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**SOWING SKILLS**

**SHAPING INDIA**

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CJ inaugurates Vidhik Sewa Kendra at Distt Court Complex Doda, e-Sewa Kendra at Bhadarwah

10

India stuns Bahrain to enter Asian Men's U-20 Volleyball C'ship 2022 semifinals

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U-18 National Volleyball team captain Kartik felicitated in Jammu

# ‘Azad to launch own party, set up J&K unit within fortnight’

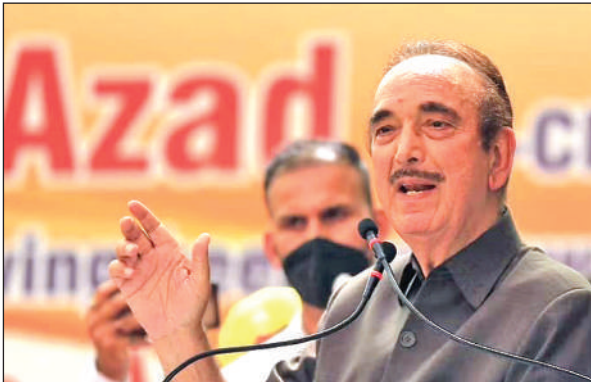
■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Former Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad is all set to launch his own party and its first unit would come up in Jammu and Kashmir within a fortnight, his close confidant G M Saroori said on Saturday.

Saroori asserted that the restoration of the pre-August 5, 2019 position of Jammu and Kashmir will be part of the party's manifesto.

A former minister who was among several prominent Congress leaders of Jammu and Kashmir who resigned from the basic membership of the party in support of Azad, Saroori said their leader was ideologically secular and there was no question of him working at the behest of the BJP.

He also claimed that hundreds of senior Congress leaders, Panchayati Raj Institution members and prominent workers have tendered their resignations after the former chief minister



ended his over five-decade-long association with the national party.

"Azad is coming to Jammu on September 4 to hold consultations with his well-wishers before the launch of our new party," Saroori, a former vice-president of the J-K unit of the Congress, told PTI.

Hours after his resignation on Friday, Azad said he would launch a new party soon and that its first unit would be set up in Jammu and Kashmir.

"I am in no hurry as of now

to launch a national party but keeping in mind that elections are likely to be held in Jammu and Kashmir, I have decided to launch a unit there soon," Azad, who hails from the Bhaderwah township of Doda district, had told PTI on Friday night.

Saroori, who along with several former legislators met with Azad in New Delhi on Friday to extend their support, said the veteran politician was going to announce the launch of the party within the next fort-

nite.

"We are happy that he is returning to J-K where he served as chief minister (from November 2, 2005 to July 11, 2008). People view his rule as a golden era and want him back to pull out Jammu and Kashmir from the present situation," he said, adding that his support base is spread across Jammu and Kashmir.

Saroori said the new party would focus on development, unity among all sections of the society, and would struggle for restoration of the pre-August 5, 2019 position.

On August 5, 2019, the Centre revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution and bifurcated the erstwhile state into two Union territories.

Saroori said the Congress is almost finished in Jammu and Kashmir with the departure of Azad. "There is a beeline of leaders

CWC to meet today to approve schedule for election of Congress President

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Congress Working Committee (CWC) will meet on Sunday to approve the schedule of dates for the election of the next party president.

This comes in the backdrop of party veteran Ghulam Nabi Azad's shock resignation Friday.

Sources said besides giving approval to the polls

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Justice U U Lalit sworn in as 49th CJI

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Justice Uday Umes h Lalit was o n Saturday sworn in as the 49th C h i e f Justice of India (CJI).

President Droupadi Murmu administered him the oath during a brief ceremony held at

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# Modi Govt strengthens probe agencies, laws as part of zero tolerance on terrorism: Amit Shah

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAIPUR: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said the Narendra Modi government took all efforts to strengthen probe agencies such as the NIA and anti-terror laws in line with its policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism.

The National Investigation Agency will have branches in all the states by May 2024, he said.

The home minister was speaking at the inauguration of the office building of the NIA's Raipur branch in Atal Nagar area of Nava Raipur.

The Modi government has adopted zero tolerance policy against Left Wing Extremism, terrorism and other related crimes including fake currency and narcotics, and therefore we left no stone unturned to strengthen the NIA, he said.

The BJP-led Union government also strengthened anti-terror laws, shared terrorism-related inputs with state governments irrespective of the party ruling in a state, strengthened anti-terror investigation agencies and increased conviction rate in such crimes, Shah added.

In line with this (policy), our government worked towards strengthening the NIA. I am happy that in the cases handled by NIA, the conviction rate has reached 94 per cent from 75 per cent in 2014," he said.



Home Minister Amit Shah addressing after inauguration of NIA office in Raipur Chhattisgarh on Saturday.

The government has tried to make Kashmir terror-free ever since it came to power, the Union minister said.

Peace is being witnessed in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 and today our agencies have succeeded in checking terror activities there. It became possible because the NIA took

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## Congress a sinking ship: Chugh

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Saturday said that the Congress was a sinking ship and people like Farooq Abdullah are trying to speed it up.

C h u g h ridiculed Farooq for holding the BJP responsible for Ghulam Nabi's resignation from the Congress and said that it was the Congress's internal matter, but nobody can deny that India is heading towards Congress-must India.

In J&K there has been a

dangerous combination of Abdullahs, Muftis and Congress, which people have decisively rejected.



J&K is entering a new chapter of peace, growth and development under prime minister Narendra Modi. It's time Abdullahs and Muftis learn their lessons.

## Recovery of six bodies in Jammu's Tawi Vihar: Police probe points towards depression, drug overdose

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Six people, including five members of a family, who were found dead inside two houses here 10 days ago, died of an overdose of drugs, which they decided to take to end their lives, a senior police officer said on Saturday.

In a press briefing, SSP Jammu Chandan Kohli gave minute details regarding the case and informed that on 16 August, a telephonic call of Shahzada sister of Noor-ul-Habib, one of the deceased, was received wherein caller informed regarding some suspicion as her brother is not picking up phone.



SSP Jammu Chandan Kohli briefing media on Saturday.

**Incident is mass suicide in nature, victims were reportedly under stress: SSP Jammu**

Police party reached at the spot and found six bodies in

two houses after which all the bodies were sent for autopsy which was conducted in GMC Jammu by board of doctors and viscera has been further sent to FSL for chemical analysis and examination of which report is awaited.

During investigation, SSP Jammu Chandan Kohli said, some very important leads were collected by SIT headed by SP Rural Sanjay Sharma with SDPO Nagrota Pradeep Kumar, SHO Nagrota Vishav Pratap Singh, IC PP Sidhra Majeed Hussain, which includes CDR, CCTV recordings,

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## ACB books AEE, AEs, others for misappropriation of funds

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Jammu has registered a case under sections 5(1) (c), 5(1) (d) read with 5(2) J&K PC Act Svt.2006 and section 120-B of RPC against Kuldeep Kumar Kaith AEE, Shabir Ahmed Malik and Vinod Kumar Abrol (both AEs) and Rahul Gandotra & Sahil Gandotra TA (Contractual) RDD Block Chassana for misappropriation of funds.

As per details, verification was initiated against officers/ officials of Rural Development Department of Block Chassana Reasi for

committing fraud and minting money by misusing funds meant for development of Panchyats of Block Chassana and not executing works on grounds for year 2017-18. After verification, it was revealed that loss to the Govt exchequer amounting to Rs13,65,425 has been caused by the officers/ officials of RDD/ REW Departments of Block Chassana Reasi while executing works under MGNREGA during 2017-18. It was also found that aforementioned officers; officials by abusing their official positions and in furtherance of a

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Two earthquakes hit J&K; 13 tremors in 5 days

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Two mild earthquakes struck Doda district on Saturday, officials said.

The tremors of magnitude 2.9 and 3.4 were reported within a span of over four-and-a-half hours in the morning, they said.

With this, a total of 13 earthquakes having mild intensity had hit Doda, Kishtwar, Katra (Reasi)

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Pakistani intruder arrested along IB in Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A Pakistani intruder was arrested along the International Border here by the Border Security Force (BSF) in the early hours of Saturday, officials said.

BSF personnel picked up on the movement of Mohd Shabad (45), a resident of Sialkot, while he was trying to sneak into the Arnia sector from across the

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**WEATHER**

Temperature (Jammu)

Max: 33.5°C Min: 25.8°C

Humidity

Max : 88 Min : 63

Temperature (Srinagar)

Max: 29.0°C Min: 17.6°C

Humidity

Max : 86 Min: 60

Sunset : 19:03 Hours

Sunrise : 06:04 Hours

## Azad's resignation shows 'lack of internal democracy' in Congress: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday said Ghulam Nabi Azad's resignation from Congress was an internal matter of the party, even though it showed lack of internal democracy in the party.

He said BJP is the only option left in the country with its democratic values.

It is an internal matter of Congress but as a responsible citizen of a democratic country, one expects that there should be internal democracy in every party, just as we follow the democratic values, Singh, the min-

ister of state in the Prime Minister's office, said here on Azad's resignation.

If internal democracy is not followed in the party, then it is a cause of concern for its leaders and they should think over it, he said.

The minister said a recent survey put Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the top of the list of the most popular world leaders with an approval rating of 75 per cent and Congress too should be proud of the fact.

BJP is the only option left in the country. Modi is not only popular in the country but a recent survey at the

international level put him at the top spot once again, which is a proud moment for all of us.

Congress should also be proud about it as an Indian leader has emerged as the most popular leader at the global level, he said.

Asked whether BJP will welcome Azad in its fold, he said it is up to him to decide his next course of action. It will be his decision what to do next.

On the timing of Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, he said it is the prerogative of the Election

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Missing Hungarian trekker rescued in 30-hour ops at Kishtwar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A 38-year-old Hungarian trekker was rescued in a joint search operation by the Army and the Indian Air Force (IAF) from the snow-bound upper ranges of Machhail in Kishtwar district, a defence spokesman said on Saturday.

The solo traveller, Akkoos Vernes from Budapest, had lost his way in Umasila Pass in Himalayan ranges while on a mountaineering expedition and was left exposed to inclement weather for five days, Jammu-based Army PRO Lt Col Devender Anand said.

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## Khadi can become inspiration to achieve goal of developed, self-reliant India: Modi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

AHMEDABAD: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said Khadi can become a source of inspiration for achieving the dream of developed and Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Once a symbol of self-respect, Khadi or the homespun was treated as an inferior product after Independence, he rued, and appealed people to gift the products of only Khadi village industries during the coming festive season.

The prime minister was speaking during

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi spinning 'Charkha' in Khadi Utsav at Sabarmati River Front, Ahmedabad.

## Farooq appears before special court in PMLA case, granted bail

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday appeared before a special court which granted him bail in a money laundering case related to the alleged financial irregularities in the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

The Principal District and Sessions Judge here had in July taken cognisance of a charge sheet filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the case and summoned him.

The court will now hear arguments on the framing of charges on September 26.

As the case was called for hearing on Saturday, Abdullah's lawyer Ishtiyak Ahmad Khan said the NC

chief may not be able to attend the court due to health issues.

The judge told Khan that Abdullah should be present in the court on the next date of hearing on September 26. The lawyer assured the court that the former J-K chief minister will attend the hearing on that day.

However, Abdullah, 84, arrived in the court later on Saturday and appeared before the judge as mandated in the law.

The special court had taken up a charge sheet filed by the ED against him and others in the JKCA money laundering case. All the accused have to be present in the court when the charge sheet is taken up for cognisance

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