitality, peace and spread message of spirituality in their nations.

Pertinently, a couple of days ago, 33 yatries from Nepal had also come to pay Darshan at Shri Amarnathiji Cave. On their way, they were warnly welcomed by administration.

The yatra resumed from the Jammu base camp on Tuesday afternoon after

remaining suspended for three days in view of the closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway for repairs in the Ramban section.

The 62-day annual pilgrimage to the 3,888-metre-high cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas commenced from the twin tracks of Pahalgam in Anantnag district and Baltal in Ganderbal district on July 1. The yatra is scheduled to conclude on August 31.

A total of 7,805 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp here for the Valley in a convoy of 339 vehicles around 3.15 am, the officials said.

They said 4,677 pilgrims are headed for Pahalgam in a convoy of 207 vehicles and 3,128 pilgrims left for the Baltal base camp in a convoy of 132 vehicles.

With this, 56,303 pilgrims have now departed the Jammu base camp for the Valley since June 30, when the first batch began the yatra.

"We are happy that our prayers were heard by Lord Shiva who facilitated our pilgrimage to his abode," Sunita Devi of Assam said. She was with a group of 23 people stranded in Jammu for the last seven days.

Expressing happiness and appreciation that the administration reconstructed within hours the road damaged due to floods triggered by heavy, she said "they have fulfilled my wish of visiting Barfani Baba".

The incessant rains on Saturday and Sunday caused unprecedented damage to the highway, especially a stretch in Ramban district, forcing its closure.

Congress holds 'silent...

protests, misused agencies to suppress his voice, but it is not Rahul Gandhi's voice only, it is the voice of 130 crore Indians," he said.

To a question about the Supreme Court hearing the pleas challenging the revocation of Article 370, the Congress leader said the party leaders have spoken over the issue and made their stand clear.

"It is a sub-judice matter. We are waiting for it (judgement) and we hope that, we have faith in the judiciary, that justice will be done with the people of Kashmir," he said.

J-K Congress president Vikar Rasool Wani and working president Raman Bhalla led the protest in Jammu in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue at Satwari Chowk in Jammu.

"We are here in full support of our leader Rahul Gandhi. We held a silent protest against BJP's vendetta politics against Gandhi. They have engineered conspiracy against him," party spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said.

Rahul Gandhi fearlessly raised the voice of the common man, poor, youths and women, and against those who have been looting the taxpayers' money, he said.

India's defence system...

hard to make India a stronger and better nation, the stronger (defence) forces are backed by a stronger government, and under the leadership of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is one of the most powerful countries in the world."

Praising the courage of security forces, the Union minister said because of their perseverance, the country's borders are secure. The government is working hard to strengthen all the three wings of the armed forces, he said.

He also said that it is the responsibility of every citizen to work for the betterment of the country.

Talking on defence equipment manufacturing, Thakur said earlier the country relied on imports, but under the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiative, more than 400 items in the defence sector are manufactured indigenously.

The previous year saw manufacturing of defence equipment worth Rs 1 lakh crore and export of Rs 16,000 crore which are great achievements, he said and added that the use of the latest technologies in defence equipment manufacturing has drawn the attention of foreign firms to join hands with Indian companies.

Addressing a public gathering at Karzok village, Thakur said the development of the Union Territory of Ladakh is a priority, and the government is working hard to usher in a new era of prosperity in the region.

He assured locals that their demands of digital connectivity, road connectivity, enhancing tourism infrastructure, improving the Jal Jeevan Mission and sports infrastructure will be addressed on a priority basis.

On the developmental initiatives undertaken by the government, the minister said it has implemented many programmes and schemes across the country to improve people's standard of living.

In Ladakh also, the scenario has changed with agriculture becoming more profitable, trade and industry increasing, employment opportunities increasing in various fields, and good education and health services being provided even in the remotest areas, he said.

Thakur thanked Prime Minister Modi for the successful implementation of various initiatives of the government in the borders area under the vibrant village programme.

The minister said the Modi government is keen for the faster development of Ladakh and ensures problems faced by locals are addressed in an efficient manner.

Chinar Corps commander...

ongoing security situation of hinterland and flood threat.

Parts of Akhnoor were inundated after the Chenab crossed the danger mark on Sunday, prompting the authorities to shift dozens of families to safer places as a precautionary measure.

However, the improvement in the weather over the past two days provided much needed relief to the people as the water level started receding. However, the weatherman has forecast another spell of rain on January 15 and 16.

Cybercrimes pose major...

in ensuring the security and integrity of critical information infrastructure and digital public platforms, the statement said.

The deliberations on cybersecurity and cybercrime prevention at the G20 forum will also help in the development of an information sharing framework.

The conference will provide a platform for cutting-edge ideas, knowledge exchange and networking with visionaries around the globe, it added.

Govt imposes import...

period. Overall merchandise imports during April-May this fiscal declined 10.24 per cent to USD 107 billion. The merchandise trade deficit for April-May 2023 stood at USD 37.26 billion against USD 40.48 billion during April-May 2022.

Import of certain gold jewelry stood at over USD 110 million in April-may this fiscal and it was mainly imported from countries like UAE, Indonesia and the US.

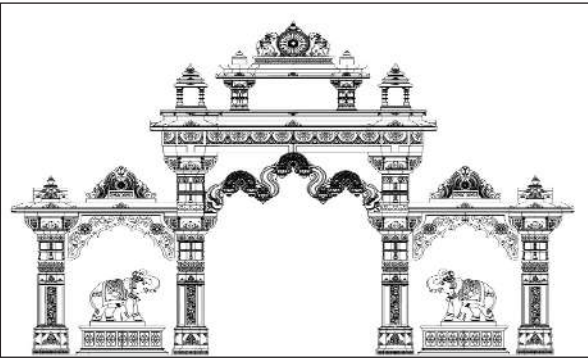
Colin Shah, MD, Kama Jewelry, and former chairman of gems and jewellery export promotion council, said, "Though the steps by the government is to balance the macroeconomics. Gold as a raw material should be available at reasonable prices for the Gems & Jewellery industry to maintain the competitive edge for exports.

Managing Committee lays foundation stone of entrance gate of Panch Mandir Channi Himmat Housing Colony

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Managing Committee of Panch Mandir Channi Himmat Housing Colony Jammu on Wednesday laid the foundation stone of Main Entrance Gate of Panch Mandir, Sector 2 Channi Himmat in the memories and to fulfill the dream of Late Parveen Kumar Gupta (Ex. Councillor Channi Himmat) founder of Panch Mandir.

On the occasion, all the prominent citizens and members of management committee including Jatinder Aul, K.P Raina, Inder Mohan Gupta, Ram Nath Sharma, Raj Kumar Gupta, Madan Mohan Gupta, Satish Gupta, Vinod Grover, Ashok Bhan



(IPS Retd), Anoop Singh Salathia (IPS Retd), Ashok Gupta ( IGP Retd), Guldev Raj Bhagat (IAS Retd), S.S Bijral (IPS Retd.), V.K Gupta, Darshan Gupta, B.B Sharma (Architect), V.K Sawhney, Omkar Nath Sharma, Bhoomi Chand,

Anil Gupta (Sr Vice President CCI Jammu), Vikram Randhawa (Ex. MLC), Ram Pal Sharma, Advocate Pardeep Gupta, Neena Gupta (Corporator), Neelam Gupta, Veena Grover and many more dignitaries were present.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a contempt petition filed by Bumesh Sharma JKAS who was prematurely retired seeking implementation of judgment whereby the petitioner premature retirement was quashed and directed to reinstate the petitioner. Against the said judgment SLP was filed that too was dismissed.

Justice Rahul Bharti of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court after hearing Sr. Adv Abhinav Sharma for the petitioner directed compliance be reported in the case by the Commissioner/Secretary to Govt., UT of Jammu and Kashmir, General

Administration Department on the next date of hearing, failing which rule of court would stand framed against the incumbent posted serving as Commissioner/Secretary to Govt., UT of Jammu and Kashmir, General Administration Department. When the matter was taken up, Sr. Adv Abhinav Sharma submitted that in terms of an order dated 05.06.2023, a reference to a Special Leave Petition (SLP) pending before the Supreme Court of India has been adverted to. Post said order dated 05.06.2023, the SLP so referred therein has come to be dismissed by

virtue of an order dated 03.07.2023 passed by the Supreme Court of India in the case titled "Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir v/s Bhumesh Sharma" thereby dismissing the Special Leave Petition (Civil) no. 13665/2023 and, as such, this is now an end of road of excuses for the respondent to defer the compliance of the court judgment and as such, the respondent - Commissioner/Secretary to Govt., UT of Jammu and Kashmir, General Administration Department is left with no other excursion option except to come reporting letter and spirit compliance

of the judgment passed by this Court in SWP no. 2140/2015.

It is worthwhile to mention here that Single Judge while quashing the premature retirement of Bumesh Sharma, observed that The formation of opinion in the instant case that petitioner is a deadwood, leading to passing of impugned order is not only arbitrary but suffers from the vice of non application of mind and is based on no material. In case the respondents were of the opinion that the petitioner has done the act of misconduct, they ought to have held a departmental inquiry against the petitioner. In the instant case,

in the considered opinion of this Court, the order of compulsory retirement is punitive in nature as while passing the order of compulsory retirement, the respondents have taken into account the alleged misconduct on behalf of the petitioner. At the cost of repetition, it may be mentioned that the order of compulsory retirement cannot be passed as a shortcut to avoid the departmental inquiry, when such a course is more desirable.

In the instant case, it appears that the order of compulsory retirement has been passed as a shortcut to avoid departmental inquiry.

NHAI's Project Udhampur unit organizes plantation drive



NHAI officials during the drive at Udhampur.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: To mark the 75th Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav NHAI's Project Implementation Unit Udhampur organized Plantation Drive under the guidance of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways which is celebrated on Pan India basis by different units of NHAI in order to spread the message of Environment sustainability.

During the plantation

drive, ADC Udhampur Joginder Singh Jasrotia, Project Director, PIU-Udhampur NHAI Anuj Kumar Singh, Chairperson of NGO Parmarth Dr. Richa Sharma and team members of NHAI and NGO were present.

While addressing the media, Project Director told that they have planted 500 plants on Jammu-Udhampur Highway Section of NH-44 on Wednesday.

RLJP will contest elections on all seats in J&K: Saraf

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP) on Wednesday said it would field candidates on all seats whenever the assembly or local bodies' elections are held in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference here, RLJP national general secretary Sanjay Saraf said he has instructed the district presidents to present their list of potential candidates, which will be finalised by the party's parliamentary board for the elections.

"Whether it is assembly elections or local bodies' elections, the party will field its candidates everywhere," he said.

Saraf demanded concession in electricity supply charges for the people in the old city here, saying after the installation of the smart metres, most of the consumers will not be able to pay the bills.

Asked about the Supreme Court hearing the Article 370 petitions, he said, "Let us see the mindset of the honourable court and wait for the outcome of the hearings," said.



Sex racket case: Police pastes seizure notice at hotel

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A team of Police Station Bage Bahu has put a seizure notice on Hotel located in Gujjar Nagar in the presence of Magistrate on Wednesday late evening. This action has been taken in connection with the sex racket case registered in Bage Bahu.

According to the information, a case has been registered in the Bage Bahu police station in which the sex racket business was busted and a minor was rescued. A female pimp was also arrested. During investigation the name of the hotel located in Gujjar Nagar came out after which action was taken by the police and a notice was issued by the ADC earlier. Later, matter went to the court. Now another notice has been issued by DC in which the hotel has been ordered to be sealed. After that, on Wednesday evening, the team and Magistrate of Bage Bahu police station reached the spot and the notice was pasted.

Minor molested; accused absconding, wife & daughter arrested

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Domana police have registered a POCSO Act case in which the accused is absconding, but his wife and daughter have been arrested as minor was molested in front of them.

According to the information, a complaint was given to the police by family in which it was told that he lives in a rented house in Domana area and another family which lives with them on rent at the same place. It was told that his minor daughter used to go to the house of another tenant where she was molested. He told that the person used to molest her daughter in front of his daughter and wife.

Acting on the complaint, the police registered a case and arrested wife and daughter of the accused. Raids are on to nab the accused.

Equipments stolen from house

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Thieves have targeted a house in Bhawani Nagar area on Tuesday in which thieves have stolen goods from the house.

According to the information, a complaint was given to police by the owner of the house that he had gone out of the house and when he came back, he found that thieves have stolen household appliances. Police has registered a case and started investigation.

Suspicious light seen along IB, security forces alerted

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

R S PURA: Security forces were alerted after suspicious lights were seen near the international border in RS Pura sector. In the investigation, it turned out to be a Pakistani helicopter which had come for the purpose of Reiki in village Abdal of Gharana Panchayat. The jawans conducted a search operation on IB even in the morning but nothing has been found. According to sources, the lights kept flashing in the Pakistani side of the international border for about an hour during the night.

On this, BSF launched a search operation on the border but nothing was found. On Wednesday morning also the areas along with IB were searched with the police.

Two found hanging

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Two people were found hanging in different areas on Wednesday.

According to information, Danish Singh, son of Sooram Singh resident Saror Adda was found hanging in his house.

Bari Brahmana police reached the spot and took the body into custody. Apart from this, a person was found hanging in his own house in Canal Road area.

Man dies in accident

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A man died in an accident in Bari Brahmana area on Wednesday.

According to information, Tarsem Lal, son Baba Ditta, resident of Arnia who was on his bike was hit by a truck in which he was injured. He was taken to the hospital but doctors declared him as brought dead.

Two notorious narco-suppliers arrested; heroin, opium straw & cash recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: Police on Wednesday arrested two notorious narco-suppliers and recovered heroin worth rupees 50,000.00 approximately, opium straw weighing 1.450 Kg & cash to the tune of rupees 12,460.00.

The arrested narco-suppliers have been identified as Govind Sharma, son of Kuldeep Kumar, resident of Samba and Sham Sunder, son of Tillo Ram, resident of Chak Salarian Ramgarh district Samba.

Govind Sharma has been arrested red-handed in the jurisdiction of Police Station Vijaypur from his possession Heroin "Chitta" worth rupees 50,000.00 approx. & cash worth rupees 12,460.00 has been recovered, and case FIR No.84/2023 under section 8/21/22/27-A/29 NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Vijaypur, whereas Sham Sunder has been arrested red-handed in the jurisdiction of Police Station Ramgarh, from his possession 1.450 Kg opium straw has been recovered, and case FIR No. 38/2023 u/s 8/15 NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Ramgarh.

The narco-suppliers were arrested by the police parties of Police Station Vijaypur and Police Station Ramgarh.

Panic grips at village Sumb after sighting unknown object

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: An unknown object was found in the fields at village Patyari area of block Sumb of District Samba due to which panic gripped in the village.

According to the sources, on Wednesday at around 5pm, one farmer namely Sansar Singh, son of Kaaki Singh, resident of Patyari Sumb Samba was working in his field and suddenly he found an unknown object blinking with red light. He immediately informed to the Sarpanch which reached the spot along with police and Bomb Disposal squad team. The BDS team and Police team inspected the area and found the object is as an ozone detector. Later the Police team took the object into their custody and started further investigations.

Police reunites 8 years boy with family

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Police on Wednesday reunited 8 years old lost boy with his family.

As per details, a party of Police Station Poonch found a minor boy having age about 08 years wandering in Dalara Poonch. The said boy immediately brought to Police Station Poonch. The Child Welfare Committee was informed accordingly. Soon after his photograph widely circulated on various social media platforms and on PCR. After an hour, the missing boy reunited with his mother. The family members paid gratitude to the efforts of Police and hailed the quick efforts of Police.

