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LG pledges to...

J&K towards an era of peace and prosperity," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also commended the innovative initiative of Jammu Kashmir Police under its Civic Action program which aims to nurture new dreams, instill new strength and create new aspirations in the lives of our youth.

"Pedal Through Paradise is not just a sporting event but a symbol of new Jammu Kashmir. It sends a powerful message to youth to choose the path of progress over violence and drug addiction," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor urged the youth to contribute towards building a terrorism-free, drug-free and Fit Jammu Kashmir.

"We must unite and wage a war against terrorism, its eco-system and drug addiction. It is my firm resolve to eliminate the ecosystem fueling terrorism and destroy the entire network responsible for radicalizing youth, supplying weapons, funding, targeting, and assisting terrorists.

Don't touch the innocent and do not spare the guilty in our policy. We believe in establishing Peace and not buying Peace. Civil and Police administration is committed to delivering justice to the families of victims of Pakistan sponsored terrorism. We are determined to eliminate every terrorist along with its entire support system," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Nalin Prabhat, DGP; Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home Department; S.J.M Gillani, Special Director General (Coordination); Anand Jain, ADGP Armed Police; M.K Sinha, ADGP Headquarters; VK Birdi, IGP Kashmir; senior officers of Police and Civil Administration; members of J&K Cycling Association, prominent sports personalities and youth in large number were present at the felicitation ceremony.

Terrorists exchange fire...

but there have been no reports of any casualties, the officials said, adding that reinforcements have been rushed to the area.

Search operations are underway to track down and neutralise the terrorists.

STATE TIMES correspondent reported that security forces have cordoned off the area and reinforcements have been rushed.

While confirming, Army's White Knight Corps wrote on X, "Based on specific inputs an operation was launched by IndianArmy in the Hadal Gal area of Kishtwar Sector."

Contact has been established with terrorists. The operation CHIRJI is currently in progress, they added.

During the searches in Hadal Gal-Kunkhu Dhar area in ridges between Dachan and Chirji, security forces came under intense fire, triggering a gunfight, and heavy exchange of fire is ongoing, the officer said.

Omar blames Pak...

mainly tourists, Abdullah acknowledged Lt Governor Manoj Sinha's admission of a "security and intelligence failure" and termed it as a positive first step.

However, he asserted that it was "not good enough."

He said, "26 people died. 26 innocent people were brutally murdered. Where were the lapses? This Pahalgam incident brought two nations, two nuclear powers to war."

"As a first step, it is appreciable that the Lt Governor (Manoj Sinha) has said that he is responsible. But down the chain of command, accountability has to be fixed, since we know now that it was a security and intelligence lapse. The next step would be to fix responsibility. And then heads must roll," he said.

Post Pahalgam, the chief minister expressed optimism to a question whether his government could balance the fragile peace with the vital need to revive tourism saying, "We have to trust our forces to do what is right and to ensure that any gaps that have been identified as a result of Pahalgam are plugged."

He stressed about his government's push to restart tourism, saying "tourism is an important part of JK's economy" and said a vast number of jobs and its appeal as a destination people genuinely want to visit.

The recent, gradual return of tourists was a heartening sign, a testament to the active efforts of his government to participate in events across the country to bring them back.

About the security audit of tourist spots, he said, "Not that it should be done, it was being done... and those have gradually started to be reopened, and I am hopeful that after Amarnath Yatra, most of the other ones that are closed will also be reopened."

The closures, he noted, were an anomaly. "We have never had tourist destinations closed," he said, a hint of disbelief in his voice. "Even in the worst of days, tourist destinations were not closed."

He presented a stark choice. Either the situation was now far worse than it had been 10 or 15 years ago, which he believed was not the case, or a considered decision needed to be made.

"If that's not the case, then we need to sort of take a considered decision, and post-Amarnath Yatra, start reopening all the closed areas," he concluded, making it clear that a return to a full sense of normalcy was both necessary and long overdue.

Parliament's Monsoon Session...

under constitutional norms.

Aiming at regulatory reform, the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025, will also be presented. This legislation seeks to enhance ease of doing business and streamline compliance procedures for businesses.

In total, eight new bills are scheduled for introduction, while seven pending bills from earlier sessions will also be revisited.

Peace in J&K...

Modi has already assured, more than once, that Statehood will be restored "at the appropriate time". He said, "there is every reason to trust what the Prime Minister says".

Talking about the recent Pahalgam attack and broader concerns over security, Dr. Jitendra Singh referred to Pakistan's longstanding hostility towards India's sovereignty over J&K. "Pakistan had never reconciled to J&K being a part of India. From wars to infiltration to sponsoring terrorism, it's been a protracted design," he remarked. But he added that the current government's approach-marked by firmness rather than appeasement-has been a decisive factor in stabilising the region.

"Even erstwhile separatists have fallen in line," he observed.

The Minister cited the return of tourism, completion of long-pending infrastructure projects, and greater youth participation across sectors as visible markers of normalcy. "Terrorism and development share a reciprocal relationship," he said, pointing out that projects such as the Ring Road and the Udhampur-Srinagar rail link, once stalled, have now resumed.

Referring to the recently flagged-off Vande Bharat train from Katra to Srinagar, he noted the surge in demand to travel by this train and described it as "a reflection of the people's enthusiasm and optimism."

The Minister's remarks come ahead of the fifth anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5 and signal the government's continued emphasis on development, integration, and a firm stance on national security in Jammu and Kashmir.

The media observation is that while calls for Statehood persist in political quarters, the Centre appears to be maintaining its calibrated approach-linking timing with ground realities and broader strategic considerations.

CB books 3...

two accused -- Iftikhar Ali and Nazir Ali of Chanderkote Ramban -- following a written complaint by a person from their neighbouring village, Mohd Taki, alleging that they have duped him after promising a government job.

PM Modi's leadership...

have been constructed in the Kashmir Valley," Sinha said

Agriculture, which supports nearly 70% of the population, has also seen a transformative push under a Holistic Agriculture Development Plan launched in 2022, he said, adding that developed in consultation with agricultural experts and universities, the plan focuses on 29 projects aimed at doubling the sector's economic contribution.

The results are promising-local fodder production has doubled from 40% to 80%, and the region has moved from a milk deficit to surplus. The rise of agri-entrepreneurs, including graduates from engineering and management backgrounds, indicates a diversification of rural employment and income sources, Sinha said.

Infrastructure development has been another cornerstone of the LG's administration. Travel time between Jammu and Srinagar has been halved from 8-9 hours to just 4 hours, thanks to extensive highway and tunnel projects worth over Rs 1.5 lakh crore currently underway. Nearly 99% of villages with populations over 250 are now connected by road, bolstered by a Rs 4000 crore Government of India initiative under PMGSY-IV aimed at linking smaller villages.

Perhaps the most symbolic project was the inauguration of the Chenab Bridge, which has for the first time connected Kashmir to Kanyakumari by rail, underscoring Jammu and Kashmir's integration into India's broader transportation network.

In the field of education, the LG highlighted the establishment of premier institu-

tions such as IIT, IIM, AIIMS, and NIFT, alongside nine new medical colleges and two AIIMS, adding 500 MBBS seats. These developments promise to raise the region's profile as a center for academic excellence and healthcare.

Energy infrastructure too witnessed unprecedented growth. While the region had historically added 3400 MW of power capacity in 47 years, over 3100 MW was added in just five years, improving electricity availability and reliability. On top of this, Jammu and Kashmir now leads the nation in digital governance, with 1,140 government services offered online, a first in India.

The LG's administration has aggressively pursued industrial development to create jobs and diversify the economy. Since 2020, private investment has totaled around Rs 14,000 crore, aided by a New Industrial Scheme offering incentives unmatched by any other state.

"Currently, projects worth Rs 300 crore are operational, over 10,000 proposals have been completed and entered production, and projects worth Rs 20,000 crore are at various stages of progress," Sinha explained. These projects span multiple sectors, and many are expected to become operational within the next year.

The LG pointed to reforms and actions taken in multiple cases, including those related to J&K Bank, ensuring transparency and fairness in governance.

"The people here will assess and evaluate this period, and history will judge. People will compare what happened in these five years versus what happened before," he said.

Highlighting the socio-political impact, he emphasized that concepts like "Kashmiriyat" (the cultural ethos of Kashmir) and "Jamhooriyat" (democracy), once often discussed in theory or the media, have now become a living reality.

The vibrant displays of the Indian Tricolor in Lal Chowk and other areas symbolize a new era of belonging and integration, he said.

The recent terrorist attacks, including the Pahalgam incident, served as stark reminders of ongoing threats.

The LG stressed that lessons were drawn to strengthen security apparatus and intelligence.

Jammu and Kashmir emerges on a markedly different trajectory. From the restoration of peace and communal harmony to rapid economic development, infrastructural breakthroughs, and digital governance, the region is witnessing a renaissance.

The LG's "People First" philosophy has anchored his efforts to ensure that the benefits of development reach the common citizen, uplifting lives and inspiring confidence. Whether it is doubling the economy, connecting remote villages, transforming agriculture, or revitalizing tourism, the comprehensive approach appears to have set Jammu and Kashmir on a path toward sustainable growth and stability.

While challenges remain, the groundwork laid during these five years provides a robust foundation for the future.

The Lieutenant Governor's administration has taken significant steps not only in development but also in addressing the long-overlooked needs of families affected by terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sinha acknowledged that families who suffered due to terrorism for over two decades had little support until recently. "Families affected by terrorism, who had no support for 20-25 years, were finally given jobs by our administration," he said, recalling the distribution of appointment letters in Baramulla.

Addressing why the move came late in his tenure, the LG candidly admitted: "According to government rules, families of those who died due to terrorist violence are eligible for jobs and financial assistance from the Ministry of Home Affairs. But this had never been fully implemented here. I accept that this was a shortcoming on my part - no one had brought this to my attention earlier."

A turning point came during a visit to Anantnag in June 2025, where he met with terror victim families and heard firsthand the stories of hardship-like that of a young girl whose SPO father was killed and whose family was abandoned by relatives and community.

Following these encounters, five key decisions were made to support these families, which include eligible family members to receive government jobs, disbursement of pending financial aid to those entitled, support for family members through self-employment schemes like PM Mudra Yojana, offering up to Rs 20 lakh collateral-free loans, filing FIRs in cases where complaints had been ignored, recovery of land or property illegally occupied by terrorists.

Sinha emphasized the dismantling of a "shadow ecosystem" that once prioritized terrorist sympathizers over the welfare of local people, calling recent appointments a "powerful blow" to such networks. "Today, 40 appointment letters were given, and this will continue."

Reflecting on his five years in Jammu and Kashmir, Sinha highlighted two major achievements: establishing the full authority of the Indian State in the region and ensuring J&K's full integration with India.

He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for reducing the emotional and geographical distance between Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi, fostering a stronger sense of unity.

Sinha noted a significant transformation among the youth, shifting from pro-Pakistan slogans to a focus on employment and development. Over 42,000 government jobs have been filled purely on merit during his tenure. He pointed out that employment opportunities have expanded beyond government roles, including industry, agriculture, tourism, and self-employment schemes such as the Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP). Remarkably, Jammu and Kashmir, with only 1% of India's population, ranked No. 1 in self-employment generation for three consecutive years. The "Back to Village" programs have helped many youth become entrepreneurs, and women's self-help groups now number around 8-9 lakh, thriving in business. Exports of handicrafts, carpets, pashmina, and handlooms have also seen significant growth, aided by GI tagging and QR codes.

Tourism experienced a complete halt following the Pahalgam attack but is now showing signs of recovery. With the ongoing Amarnath Yatra, pilgrimage numbers have reached nearly 200,000 and are expected to surpass 200,000 soon. Hotels in Pahalgam and Sonamarg are fully booked, and Srinagar's hotel occupancy is at 30-40%. The government has worked hard to restore confidence, with high-profile visits and active promotion. Sinha expressed optimism that pilgrims returning from the Yatra will become ambassadors, encouraging others to visit Jammu and Kashmir.

Significant infrastructure improvements have been made, including widening roads leading to Baltal and Chandanwari, and extending electricity to the Holy Cave area. New pilgrim shelters (Yatri Niwas) have been constructed. Security measures have been strengthened, particularly in light of Operation Sindoor and threats like drone attacks. Local communities have shown strong support for pilgrims, with large crowds protesting against Pakistan and terrorism following the Pahalgam incident.

Regarding the challenges posed by drones and social media misinformation, Sinha stated that India has effectively mastered technology, as demonstrated by the success of Operation Sindoor. Indigenous defense equipment development is progressing rapidly, signaling a positive future for national security.

Film shootings, which had slowed down, have resumed recently with major productions scheduled in the region. The successful hosting of the G20 summit in Jammu and Kashmir has further boosted the area's visibility at national and international levels.

Sinha emphasized that his current priority is to fulfill his responsibilities with dedication and honesty, rather than personal achievements. Regarding speculation about his political future or possible BJP presidency, he declined to comment, calling such reports media speculation. He reaffirmed his commitment to his role as Lieutenant Governor and left his future plans to divine will.

The Lieutenant Governor identified stopping infiltration and tackling remaining terrorists as the key challenges ahead. He highlighted a significant change in public mindset, with more people in Kashmir recognizing that their future lies with India and rejecting Pakistan's influence. On the sensitive issue of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), Sinha deferred comments to the Ministry of External Affairs but reaffirmed India's official stance that PoK is an integral part of India.

On the controversy surrounding the reinstatement of Article 370, Sinha maintained that it was legally abrogated by Parliament and upheld by the Supreme Court, making its return impossible. He avoided direct comment on former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's remarks comparing their political trajectories post-reorganization, noting it was Abdullah's matter to address.

Sinha fondly spoke of Ghazipur, his birthplace and former constituency, acknowledging the deep personal ties he maintains there. However, his current focus remains on the peaceful and successful conduct of the Amarnath Yatra. His daily schedule is packed with meetings and direct engagement with people to gain real-time feedback on ground realities.

The government is supporting the empowerment of Kashmiri women, who are excelling in handicrafts, education, sports, and entrepreneurship. Sinha praised the visible impact of the Women-Led Development model promoted by Prime Minister Modi in Jammu and Kashmir.

Precautionary restrictions imposed...

aims to ensure that the atmosphere remains calm and conducive to communal harmony. Meanwhile, General public has been appealed to extend full cooperation and strictly abide by the restrictions. These measures have been enforced purely in the interest of public safety and overall well-being.

UAPA accused arrested via facial recognition system

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

ANANTNAG: In a significant breakthrough, Police in Anantnag successfully apprehended a suspicious individual identified as Muneeb Mushtaq Sheikh son of Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh resident of Malik Mohalla Drangbal Pampore. The arrest was made after the suspect was detected at the X-Ray Point, Ganishbal, through the Facial Recognition System (FRS) installed by J&K Police.

Upon detection, the individual was immediately taken into custody and shifted to Police Station Pahalgam for further verification. Subsequent inquiries revealed that Muneeb Mushtaq Sheikh is involved in Case FIR No. 28/2021 registered under Sections 16, 18, 20 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act [UA(PA)] and Sections 4/5 of the Explosive Substances Act of Police Station Pampore.

The swift identification and apprehension of the suspect highlight the effectiveness of advanced surveillance technologies including the Facial Recognition System, in enhancing security and maintaining law and order. J&K Police remains committed to leveraging modern tools to combat terrorism and ensure public safety.

Thief nabbed red handed while cutting BSNL's copper wire

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Locals of Mohalla Kamakhan near Zanana Park caught a thief cutting copper wires belonging to BSNL and handed him over to the police.

Vicky Sharma and employee of BSNL said similar incidents have been reported in entire Poonch from long time and have informed police and locals about these types of theft he said Copper wire theft causes significant disruptions to communication and electricity services, resulting in substantial financial losses to the company he said now we were hopeful that no such incident will come in Poonch.



Young boy drowns to death

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: A young boy was drowned to death in a river at Chella Satarban area of Sawjian in Poonch district

Police said that a youth accidentally slipped into river and subsequently died after he had gone for an excursion.

Police identified the deceased as Akash Deep Singh(21) son of Gurdeep Singh. As per family he along with his friends were gone to sawjian for excursion and their the mishap happens Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident.

Janipur Police nabs drug peddler with 2.3 kg Ganja

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a breakthrough, the Janipur Police has apprehended a 23-year-old individual, Aakash S/O Kavi Raj, resident of Orissa, Nayagarh Police Station, Nayagarh District, Khandapara ,currently residing at H No. 156, Upper Roop Nagar, Sector 4, Janipur, Jammu.

The accused was caught red-handed by a patrolling party led by PSI Sheetal Rajput, comprising Sget Zameer Singh, Sget Lokesh, and Spo Rahul Sharma, near Lakkar Mandi Depot. The operation resulted in the seizure of 2 kg 316 gms of Ganja-like substance from the accused's possession. The successful operation was conducted under the supervision of SDPO City West, demonstrating the Janipur Police's commitment to tackling drug trafficking and ensuring public safety.

The Janipur Police under the leadership of SHO Insp Vikram Sharma registered an FIR and initiated a thorough investigation to uncover the accused's network and connections. The police department remains dedicated to maintaining law and order in the region and urges citizens to report any suspicious activities.

Jammu South Police continues anti-mining drive; seizes 4 vehicles

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: As part of its ongoing crackdown on illegal mining activities under Operation Ploughing, Jammu Police, South Zone has intensified its enforcement measures and seized multiple vehicles involved in unauthorized sand transportation.

During routine checking, the following vehicles were found transporting sand in violation of mining regulations and without valid documentation:

A tipper bearing registration number JK02CX/6779 was intercepted at Police Post Nehru Market.

A tractor-trolley (Chassis No. MBN-GAALFZRRC05424, Engine No. RRC2GDA2102) was seized by Police Post Chatha for illegal mining.

Another tractor-trolley (Reg. No. JK02CV-1810, Chassis No. MBN-GANUUMJD03078, Engine No. MMC2MRJ0169) was seized by Police Post Gadigarh while transporting illegally mined sand. One tractor-trolley involved in illegal sand transportation was also seized at Police Post Phallian Mandal.

In all cases, the DMO Jammu has been duly informed for further legal action as per the law. These operations were carried out under the close supervision of SP City South, SDPO South, and overall supervision of SSP Jammu.

Bovine smuggling attempts foiled; 4 arrested; 39 bovines rescued

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: In Strong action against bovine smuggling Rajouri Police has successfully rescued 39 bovine animals in separate incidents under the jurisdiction of Police Station Kandi.

Acting on specific inputs and routine patrolling police teams intercepted smugglers at multiple locations and registered the cases vide FIR No. 83/2025 in which 10 bovine animals were rescued at Badhal Naka; FIR No. 84/2025 in which 10 bovine animals were rescued at Krag Road Badhal; FIR No. 85/2025 in which 10 more bovine animals were rescued from the Badhal area and FIR No. 86/2025 in which 09 bovine animals were rescued from Badhal Pulli.

The arrested accused were Shah Mohd S/O Ahmed Din R/O Keri Khawas; Mushtaq Ahmed S/O Abdul Aziz R/O Keri Khawas; Mohd Hussain S/O Bajir Mohd R/O Keri Khawas and Manzoor Hussain S/O Mohd Shafi R/O Keri Khawas.

All bovine animals were rescued safely and further investigation is underway.

Crackdown on illegal mining, 5 vehicles seized

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a drive against illegal mining and to tighten noose against the violators, Jammu Police has initiated strict action against the criminals involved in illegal mining & minting money out of the public resources.

In a surprise operation which was carried out in last few days at different locations in Rural zone of District Jammu. PP Sidhra seized 01 dumper and 2 JCBs which were involved in illegal mining without Form-A which include JCB bearing regd no JK19/8610 loaded with sand; JCB bearing regd no JK14C/3519; Dumper Bearing Regd. No. JK02BX/2766. PP Pounichak seized 1 tipper bearing registration number JK02CG/3401 found loaded with sand and without forms A.

PP Jourian seized 1 tipper bearing registration number JK02CS/2823 found loaded with Sand and without form A. After seizure of these vehicles District Mining Officer was informed for necessary legal actions.