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Parliament passes bill...

1947 or any other relevant Act for the time being in force, or by an order issued under any such Act, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems."

Satyendra Prakash assumes...

honoured by the Election Commission for his outreach campaigns to increase voters participation in elections after the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a career spanning over three decades, Prakash has served in various capacities in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, including as Additional Director General, News & Current Affairs in Doordarshan, and Director (Media), Ministry of Communications & IT and Ministry of Civil Aviation in the Press Information Bureau.

Bhatnagar, a 1986-batch IIS officer, earlier served in Doordarshan News as head of the Commercial, Sales and Marketing Division.

He has also served as Prasar Bharati Special Correspondent West Asia covering 20 countries and later went on to head the News Services Division of AIR.

Manish Desai, Director General of West zone of the PIB, will succeed Prakash in the Central Bureau of Communication.

Zero probability of...

in substantial risky position of getting into recession."

On the macroeconomic fundamentals of the country, the Finance Minister said that the country's debt-to-GDP ratio is better than many developed nations, including Japan, and the GST collection has touched the second-highest since its rollout in July.

The GST collection rose 28 per cent to touch the second-highest level of Rs 1.49 lakh crore in July. GST, introduced in July 2017, touched a record high of Rs 1.68 lakh crore in April 2022.

J&K reports 397 new COVID cases, Ladakh 15

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Monday reported 397 fresh cases of COVID-19 - 122 from the Jammu division and 275 from the Valley, thus taking the total number of positive cases to 465163.

Also, one COVID death has been reported from Jammu division.

According to the daily Media Bulletin, out of 465163 positive cases, 4551 are Active Positive (455840 have recovered and 4772 have died; 2343 in Jammu division and 2429 in Kashmir division.

Providing district-wise breakup for positive cases during the past 24 hours, the Bulletin informed that in Kashmir division, Srinagar reported 105 cases, Baramulla 88, Anantnag 21, Kupwara 18, Budgam 13, Pulwama, Kulgam and Bandipora districts reported 10 cases each while Ganderbal and Shopian reported no fresh case.

Similarly in Jammu division, Jammu reported 80 cases, Ramban 08, Rajouri and Samba districts 07 each, Udhampur and Kathua districts 06 cases each, Poonch and Doda districts 04 cases each while Reasi and Kishtwar districts reported no cases.

Meanwhile, Ladakh has recorded 15 fresh Covid cases that took the infection tally to 28,886, officials said.

All the new cases were recorded in Leh, they said.

So far, 228 people have succumbed to COVID-19 in Ladakh. Of these, 168 deaths were reported from Leh and 60 from Kargil, according to officials.

The number of active cases stands at 119 in Ladakh - 104 from Leh and 15 in Kargil.

Officials said 19 patients were discharged from hospitals in Leh after getting cured, taking the overall recoveries to 28,530, officials added.

450 pilgrims leave Jammu for Amarnath Yatra

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The 32nd batch of over 450 pilgrims left Jammu for the twin base camps of the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said on Monday.

A total of 458 pilgrims left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas here in a convoy of 21 vehicles amid heavy security this morning, they said.

They said 164 pilgrims heading for Batalal were the first to leave the camp in eight vehicles followed by the second convoy of 13 vehicles carrying 294 pilgrims for Pahalgam.

The number of pilgrims visiting the cave shrine is drastically falling as the yatra is inching towards its conclusion and also due to bad weather conditions, officials said.

The annual 43-day yatra commenced from the twin base camps - traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag and 14-km shorter Batalal in central Kashmir's Ganderbal - on June 30.

A total of 143,123 pilgrims have left from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp for the Valley since June 29, the day the first batch of pilgrims was flagged off by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha. The yatra is scheduled to end on August 11 on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

A total of 36 people, mostly pilgrims, have died during the on-going Amarnath yatra so far, excluding 15 people, who died in the flash floods at Amarnath cave shrine on July 1.

2 mines, mortar shell recovered; destroyed by Army in Poonch

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Army averted a tragedy on Monday as it detected two anti-personnel mines in Poonch district and safely destroyed them, officials said.

During a routine patrol, an Army team detected the mines in the forward area of Keri in Mendhar sector, they said.

Separately, troops recovered a 51-mm mortar shell in the Chandi area of Poonch district, they said.

The bomb disposal squad of the Army safely destroyed the mines and shell, thereby averting any tragedy, they said.

Flash-floods hit Surankote belt; Army rescues 56 people

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Flash floods triggered by cloudburst hit Surankote town of Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, prompting the army to launch an operation to rescue 56 people on Monday, officials said.

A man was washed away in the flash floods in river Suran and efforts to rescue him are on, they said.

Heavy overnight rains in the hilly areas triggered flash floods in drains in Potha area and the water gushed into low-lying Iqbal Nagar in the midnight, they said.

Flood water also entered houses and shops and washed away vehicles, they said. The authorities ordered the closure of educational institutions and sounded a flood alert, they added. Following distress calls from the Surankote-Potha region, a Quick Reaction Team of the army rushed to the area and rescued 56 people, including 11 women and seven children, he said, adding the team also saved about 42 vehicles from getting washed away. Road blocks were reported at Surankote Market, Hari Mohar and Surankote-Potha bypass road. Traffic jams were also reported from Kalai, Sanai, Madaba and Sindrah along the Line of Control.

This is the sixth time that the monthly GST collection crossed the Rs 1.40-lakh-crore mark since the inception of Goods and Services Tax and the fifth month at a stretch since March 2022, she said.

Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) touched eight months high is an indication that the Indian economy is getting more robust, she said.

Gross NPAs of scheduled commercial banks have reached a six-year low of 5.9 per cent, she said, adding that government debt to GDP ratio has come down to 56.29 per cent in FY22.

Acknowledging that the country faces inflationary pressure, the Finance Minister said that the government has been able to contain it below 7 per cent despite problems like COVID-19 and Omicron.

Efforts are being made to bring down retail inflation below 7 per cent, the minister said.

Prices of edible oils have corrected sharply following steps taken by the government, she added.

During the UPA government she said, "Retail inflation was more than 9 per cent in 22 months and inflation crossed double digit 9 times during UPA regime time... We will bring inflation below 7 per cent and inflation is coming down below inflation 7 per cent."

Sitharaman countered repeated opposition's criticism that Modi government has increased GST on essential items, saying it was an unanimous decision of GST Council comprising of State Finance Minister and Union Finance Minister.

A 5 per cent Goods and Services Tax (GST) was levied on essential food items including pre-packed curd, paneer, honey, wheat jaggery, puffed rice (muri), among others, effective July 18.

In addition, hotel rooms with tariff of up to Rs 1,000/day, maps and charts, including atlases, invited 12 per cent GST, while 18 per cent GST has been levied on tetra packs and fees charged by banks for the issue of cheques (loose or in book form).

The decision was unanimous and there was no difference of opinion on raising rate, she said, adding it was done to plug leakages.

Referring to a letter written by a six-year old girl on costlier pencil and Maggi, she said the girl has faith in the Prime Minister that is why she has written to him.

She has not written to anyone else as she believes that the Prime Minister can provide a solution, the finance minister said.

The finance minister said that the GST compensation to states till May 2022 has

been paid and only June month's dues are pending.

With regard to issuance of Rs 1.48 lakh crore oil bonds by the UPA regime, Sitharaman said, it was principally wrong and the burden of interest payment and principal repayment were transferred to the future generation.

"Taxpayers of today are paying for subsidy dished out to consumers more than a decade ago in the name of oil bonds. And they will continue to pay for the next five years as the redemption of bonds continues till 2026," she said.

On forex reserves, she said India has sufficient reserves and economic fundamentals are perfect.

ACB nabs AEE...

that since contents of complaint disclosed demand of bribe by alleged accused public servant, accordingly FIR No 23/2022 was registered at Police Station ACB Baramulla and investigations started. The official further said that during investigation a trap team constituted, which caught Assistant Executive Engineer (REW) Boniyar namely Ravinder Singh, red-handed while demanding & accepting bribe of Rs 4000 from the complainant in presence of independent witnesses. The bribe amount and documents of complainant were recovered from the possession of accused Assistant Executive Engineer (REW) Boniyar namely Ravinder Singh, son of Kirpal Singh, resident of Kanispura Baramulla, adding that further investigation is going on.

Nigerian man in...

Meanwhile, two suspected monkeypox patients, both Nigerian nationals, have been admitted to the Delhi government-run LNJP Hospital, the nodal hospital for treatment of the infection, since Sunday.

The 35-year-old man, with blisters and fever, were admitted to the LNJP Hospital two days ago. His samples were sent to the National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune. The report which arrived Monday evening showed he was positive, an official source said.

The two suspected patients of monkeypox also have fever and rashes. They too do not have any recent travel history. One of them was admitted to the hospital on Sunday and the second on Monday. Their samples have been sent for testing.

Sources said Delhi's first monkeypox patient is doing fine and is likely to be discharged from the hospital in a couple of days.

VC SKUAST-J starts Green Campus drive

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A Green Campus drive was organized at SKUAST-Jammu on Monday under the guidance of Vice Chancellor, Dr. J.P. Sharma by Environment and Social Safety Cell of the IDP SKUAST Jammu.

A tree plantation drive was carried out at Chatha Campus in which around 400 seedlings of Neem, Shisham, Drenk, Amaltas, SukhChain, Bottlebrush, Kaner, Kachnar were planted.

Prof. Sharma inaugurated the programme by planting a sapling of Gulmohar. Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized that trees are an important part of every community that create a peaceful and aesthetically pleasing environment.

The green campus drive was organized in collabora-



VC SKUAST-J Dr. J.P. Sharma planting a sapling.

tion with National Service Scheme (NSS) wing of SKUAST-J, Division of Agroforestry and Social Forestry Department of JKUT. Present on the occasion were Dr. Rakesh Nanda, Director Education; Dr. SK Gupta, Registrar; Dr. AK Mondal, Dean Faculty of

Agriculture; Dr. Vikas Sharma, Associate Coordinator NAHEP-IDP; Dr. LM Gupta, HOD Agroforestry; Dr. RP Punia and Dr. Arvinder Singh, NSS Instructors and Dr. Sandeep Sehgal, Nodal Officer, Environment and Social Safety Cell.

DIPR condoles with Gulzar Ahmad

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Department of Information and Public Relation, Srinagar (DIPR) has expressed grief and sorrow over the demise of mother of Gulzar Ahmad, an employee presently posted at District Information Centre Budgam. A condolence meeting of officers and officials of the Department was held today under the chairmanship of Joint Director Information Kashmir, Inam ul Haq Siddiqui in which the Joint director expressed sympathies with Gulzar Ahmad. Meanwhile, the Deputy Director (PR) Kashmir; Bilal Mukhtar; Assistant Director/FPO, M Aslam Khan; Cultural Officer, Burhan Hussain and other officers and officials of Information Department Kashmir have also extended sympathies to the bereaved family.

DPT decorates HC with ASI rank

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Director Police Telecommunication, Shridhar Patil, decorated the recently promoted Head Constable Devinder Sharma to the rank of Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) in a piping ceremony was held at Zonal Police Telecom HQs here recently.

During the ceremony, Rakesh Gupta, Incharge Supdt. of Police Telecom Jammu Zone Jammu and Madan Mohan Sharma DySP T/C Reasi along with other officers of Police Telecommunication were present on the occasion.

Shridhar Patil congratulated the officer and his family and expressed his hope that he will strive to work with more dedication in the department.

Modi Govt working hard to eliminate malnutrition at ground level: Baru

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Narendra Modi led Union Government is committed and working hard to eliminate malnutrition by implementing integrated child development schemes at grassroot level, stated by BJP senior leader and JMC Councillor ward 41, Sanjay Kumar Baru while addressing a community based camp organised by ICDS project Kot Balwal zone supervisor Kanta Sharma at Udhaywala Bohri.

For the better coordination and functioning Sanjay Baru on the occasion adopted the PattaChungi ICDS project centre.

Kanta Sharma in her well-



BJP leader Sanjay Baru distributing fruits among children.

come address said about the importance of healthy diet under nutrition and highlighted the under Poshan activities during CBE. Weight and height also done to deduce the CAM & MAM

children. Baby kits were also distributed among the healthy babies.

Health workers and helpers of nearest centres were also present in the camp.

ADGP Armed J&K decorates newly promoted officials with ranks

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Armed J&K, S.J.M. Gillani decorated Riyaz Ahmad and Khurshid Ahmad of Armed Police Headquarters with ranks on their promotion as HC in piping ceremony held at Armed Police Headquarters J&K, here on Monday.

The ADGP congratulated the newly promoted HCs and wished them successful professional career.

Syed Sajad Hussain-DySP (S) Pvt. Seey. to ADGP Armed J&K and Ab. Rashid PA to ADGP Armed J&K were also present on the occasion.

Delegation of All J&K Pasmanda Tabkajat Federation meets LG

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Delegations of All J&K Pasmanda Tabkajat Federation, Dalit Janjagrut Mission and Innovator from NIT Srinagar on Monday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here at Raj Bhavan.

The Delegation of All J&K Pasmanda Tabkajat Federation led by Mohammad Maqbool Sheikh submitted a memorandum of demands pertaining to the welfare of members of various communities coming under the umbrella of OBC. They raised the demand for a special employment drive for members of the OBC community with



similarly, a delegation of Dalit Janjagrut Mission led by Suhail Ahmad Mir met the Lt Governor and put forth the demand of inclusion of eligible people left out in the PMAY.

The Lt Governor while interacting with the members of the delegations assured them that their genuine issues and demands would be taken up with the concerned authorities for early redressal on merit.

Earlier, Sheikh Inayat Ullah, CEO Move Beyond and Career Innovator NIT Srinagar also met the Lt Governor. He apprised him of the developments vis-à-vis innovative

career guidance model designed by him. He informed that the model aims at reaching out to the youth and helping them in their employability.

Sheikh Inayat Ullah expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor for proactive support from the Government to the start-ups in J&K