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J&K moving ahead to become one of leading regions: LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is now moving ahead to become one of the leading regions in sectors like IT, industries, tourism, women entrepreneurship and youth empowerment, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said here on Sunday.

Addressing the 17th edition of the 'Awaam Ki Awaaz' programme, Sinha said 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' provides the perfect opportunity to make the union territory job-oriented and free from fear, corruption and drugs.

These four resolutions entail the participation of the people to fulfil our resolve and build upon the achievements of the last 75 years, he added.

"No strategy of rapid socio-economic transformation will work without active participation of people", the Lieutenant Governor said, adding that the Amrit Kaal Khand has infused a sense of self-confidence and we are determined to harness the tremendous capacities of human capital to build a strong and prosperous J&K.

Observing that janbhagidari is a strong foundation of effective and



efficient administration, the Lt Governor urged the people to become a partner in the developmental journey.

Sinha added that continuous efforts are being made to fulfill the aspirations of the people, particularly the youth, who are the lifeblood of society and guardians of economic development and social progress.

He also expressed gratitude to all the citizens for their immense contri-

bution and wholehearted participation in 'Har Ghar Tiranga Utsav'.

The Lt Governor also shared inspiring stories of citizens who are making a positive impact in the lives of others and playing the role of a change-maker for the society.

"The story of Haji Mohd Shafi Sheikh is truly inspiring. A pioneer in introducing horticulture in Baderwah, he encouraged other farmers to convert their land into

orchards, and now three villages have been transformed into exotic fruit hubs of the Jammu division", said the Lt Governor.

Appreciating Syed Jalees Qadri, a young entrepreneur from Srinagar for his endeavor of replacing the use of plastic cups with 'kulhad' (earthen cups), the Lt Governor said, Jalees is on a mission to promote environmental sustainability and reviving traditional crafts. For environmental protection, it is necessary to adopt a sustainable lifestyle and bring about a change in our behavior. Now, environment-friendly 'kulhad', which has been a part of our tradition since ages, is slowly and steadily replacing plastic cups,' added the Lt Governor.

Acknowledging the determined efforts of Srinagar's Abdul Rahim Bhat to plant a million trees till 2030 in the valley, the Lt Governor said that his story is an inspiring tale of common man's social responsibility. He has planted two lakh trees in the Kashmir Valley without the help of any organisation. His spirit to give back to society is commendable.

Our natural resources are limited, and their conservation & protection is essential for

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J&K parties to discuss issue of 'inclusion of non-local voters' today

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Dissatisfied with the clarification issued by the Jammu and Kashmir administration on issues related to revised electoral rolls, the National Conference said they will go ahead with their planned "all-party meeting" on Monday to discuss the matter.

Parties like the NC and PDP claimed the administration has not addressed their main concern on whether "outsiders" ordinarily residing in J-K will be allowed to enroll as voters.

So the meeting will discuss everything threadbare. Even the clarification will be discussed. It is an all-party meeting and every party will present their point of view, PDP chief spokesperson Suhail Bukhari said.

NC president Farooq Abdullah had called the meeting on Monday to discuss the issue of the "inclusion of non-local voters" in the electoral rolls in Jammu

and Kashmir after remarks related to the addition of voters in the revised rolls by the UT's Chief Electoral Officer Hirdesh Kumar raised hackles of the regional parties.

The government on Saturday issued a clarification, saying the reports of a likely addition of over 25 lakh voters after the summary revision of electoral rolls is a "misrepresentation of facts by vested interests".

"The Kashmiri migrants will continue to be given the option of voting at their place of enrolment or through postal ballot or through specially set up polling stations at Jammu, Udhampur, Delhi, etc," it said.

"This revision of electoral rolls will cover existing residents of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the increase in numbers will be of voters who have attained the age of 18 years as of October 1, 2022, or earlier," it said.

Mainstream political par-

ties have alleged that the "inclusion of non-locals was a clear-cut ploy to disenfranchise the people of Jammu and Kashmir".

However, even after the clarification, the political parties will go ahead with the all-party meeting convened by the NC president at his residence.

The all-party meeting will discuss everything threadbare, the NC state spokesperson said.

"The Clarification" issued by DIPR is a silent endorsement of the statement given by the Chief Election Officer. Doesn't address our apprehensions about non-locals en masse being given the power to vote. Yet another design to dispossess people of J&K, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti wrote on Twitter on Sunday.

The National Conference also said the clarification does not address whether "outsiders" residing on J-K can vote or not.

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J&K records 276 new COVID cases, Ladakh 9

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir registered 276 fresh coronavirus cases on Saturday, taking the infection tally to 4,76,044, officials said here.

While 41 cases were reported from Jammu division, 235 cases were from Kashmir valley, they said.

The death toll due to the virus remained unchanged at 4,779 as no new fatality linked to the pandemic was reported in the last 24 hours.

There are 2,597 active COVID-19 cases in the Union Territory, while the number of recoveries has reached 4,68,668, they

added. Meanwhile, Ladakh has recorded nine new Covid cases that pushed the infection tally to 29,143, officials said.

Of the new cases, seven were detected in Leh district and two in Kargil during screening of 2,865 people, including 1,892 air travellers, they said.

Eleven people were discharged from hospital in Leh, taking the overall recoveries to 28,845 in Ladakh, officials said.

The number of active cases stands at 69 61 in Leh and eight in Kargil, officials

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LeT guide trained by Pak Army arrested along LoC in Rajouri

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A highly trained Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) guide, who also worked for Pakistan Army's intelligence unit, was arrested after being shot at by the Indian Army near the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district on Sunday, officials said.

Tabarak Hussain (32), a resident of Sabzkot village of Kotli in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), was arrested for the second time in six years while trying to infiltrate into the Indian side of the border, they said.

Previously, he and his younger brother Haron Ali

had undergone 26 months of imprisonment before being repatriated via the Attari-Wagah border in Amritsar.

This time, he was apparently planning a 'fidayeen' (suicide) attack, the officials said.

"Mai marne ke liye aaya tha, mujhe dhoka de diya. Bhaijaan mujhe yahan se nikalo," (I came to die but was betrayed. Brothers, pull me out from here), a wounded Hussain cried when the army arrested him.

The officials said hairs on his private part and armpits were found to be shaved, which terrorists do while on a

suicide mission, as seen in the past.

Earlier, Rajouri Senior Superintendent of Police Mohammad Aslam said army troops guarding the LoC in Sehar Makri area of Nowshera sector noticed suspicious movement of an infiltrator, who was challenged but he started to run.

"On this, the intruder was fired upon and was then intercepted in an injured condition. He was provided medical facilities at the local army establishment and has now (been) shifted to the army hospital in Rajouri," the officer said, adding he

was responding positively to the treatment.

In April 2016, Hussain and his then 15-year-old brother Ali were sent with three other terrorists - Mohammad Kafil, Mohammad Ali and Yasin from Kaldio-Sabzkot. They were carrying war-like stores and planned to plant Improvised Explosive Devices on operational tracks near forward posts used by Indian Army.

While Kafil, Mohammad Ali and Yasin escaped, the two brothers were arrested on April 25 that year while trying to intrude into this

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Omar questions Congress 'doublespeak' on role of central agencies

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah on Sunday questioned the Congress' doublespeak on the role of central agencies like the CBI, ED and NIA.

Abdullah's remarks came after the Congress demanded the resignation of Delhi Excise Minister Manish Sisodia in the light of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) raids against him.

How does this work? When CBI/ED/NIA etc go after Congress leaders then these organisations are the discredited agents of the BJP yet when AAP leaders are targeted then suddenly the credibility is restored.

How can the agencies be both credible & discredited at the same time? Abdullah wrote on Twitter.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAO PAULO (BRAZIL): External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said that China has disregarded the border pacts with India, casting a shadow on the bilateral ties as he asserted that a lasting relationship cannot be a one-way street and there has to be mutual respect.

Jaishankar, who arrived here on the first leg of his six-day visit to South America aimed at boosting overall bilateral ties with the region, made the remarks during his interaction with the Indian community here on Saturday.

While responding to a question on Sino-India ties, Jaishankar said India and China have agreements going back to the 1990s which prohibits bringing troops to the border area.

"They (Chinese) have disregarded that. You know what happened in the Galwan Valley a few years ago. That problem has not been resolved and that is clearly casting a shadow," Jaishankar said.

Chinese and Indian troops are engaged in a prolonged standoff in Eastern Ladakh. The two sides have so far held 16 rounds of Corps



Commander Level talks to resolve the standoff which erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.

Jaishankar, who was the Indian Ambassador to China

from 2009 to 2013, said that a relationship cannot be a one-way street and mutual respect has to be there in order to sustain it.

"They are our neighbour and everybody wants to get along with their neighbour...But everybody wants to get along with their neighbour on reasonable terms. I must respect you and you must respect me," Jaishankar said.

"From our point of view, we've been very clear that if you have to build a relationship, then there has to be mutual respect. Each

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China disregarded border pacts with India, casting shadow on bilateral ties: Jaishankar

Nine civilians injured in grenade attack in Srinagar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Nine civilians were injured after terrorists hurled a grenade in the Nishat area of the city on Sunday, officials said.

The attack took place outside the famous Mughal garden on the banks of the Dal Lake, they said.

The officials said nine civilians were injured. Seven of them were taken to the SMHS hospital and two to the SKIMS hospital here, they said. Their condition is stated to be stable, the officials added.

IED found in Pulwama, destroyed



Bomb disposal squad checking IED at Tral.

SRINAGAR: Police on Sunday claimed to have averted a "major" terror incident by destroying an improvised explosive device (IED) recovered in the Pulwama district. The IED, weighing about 10-12 kg, was recovered

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Radio-frequency identification introduced for pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi on trial basis

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Radio-frequency identity cards have been introduced on a trial basis for pilgrims visiting the Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, officials said on Sunday.

The radio-frequency identification system is based on wireless technology which can be tracked through radio waves. The tags can carry encrypted information, serial numbers and short descriptions.

"The RFID technology was put in place last week on a trial basis from Balganga and Tarakote enroute to the cave shrine, aimed at tracking the movement of pilgrims on a real-time basis," a senior official of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board said.

The system will help the board to regulate the number of pilgrims in



accordance with the holding capacity of the trek and the cave shrine, he said.

The official said verification counters have been set up at seven places where security personnel

and enforcement staff will check the cards, while there are 29 locations where antenna and trackers have been placed along the 13-km route from Katra to the Bhawan (sanctum sanctorum).

"The current trial of the RFID is crucial to identify and resolve any issues before the complete implementation of the project in the coming days," he said.

The officials said RFID is bound to replace the age-old traditional yatra slip system and is mandatory for all pilgrims visiting the shrine. They said the RFIDs are reusable and pilgrims returning to the base camp after having 'darshan' will have to deposit the cards at the exit point.

The officials said over 60 lakh pilgrims have visited the cave shrine since the beginning of the year.

25 pc extra seats, no entrance test for foreign students: UGC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Universities and higher education institutions across the country will now be allowed to create up to 25 per cent supernumerary seats for foreign students in their undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) programmes, UGC chairman Jagadeesh Kumar has told PTI.


There will be no entrance tests for these admissions, Kumar said, adding that the decision was taken at a meeting of the University Grants Commission (UGC) held last week to discuss "internationalisation of UG and PG programmes in India."

The supernumerary seats will be created over and above the total sanctioned strength and the decision

regarding these seats will be taken by concerned higher educational institutions (HEIs) according to specific guidelines and regulations issued by the regulatory bodies considering the infrastructure, faculty and other requirements.

"Indian HEIs may admit international students based on the equivalence of entry qualification held by them. The equivalence is to be determined by UGC or any other body recognised by UGC for such purpose or the concerned regulatory bodies of the country. HEIs may adopt a transparent admission process for admitting the international students," Kumar told PTI. "HEIs may create up to 25 per

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 35.0°C Min: 25.8°C

Humidity

Max: 85 Min: 66

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 31.8°C Min: 16.6°C

Humidity

Max: 74 Min: 36

Sunset : 18:52 Hours

Sunrise : 06:10 Hours