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Will help KPs; RSS, BJP trying to break J&K's composite culture: Rahul Gandhi

Canceling Darbar Move impacts Jammu economy, says Azad

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday reached out to displaced Kashmiri Pandits, saying he and his family belong to this community, and promised them all help.

He also accused the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) of trying to break the composite culture of Jammu and Kashmir, and said both the organisations are "ruining" the love and brotherhood that exists among the people of the Union Territory.

"The feeling of love, brotherhood and composite culture exists among you all. I feel sad that the RSS and BJP are trying to break this culture," Gandhi said in his address to Congress office-bearers and workers at a party function here on the second day of his two-day visit to Jammu.

The Congress leader



MP and former Congress President Rahul Gandhi being honoured by senior party leaders during 'Sammelan' in Jammu on Friday.

exhorted the gathering to chant 'Jai Mata Di', a day after he paid obeisance at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra.

"I went to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine yesterday. There are three symbols of mata (pindis) there - Mata Durga, Mata Lakshmi and Mata Saraswati, Gandhi said.

Goddess Durga protects us,

Lakshmi is a symbol of power, and Saraswati symbolises education and knowledge, he said.

When these three shaktis are in your home and country, your home and country will make progress," he said.

However, the BJP government's policies like demonetisation and GST have weakened their powers, he said.

"I told my Kashmiri Pandit brothers that I will show by helping you. I do not tell lies," Gandhi said, adding that he himself belonged to the Kashmiri Pandit community and feels their pain.

"Today morning, a delegation of Kashmiri Pandit brothers had come. When the members of the delegation

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J&K issues Gandhi family's legacy: BJP

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Friday hit back at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for accusing it and the RSS of "trying to break the composite culture of Jammu and Kashmir", alleging all the vexing issues of the region is the "legacy of the Gandhi family".

BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra, in a press conference, alleged the Congress, for its petty vote bank politics, sacrificed not only the Kashmiri Pandits but also the development of the region.

A day after paying obeisance to Mata Vaishno Devi in Katra, Gandhi accused the BJP and the RSS of "ruining" the love and brotherhood that exists among the people of the Union Territory. Reaching

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200 recommendations of Swaminathan Panel accepted: Tomar

Stresses need for holistic development of agriculture sector in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Union Minister for Agriculture, Narendra Singh Tomar on Friday lauded the Government for implementing "200 out of 201" recommendations of the Swaminathan Committee and highlighted that 'the most significant recommendation to be accepted has been to ensure that farmers get at least 50 percent profit over their investment, adding that some crops are even earning them profit of about 100 percent.

"Prime Minister is working towards giving boost to agriculture and allied sectors, so as to ensure greater exports of exceptional quality", Tomar said at an event organised at village Maralian, in RS Pura subdivision.

As part of the ongoing public outreach initiatives of the Union Government, Narendra Singh Tomar and Union Ministers of State for



Union Minister for Agriculture, Narendra Singh Tomar speaking during a programme in RS Pura.

Agriculture, Shobha Karandlaje and Kailash Choudhary visited Jammu and took stock of agriculture and horticulture related activities in the region.

Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan and Principal Secretary, Agriculture & Horticulture, Navin K Choudhary also accompanied the team.

The Union Agriculture Minister expressed delight and said, "Farmers of J&K are showing extraordinary

enthusiasm for availing benefits of the government's schemes".

'Around 85 percent of farmers of India have land holding of less than 2 hectares, the minister said, and it is by strengthening these farmers that the nation can truly prosper'. He stressed that in order to double the farmer's income, they need to shift from traditional methods and opt for modernisation and

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Pak terrorist gets 7 yrs of rigorous imprisonment for conspiring to carry out attacks in India

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: A special NIA court here on Friday sentenced a Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist from Pakistan to seven years of rigorous imprisonment for conspiring to carry out terror attacks at different locations in India on the directions of his handlers from across the border.

Mohammad Amir of Karachi was sentenced under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Arms Act, the Explosive Substances Act, the Foreigners Act, the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act and relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, an offi-

cial of the premier investigating agency said.

Amir along with three others had infiltrated into India from Pakistan with weapons, ammunition and other warlike stores with an intention to carry out terror attacks at different locations Of India on the directions of their handlers based across the border, the NIA official said.

He was arrested in November 2017 from Magam in Jammu and Kashmir's Handwara, while his three associates were killed in an encounter with security forces the same month, the official said.

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NC leader murder: Raids conducted in Jammu, Amritsar to trace two suspects

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Raids are being conducted in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab to nab two suspects involved in the murder of National Conference leader Trilochan Singh Wazir, the Delhi Police said on Friday.

Wazir (67), also former Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Council member, was found dead in a flat in West Delhi's Moti Nagar Thursday morning, it said.

A case of murder was registered in the matter and the investigation was transferred to Delhi Police's Crime Branch with the force's

Special Cell to assist them, officials had said.

According to sources, police checked CCTV footage of the area and found that the accused were present in the building on Wednesday, a day before Wazir's body was found.

Prime facie, it looks like the NC leader was killed on September 2, sources said.

The post-mortem was conducted at a government hospital on Friday for which a board of doctors was constituted, they said.

A senior police officer said investigation teams have been sent to Amritsar and

Jammu in connection with the probe to trace the two suspects -- Harpreet Singh and Harmeet Singh -- who have been absconding.

The highly decomposed body of Wazir with his head wrapped in a plastic bag was found in a washroom of the flat which was taken on rent by his acquaintance Harpreet Singh (31), a native of Amritsar, police had said.

According to them, Wazir arrived in Delhi on September 2 and was staying with Harpreet and his friend Harmeet, a native of Jammu, at their rented flat

in Basai Darapur area.

Harpreet's mobile phone was found to be switched off after the incident, but the call detail records of both the suspects are being analysed, police said.

Wazir's brother had claimed that the NC leader, a resident of Jammu, was supposed to take a flight to Canada on September 2 to meet his family there. When there was no news of him for days, his family informed the Jammu Police which in turn approached the Delhi Police, an official said. On Thursday, the Delhi

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Govt terminates services of Forest Guard Kewal Sharma

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The government on Friday terminated the services of Kewal Krishan Sharma, Forest Guard, presently under suspension for furnishing fake qualification certificates.

An order in this regard issued by Forest, Ecology and Environment department reads, "The case of Kewal Krishan Sharma, Forest Guard, presently under suspension was forwarded by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (HoFF), J&K, wherein, the matter regarding fake and fraudulent qualification certificate furnished by the offi-

cial has been reported, including other acts of omissions and commissions".

The order continues, "Whereas, in the matter of securing appointment by the official, Krishan Sharma, Forest Guard, on the basis of fake qualification certificate, the Law Department has advised that any appointment based on a fake certificate, which forms the basic eligibility, is non-est in the eyes of law and no right flows from anything that is a nullity or a non-est right from the very inception; and whereas, the grave acts of omission and commission,

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Grenade attack in Srinagar, three injured

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A CRPF jawan and two women were injured on Friday in a grenade attack by militants on security forces at Chanapora area in the city, officials said here.

The ultras lobbed the grenade on the security forces near the government residential quarters here.

The injured have been admitted to a hospital.

Colleges to resume physical academics after permission from DCs

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Higher Education Department on Friday said colleges in Jammu and Kashmir will resume physical academics subject to specific permission of the concerned Deputy Commissioners.

"Higher education institutions have been permitted to commence with limited in-person teaching subject to 100 percent vaccination

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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

Centre making all efforts for overall development of Jammu & Kashmir: Union Minister

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The central government is making all efforts to provide overall development of Jammu and Kashmir, Union Minister Ajay Bhatt said on Friday during his visit to Kupwara district.

His visit to the border district in north Kashmir is part of the Centre's public outreach programme for the Union Territory, an official spokesman said.

The minister of state for defence visited forward posts near the Line of Control in the district and reviewed the security scenario in the area,

he said, adding that Bhatt also interacted with army officers and troops there.

After his tour of forward posts, Bhatt visited the Horticulture Base Station in Chogul where he interacted with orchardists, farmers, women self help groups (SHGs) and local panchayati raj institution (PRI) representatives, the spokesman said.

Addressing a gathering, the minister expressed happiness for being among the people of the frontier district.

Terming Kashmir a paradise on Earth, Bhatt said the government headed by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi is making all efforts to keep its essence intact by providing overall development of the region, especially the border district of Kupwara.

Requests, issues and grievances of PRI and SHG members and the public have been taken note of and the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir lieutenant governor will look into these for redressal, he said.

The people are marching forward and development activities are going on in a big way, the minister said.

Bhatt, who is also minister of state for tourism, assured

that border tourism, eco-tourism and horticulture tourism will be taken up on priority.

He also laid the foundation stone of a synthetic handball court at the Boys Higher Secondary School, Kandi Khas, and interacted with members of the youth club and the PRI.

While highlighting centrally-sponsored schemes, Bhatt said that there is a need for better utilisation of the benefits of these schemes.

The minister impressed upon the youth to channelise their talent to earn

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PM chairs meeting on COVID situation; states asked to keep buffer stock of medicines

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday chaired a high-level meeting on the Covid situation and vaccination as the government noted high caseloads in states like Kerala and Maharashtra to say that there can be no room for complacency.

Modi reviewed the status of augmentation of bed capacity for pediatric care and of facilities supported under "COVID Emergency Response Package II", and it was noted that states have been advised to redesign and orient primary care and block level health infrastructure in these areas to manage the situation in rural areas, a statement said.

States are being asked to maintain a buffer stock for drugs used in management of COVID-19, mucormycosis, MIS-C at the district level, it added.



"It was discussed that across the world, there are countries where the number of active Covid cases continues to remain high. In India too, the figures from states like Maharashtra and Kerala indicate that there can be no room for complacency," the statement said.

However, the weekly positivity was at less than three per cent for the 10th consecutive week, it added.

Modi underscored the need to rap-

idly augment the entire ecosystem to ensure increased oxygen availability, including oxygen concentrators, cylinders and PSA plants.

Efforts are also on to install 961 Liquid Medical Oxygen storage tanks and 1,450 medical gas pipeline systems with an aim to support at least one such unit per district, the government said.

The ambulance network is also being augmented to ensure at least one ambulance per block.

Modi also reviewed the status of PSA oxygen plants coming up across the country and told that around one lakh oxygen concentrators and three lakh oxygen cylinders have been distributed to states.

He was also briefed about the concentration of cases in a few geographies, districts with high test positivity as well as the week on week test positivity rate in the country.

On vaccines, the statement noted that around 58 per cent of India's adult population has received the first dose and nearly 18 per cent both doses.

Modi was also updated about the vaccine pipeline and increased supply of vaccines.

He spoke about the need for constant genome sequencing to monitor emergence of mutants.

He was informed that INSACOG (SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortium) now consists of 28 labs distributed across the country.

The lab network is also linked with a hospital network for clinical correlation. Sewage sampling is also being done for genomic surveillance. States have been requested to share SARS COV2 positive samples with INSACOG regularly. Modi highlighted the need to ensure adequate testing across

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