

!! Continuations from Page 1 !!

Admn aims to...

J&K's culture. It will serve as a platform for organizing buyer-seller meets creating opportunities for enhancing local business & exports on a permanent basis by connecting local artisans with a multitude of markets, he added.

He said that the Haat will empower the local entrepreneurs to build successful businesses by providing high-quality training programs, advisory services and this access will help people achieve economic self-sufficiency through small business development, besides promoting local heritage & tourism.

"I believe that Jammu Haat can bring about a massive change in the handicraft, handloom and local industry at the grassroots level in Jammu", the Lt Governor added.

The Lt Governor said that the tradition of handicrafts, handlooms has been part of our society for the last ten thousand years. "Our primary focus is to scale up the local industries of handloom and handicrafts to global level", he added.

The Lt Governor noted that the UT government is not only committed to the preservation and development of local art but also for the social and economic upliftment of lakhs of people associated with the handicraft sector in J&K.

He recalled that the Karkhandar scheme started in August this year aimed to create a bridge between traditional crafts and market, besides training the artisans, weavers associated with this rich heritage. The scheme broadly aims to revive the languishing crafts; upscale the learning techniques of trainees; improve the wages of the craftsmen through collectivization and creating linkages with producer organizations to inculcate entrepreneurial skills and aptitude to the trainees.

"Under the 'Karkhandar' scheme during the training beneficiaries will be given an honorarium of Rs 2,000 per month and an additional Rs 25,000 to buy raw materials and other items. After the training, all the craftsmen and weavers who want to start their own unit will be provided all possible financial assistance from the administration", the Lt Governor said.

Besides extending financial support to the people associated with local crafts, the UT government is making sustained efforts to promote the branding of GI tagged handicrafts on priority basis so as to provide international market to the artists through e-commerce. Very soon Basohli painting, Basohli pashmina products, Kishtwar loi and Chikriwood craft will also get the GI tag, the Lt Governor added.

The Lt Governor said that a major part of the Udhampur Industrial Estate has been reserved for women entrepreneurs. Similarly, Jammu Haat will also act as an exclusive hub for Women Entrepreneurs associated with small and medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), and will play an important role in the Sustainable Economic Growth of the entire region", he added.

The Lt Governor said that the UT government is making committed efforts for youth empowerment, especially women, through programmes like Hausla, Himayat, Mumkin, Parwaz, Umeed, Tejaswini, Sankalp, Saath, Rise Together etc. Besides, youth clubs have been established in all panchayats, making the Youth a partner in the governance process and UT's development. In the last few months, around 20,000 youth have been empowered financially to start their enterprises, he added.

The Lt Governor announced the extension of financial assistance to the artisans and youth who want to start their enterprise in the field of traditional crafts or any other small scale industrial unit.

"There will be no limit as far as the numbers are concerned. We will reach out to every person. In Jammu division our aim is to provide financial support to two lakh artisans and youngsters willing to start their own business," he added.

The Lt Governor said that under 'One District One Product' scheme, PM Narendra Modi has transformed the economically backward districts into engines of inclusive development with the promotion of local skills and arts.

The Lt Governor lauded the efforts of Industries department, which worked with full dedication and fulfilled the years old demand of the people of Jammu.

Earlier, Anoo Malhotra, Director Industries and Commerce read the welcome address; Ranjan Prakash Thakur, Principal Secretary Industries and Commerce, and Ankita Kar, Managing Director J&K Trade Promotion Organization gave an overview of the efforts of the government in promoting trade and commerce in the UT. Jugal Kishore, Member Parliament; Chander Mohan Gupta, Mayor Jammu Municipal Corporation; Bharat Bhushan, Chairman DDC Jammu Baseer Khan, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr. AK Mehta, Chief Secretary; Mukesh Singh, ADGP Jammu; Raghav Langer, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Anshul Garg, DC Jammu besides HoDs Entrepreneurs were present on the occasion.

Two cops among...

Jaffer Hussain Butt of Kishtwar was arrested in a case that is presently under investigation of the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The probe has revealed that Butt provided his car to Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists and facilitated their safe movement in his hometown, the officials said, adding that he is currently on bail since August 30.

Teacher Abdul Hamid Wani of Bijbehara in Anantnag district was also among those dismissed from service. It is alleged that before joining government service, he was a district commander of terror group Allah Tigers and propagated secessionist ideology, the officials said.

They said he had reportedly secured the employment without any selection process by leveraging Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) influence. He was a key speaker and organiser in the 2016 agitation following the killing of terrorist commander Burhan Wani.

A junior assistant in the Roads and Buildings Department, Mohd Rafi Butt of Kishtwar, is accused of having provided logistical support to Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists in Kishtwar, besides providing a safe environment to them to execute terror plans. He figures in an FIR registered by the NIA and is presently on bail after being arrested, the officials said.

They said teacher Liyaqat Ali Kakroo of Baramulla was appointed in government service in 1983 and was arrested in 2001 with an explosive substance. The probe against him revealed that he was a locally-trained terrorist.

A cache of arms was recovered from his possession in 2002 and subsequently, he was detained under the PSA for two years. However, he was acquitted by court in both the cases, the officials said, adding that two grenades were recovered from his possession again in 2021.

Range officer Tariq Mehmoood Kohli of Poonch was allegedly involved in smuggling of illegal arms, ammunition and explosives, including hard drugs and fake Indian Currency Notes from Pakistan, they said.

They said Kohli, who was arrested in a case registered against him in 2010, had remained in touch with active militants and was mentioned as an overground worker in police records.

In an identical order about the dismissal of the six employees, the General Administration Department (GAD) said the Lt Governor was satisfied after considering the facts and circumstances of the cases and on the basis of the information available that the activities of these employees were such as to warrant their dismissal from service.

"...the Lieutenant Governor is satisfied under sub-clause (c) of the proviso to clause (2) of Article 311 of the Constitution of India that in the interest of the security of the State, it is not expedient to hold an enquiry in the case of... Accordingly, the Lieutenant Governor hereby dismisses... from service, with immediate effect," the order said mentioning the name of each sacked employee.

On July 11, as many as 11 employees, including two sons of the Hizbul Mujahideen chief, were dismissed from service.

Earlier in April-May, the administration dismissed seven employees, including DSP Davinder Singh.

Idrees Jan, a teacher from North Kashmir's Kupwara district was the first government employee to be sacked from service for anti-national activities on May 1.

His dismissal came barely a week after the Union Territory administration constituted a Special Task Force (STF) empowered to look into allegations against government employees of involvement in anti-state activities and recommend dismissal of those found involved.

Huge misappropriation of...

initiated action on recommendations of the Ministry of Defense.

Earlier, the Defense Ministry officials had also conducted a preliminary inquiry into the alleged misappropriation of funds, on a large scale, by Sainik School Management. After enquiry, the Defense Ministry recommended the case to CBI for detailed investigation. Accordingly, a team of 14 CBI officers raided the school at 10 AM on Wednesday and seized all record kept in the Administrative Officer's room for detailed scrutiny.

CBI officers interrogated the then Principal Pawan Kumar and clerks for hours. At a time, when case of misappropriation of funds by school management came to light, Pawan Kumar was working as the acting principal of the school. The new principal A K Desai has taken over the charge from Pawan Kumar just two months back.

Normal life hit...

closed, while the movement of public and private transport was thin.

Protests and rallies at various places by traders, activists of National Panthers Party (NPP), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Aam Aadmi Party and Dogra Front in the city marked the strike, which was the first of its kind in the Jammu province after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

Among other things, the sponsors of the strike are agitated over the scrapping of the 'darbar move' by the government without consulting the stakeholders and new excise policy, rendering wine shopkeepers jobless.

Other issues which triggered the strike included the new Geology and Mining policy, restrictions on banquet halls and proposed opening of the Reliance Retail stores chain even as the company on Tuesday evening clarified that the talk of 100 stores being opened in Jammu is "completely untrue".

We have not opened any stores in Jammu and the talk of 100 stores being opened is completely untrue, a Reliance Retail spokesperson had said.

We have a few delivery points in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and these are set up by our delivery partners to support the small traders," it had added.

The business house had claimed that it has a track record of supporting small traders and "we remain steadfast in our commitment of partnering with small merchants".

Leading a rally outside the Chamber House here, JCCI president Arun Gupta, however, described the statement of Reliance Retail as "misleading" and said, "We are all united and will continue our struggle to safeguard the interests of the people of Jammu region."

"This government is deaf and dumb and had miserably failed to fulfil its responsibility to safeguard the interests of the traders. They (Reliance Retail) are claiming that they are not opening the stores but the situation on the ground is different," he said, amid chants of slogans against the opening of Reliance Retail stores and alleged discrimination with Jammu.

He thanked the people for making the strike successful but said the motive of the JCCI was in no way to oppose the government as far as the abrogation of Article 370 is concerned as "some sections in the political circles" are trying to portray.

"The only reason behind this resentment is the lopsided policies of the J&K government towards the business community of the (Jammu) region," he said.

Another group of traders led by the Traders Federation WareHouse president Deepak Gupta staged a protest at Nehru Market, while the Chemist Association led by General Secretary Prem Sharma also took to streets near the Exhibition ground, terming the statement of the Reliance retail as an "eyewash".

"We are concerned about 50,000 small shopkeepers who will be rendered jobless if Reliance opens its retail stores. We will not tolerate any decision which we feel is against the interests of the people of the Jammu business community," Gupta said.

Activists of the NPP, PDP, AAP and Dogra front also staged protests in support of the traders.

"We are supporting the strike call given by traders on genuine concerns of the busi-

ness community and wrong policies of the government," NPP chairman and former minister Harsh Dev Singh said as activists of the party displayed placards demanding restoration of statehood to J&K.

A group of AAP activists were briefly detained at the city's Gandhi Nagar police station when they tried to take out a march from there to Dogra Chowk in the city, the officials said.

Congress, National Conference, CPI(M), Lok Janshakti Party besides several social groups had supported the strike and urged the government to roll back the decisions which are against the legitimate interests of trade and commerce.

The officials said police and paramilitary forces have been deployed in strength in sensitive areas to maintain law and order.

Official reports spoke of shutdown and peaceful protests in various district headquarters across Jammu province.

Court paves way...

buildings but the relief organisation filed two different applications for setting aside both the awards which were subsequently dismissed by the court due to failure of the prosecutor to plead the case.

The stopping of the relief led to protests by migrant Kashmiri Pandits at different places in Jammu over the past fortnight.

Advocate Kohli successfully pleaded the case before the additional district judge on behalf of the migrant Kashmiri Pandits.

"Accordingly, having regard to the undertaking submitted by the judgment debtor No.2 (Relief and Rehabilitation Migrants) and in view of the sufferings of the Kashmir migrant families, the order dated August 26 is modified to the extent that Major Head 2055 Sub Head 0872 and 1057 are detached and instead the Treasury Officer Tirath Nagar, Talab Tilo Muthi, Jammu shall deduct the decretal amount to the tune of Rs 89,10,613 from the detailed head 001 (Salary Head) of judgment debtor No 2 and keep in fact/reserve the same subject to further order," the court said.

The relief and rehabilitation commissioner (migrants), in his undertaking, has submitted that an amount to the tune of Rs 1 crore will be maintained or kept intact in the detailed head 001 (salary head) till the final outcome of the court proceedings pending adjudication.

Kohli pleaded before the court that the migrant families are at the risk of starvation as the attachment of the heads lead to chaos and confusion among them.

"It is submitted on behalf of the Kashmiri migrant families that they are living in the camps and are solely dependent on the monthly cash assistance provided by the Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants) Jammu and by attaching the Major Head 2055, Sub Head 0872 and 1057 they are suffering from starvation," the court said.

It said the counsel for the decree holder (builder) has submitted that he is aware of the sufferings of the Kashmiri migrant families and he favours such an order which may satisfy their grievances.

The court said the instant execution petition is pending disposal before it for more than three years and till date, the judgment debtors on one pretext or the other only gained time and failed to pay the decretal amount to the decree holder.

"On failure of the judgment debtors to pay the decretal amount to the decree holder, this court was left with no other option except to attach the Major Head 2055 Sub Head 0872 and 1057 of the Relief Commissioner (Migrants) Jammu," it said.

SC permits women...

National Defence Academy will be out by May next year.

A bench headed by Justice S K Kaul took note of the submissions made by senior advocate Chinmoy Pradip Sharma, appearing on behalf of the petitioner Kush Kalra, and said that it cannot delay absorption of women by one year.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati submitted that a study group has been formed to facilitate the entry of women, and the necessary mechanism to facilitate that can be put in place by May 2022.

The ASG sought skipping the next NDA entrance examination, scheduled to be held on November 14.

The Bench said: "A report has been filed by the Armed services. Some of the areas which need to be addressed have been set out in the affidavit. These are stated to be preparatory action for induction of women in the NDA. Suffice to say the aspects refer to medical fitness intake strength, proposed training strength, requirement of infrastructure, accommodation etc and all these are expected to be addressed by a study group which is to lay down a comprehensive curriculum.

"The only caveat that has been set out is in Para 4 which says that the necessary mechanism will be in place till May 2022. Mr Chinomoy Sharma submits that two exams are held if women would not be allowed to take the exam of November 2021, this would lead to postponing of the whole aspect by one year. We have given a thought to the matter and the difficulties by armed services. What effectively would mean if we accept the submission of ASG is the principle of 'no jam today jam tomorrow'".

The bench also comprising Justice B R Gavai in its order said: "It would be difficult for us to accept such a position as the aspiration of women have arisen in view of our order. The Armed services have dealt with very difficult situations at the border and in the country.

"To deal with emergencies is part of their training. We are sure that they will be able to come at par with this 'emergency' if so. For larger gender interests, this cannot be postponed. We would thus not like to effectively vacate the order effectively passed by us, We will keep the plea pending here so that directions can be sought as situations arise".

Search operation in...

had prompted the massive search operation to ensure that the infiltrators, if any, do not get to the hinterland.

The area where the suspicious movement was observed falls near Gohalan, the same area from where the attack on Uri Brigade was launched by terrorists in September 2016.

Forces ready to meet any security challenge: Army Chief

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Indian Army is continuously monitoring the situation in the country's neighbourhood and is ready to meet any security challenge that comes its way, Army Chief General M M Naravane said on Wednesday.

Addressing the AIMA National Management Convention, the Chief of Army Staff noted that the army is prepared to tackle even a dual-front war if the need arose.

He highlighted that the Indian Army was making rapid strides in changing itself from being a manpower-intensive army to a technologically empowered one in order to keep an edge over opponents.

"We always continue to do a regional and environmental scan and based on that scan we do keep reviewing what threat perceptions could be. Based on those threat perceptions, we recalibrate our possible responses.

"That is always work in progress and we will always be prepared to meet whatever security challenges that come due to this changed situation," Gen Naravane stated.

He was responding to a query on how the Indian Army views the return of Taliban in Afghanistan and what it could mean for the country's security.

Asked about the Chinese incursions and how the

Indian Army is changing its strategies and capabilities to face the situation, he noted: "As we go along, we will also be continuously monitoring the developments in various regions, whether it is land based, space based and based on these changes, we will continue to refine our operational strategies."

He pointed out that the nature of war remains constant and it is the character of war that keeps changing over a period of time.

"...the nature of war is constant, the nature of the war will always be to impose your will on the opponent...the methodology of imposing that will keep changing," Gen Naravane said.

To a query regarding the army's preparation for a multi-front war with China and Pakistan, he said: "All of us know that to our North and West we have unsettled borders and obviously with these unsettled borders, there are challenges that we face."

"But these challenges are not insurmountable and if the need arises, we will be always ready to tackle both these challenges at the same time," he said.

"Of course, there would always be a primary front and a secondary front and the focus would be on the primary front as we try to contain the secondary front. And that is the overall strategy as far as we are concerned. Act on one, contain

the other, that is going to be the strategy," he said.

Gen Naravane further said with changing times, the Indian Army is also working on all aspects of future warfare.

"It has been our endeavour over the last many years to slowly and steadily change ourselves from a manpower intensive army to technologically empowered one. This change cannot happen overnight.

"This change obviously would happen when technological capacities improve, as and when sophisticated weapons keep getting inducted and once we train on them and graduate using these hi-tech weapons," he noted.

He further said: "So this is work in progress and I would like to ensure everyone that we are nowhere behind as far fighting in the newer

domains of cyber, space and such aspects. We are on our way in incorporating all this big data, AI, quantum technologies. You name it and we are working on all these aspects and how to incorporate them into the characteristics of the war."

Gen Naravane also said the army has made rapid strides in honing skills in new technologies and has partnered with the industry and academia, including IITs, in this regard.

"Our officers are even attached with these institutions so that in no way should we lag behind. The industry, academia and the top notch technology institutions have (been) more than willing to come forward to meet our futuristic requirements. So we are well on the way. We are no way lagging behind," he stated.

204 new COVID cases in J&K, no virus-related death

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday recorded more than 200 fresh cases of coronavirus, the highest daily tally in more than two months, taking the total number of infected people to 3,28,418 while no fresh death due to the virus was reported from the Union Territory in the past 24 hours, officials said.

Out of the 204 fresh

cases, 45 were from Jammu division and 159 from Kashmir division of the UT, the officials said. This was the biggest single day tally of fresh cases since July 16 when 221 cases were reported.

They said Srinagar district recorded the highest number of 80 cases followed by 28 cases each in Budgam and Reasi districts.

There are 1,536 active

Army pays tributes to two pilots killed in helicopter crash in Udhampur

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, North Command, Lt Gen Y K Joshi on Wednesday led his troops to pay homage to two major-rank pilots who were killed when their helicopter crash-landed in a dense forest in Udhampur district, officials said.

Major Rohit Kumar and Major Amuj Rajput were on a training sortie when their Cheetah helicopter crash-landed in Shiv Garh Dhar near Patnitop, resulting in grave injuries. Both the pilots succumbed at Command Hospital, Udhampur where they had been evacuated for treatment.

A defence spokesperson said a solemn ceremony was held at Udhampur, where the

cases in the UT, while the number of recovered patients was 3,22,463, the officials said.

The death toll in the UT due to the pandemic was 4,419 as no fresh death was reported in the past 24 hours. Meanwhile, the officials said there were 46 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black fungus) in the UT as no fresh case was reported since Tuesday evening.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GoCo-in-C, North Command, laid a wreath to honour the valiant sons of India who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

"Major Kumar (35) and Major Rajput (28) were brave officers who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. The Indian Army will always remain indebted to their supreme sacrifice and it offers deepest condolences to their families," he

said. The mortal remains of Major Kumar, who hailed from Noida, were consigned to flames with full military honours at Devika Ghat in Udhampur district where he was putting up with his family.

Wrapped in tricolour, a coffin containing his body was brought to the cremation ground where a large number of people joined the Army personnel to bid a tearful

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The minister will kick-off the festival which will be held in Leh district for five days from September 24-28, a statement by the ministry said.

The opening ceremony will be attended by Vishnuvardhan, the director of Hindi film Shershaah, and actor Siddharth Malhotra.

"The festival will comprise of various segments to enthral the audience, including screening of popular films at the Sindhu Sankruti Auditorium, Leh. Workshops and master classes will be organised wherein filmmak-

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adien to him amid the chants of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Shaheed Major Amar Rahe', the officials said.

They said floral tributes were paid to the deceased during the last rites which were performed with full military honours, including a gun salute.

The officials said the mortal remains of Major Rajput, a bachelor, would be taken to his hometown, Panchkula.

Himalayan Film Festival to be inaugurated on Friday in Ladakh

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ers, critics and technicians from the Himalayan region will be invited to impart knowledge and skill to local film enthusiasts. This will serve as a necessary stimulus to ignite a creative leaning towards filmmaking," the statement said.

The festival will also have documentary and short-film competitions, a food festival, music fest, cultural shows in collaboration with the Department of Culture to showcase the rich cultural variety of Ladakh, the ministry said.

"The Himalayan region of India attracts filmmakers from all around the globe due to its scenic endowment. The unique geography of the region is widely documented along with its indigenous people, traditional skills, and occupations. The film festival

in this context presents an opportunity for local filmmakers to narrate their stories to a wider audience," it said.

In the last two decades, the independent film industry in the region has taken shape, with filmmakers producing films in local language, it said, adding that the same period has also seen rapid electrification in the region which is a prerequisite for the development of the audio-visual sector. "With these developments, a popular film produced in India reaches Ladakh but stories from Ladakh still remain untold, especially from the perspective of local filmmakers. Film workshops, master classes, and in-conversation sessions in this context will impart necessary skills and networking opportunities to budding as well as established filmmakers," it said.