

BJP's devp agenda transforming J-K's political landscape: Poonia

Party would raise public issues both inside the Assembly and on the streets while implementing campaigns assigned by the national leadership

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: BJP National General Secretary, J&K Prabhari and Rajya Sabha MP Dr. Satish Poonia asserted that Jammu and Kashmir occupies a special place in the national consciousness, emphasizing that the BJP's historic commitment to national integration, development and public service continues to shape the region's future. Addressing an organizational meeting at the BJP headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, on Wednesday, he called upon party leaders to strengthen



their public outreach and capitalize on the changing political atmosphere in Jammu and Kashmir.

BJP J&K President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma (CA), Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, Leader of Opposition in the J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma, Rajya Sabha MP Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana, former Deputy Chief Minister Dr. Nirmal

Singh and former J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina also addressed the meeting. State office bearers, District Prabhari and Seh-Prabhari, District Presidents, spokespersons, Morcha Presidents and other senior leaders attended.

Dr. Satish Poonia recalled the supreme sacrifice of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee on ► P11

India's heritage gaining global recognition: PM

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India's music, dance, cinema and cuisine continue to connect the country with societies across the world, asserting that its cultural heritage is receiving growing recognition internationally.

In a written message to the participants at the 'Brihattar Bharat: International Conference on Bharat's Cultural Connections Across the Globe' being held at the Vigyan Bhawan from October 14-16, Modi also said that besides preserving monuments, the government is also preserving India's manuscript heritage through the Gyan Bharatam initiative.

Union Culture Secretary Vivek Aggarwal read out the prime minister's message at the inaugural session of the conference.

Efforts to bring back antiquities from foreign countries have gained a "renewed momentum", while India's cultural heritage is receiving growing recognition at the international level, Modi said.

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts ► P11

J&K before 2019 to be made JLK

INKING THE TRUTH



Shivang Satya Gupta
Editor-in-Chief

'Reunite Jammu, Ladakh & Kashmir'; Fortify Bharat's Himalayan frontier

My proposal is JLK: Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir, reunited as a full-fledged Indian state within the Constitution of India, founded on equal citizenship, effective representation, regional dignity, accountable government and shared prosperity.

My position is explicit. I do not support restoration of Article 370, application of the Sixth Schedule to the proposed State, or statehood conditional on new regional constitutional exceptions. I support full statehood with the ordinary powers, responsibilities and accountability of an Indian state. Protection of people's rights, cultures and livelihoods should operate through the common Constitution, lawful reservations, ordinary legislation and competent public institutions.

This is a proposal for an integrated, future-ready Bharat. Its strategic purpose is to connect democratic participation with the practical capacity to sustain communities, maintain essential services and respond to disruption across difficult terrain. Its legitimacy must come from constitutional validity, public acceptance and measurable improvement in people's lives.

A democratic settlement with strategic purpose

This proposal is conceived as a lasting democratic settlement: one that gives citizens a stable framework, elected authority with clearly defined responsibilities and a development model suited to both densely populated valleys and remote mountain

settlements. Its durability would depend on the confidence it earns. No reorganization can place future constitutional choices beyond democratic consideration.

Its purpose would be a new beginning: an elected government answerable to the people, an economy connected to national opportunities, and public institutions capable of delivering justice and services across difficult terrain.

Alongside the reunification of Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir, India may examine whether selected adjoining areas of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab would benefit from inclusion in an expanded Jammu region. Such inclusion must never be imposed for political convenience. It should be considered only where there is demonstrable public advantage, geographical and administrative logic, financial viability, protection of existing rights and clear public acceptance established through transparent consultation.

The present moment makes such an examination relevant. Jammu and Kashmir's Assembly has sought restoration of full statehood. Ladakh's representative organisations have campaigned for statehood, elected authority and constitutional safeguards; recent discussions also concern the powers of a proposed elected territorial body. These demands are not identical. They nevertheless reflect a common

democratic concern: citizens want a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their land, livelihoods, ► P11

Court orders 5-day judicial custody for CJP leaders

NEW DELHI: Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka were remanded to five days' judicial custody on Wednesday for allegedly trespassing into a private property to reach Jantar Mantar, a denotified protest site, and violating bonds requiring them to maintain peace, police said.

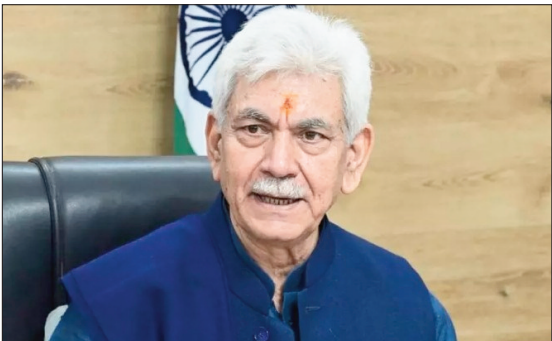
Their associate Ajinkya Shinde was bound down to maintain peace and good behaviour for six months and released on a personal bond and a surety of Rs 5,000, they said. According to police, Das and Ranka were sent ► P11

Critical to protect Himalayas, calls for sustainable mountain devp: LG Sinha

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday called for preserving the ecological balance in the Himalayas, as the region was not only a source for rivers but also a protector of biodiversity and a vital regulator of climate.

"Any disturbance to the Himalayan ecological balance would have far-reaching consequences," Sinha said in his message to the valedictory session of the 13th Sustainable Mountain Development Summit at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir



(SKUAST-K) in Srinagar.

He underscored the critical importance of protecting the Himalayan ecosystem and called for a science-based and people-centric approach to sustainable mountain development.

The LG said that the

summit had provided a platform for meaningful deliberations on issues concerning water resources, forests, land, biodiversity and climate change, while amplifying the concerns of millions of people dependent on the Himalayas ► P11

Lt Guv applauds GMC Srg

SRINAGAR: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday congratulated Government Medical College, Srinagar for organising a conference on "Advancing Internal Medicine: From Evidence to Excellence in Clinical Practice". In his message, the Lieutenant Governor underscored the critical role ► P11

Terror-funding case: Pak-based terrorist declared 'offender'

JAMMU: A special court here has declared a Pakistan-based terrorist a proclaimed offender in a 2022 case concerning alleged terror-funding activities involving Al-Huda Education Trust (AHET) and unlawful activities of the banned Jamaat-e-Islami.

Mushtaq Ahmad Mir, a resident of Thanamang village in Darhal tehsil of Rajouri district, had crossed the Line of Control (LoC) in 1995-96 to join militancy and is currently believed to be operating from Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Special Judge, NIA Court, Prem Sagar, declared Mir a proclaimed offender while disposing of an application filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) under Section 84 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). The court noted that ► P11

Govt Accommodation for Political Leaders HC questions policy allowing Azad, Raina to 'retain' official residences

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh has sought clarity on the policy governing government accommodation for political leaders after it was informed that former J-K chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad and senior BJP leader Ravinder Raina can retain their official residences till March next year following recommendations by a committee.

Hearing a PIL filed by Professor S K Bhalla on October 12, a division bench of Chief Justice Pushendra Singh Bhati and Justice Rajesh Sekhri questioned the administration over the policy under which the two political leaders have

been permitted to continue occupying government accommodation.

Appearing for the UT administration, senior additional advocate general Monika Kohli told the court that a designated committee had considered the cases of Azad and Raina, former president of the J-K BJP, at a meeting held on August 14.

Kohli submitted that the committee recommended continuing the allotments in favour of both leaders.

The recommendations were subsequently placed before the competent authority, which, after due consideration, permitted them to retain the residential accommo-

dations until March 2027 or until the next review, whichever is earlier, Kohli told the bench.

The bench, however, sought an explanation regarding the policy governing such allotments, asking Kohli about the rules under which the designated committee exercises its powers to permit political leaders to retain government accommodation.

"This court, on such submissions, has posed a question to learned senior AAG, as to what is the policy in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, which governs the retention of government accommodation... And from where the designated committee derives its power to consider whether ► P11

J&K Homestay Policy to boost local tourism: CM

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today termed the Jammu and Kashmir Homestay Policy, 2026, a major step towards promoting sustainable tourism, strengthening local entrepreneurship and creating new livelihood opportunities across Jammu and Kashmir.

Following the approval of the Council of Ministers, chaired by the Chief Minister, the Government has notified the policy to provide a simple and enabling framework for expanding quality tourist accommodation, particularly in ru-

ral, border, heritage and emerging tourism destinations.

The policy introduces a streamlined registration mechanism with Silver and Gold classifications based on facilities, hygiene and safety standards. It will enable resident homeowners to host visitors, showcase the region's rich cultural heritage and hospitality, and generate sustainable income from tourism.

Under the policy, eligible residential properties can also be registered as Bed & Breakfast establishments, further augmenting the region's hospitality infrastructure and ► P11

Cabinet revises disability pension norms; approves social aid outlay

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an outlay of Rs 53,428 crore for the continuation of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) for five years, from 2026-27 to 2030-31, with revised eligibility criteria and assistance rates for disability pension beneficiaries.

The scheme will be renamed the 'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Sahayata Yojana', while its pension and family benefit components will also be renamed, according to an official statement. ► P11

HC calls for report from jail on Malik's non-appearance

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday called for a report from the jail authorities on non-appearance of separatist leader Yasin Malik from prison in a terror funding case.

A bench of Justices Navin Chawla and Arun Bhargava noted that Malik was to be produced before the court virtually.

"Respondent (Malik) had to be produced virtually before us. However, it is not done. Let a report in this regard be called from the jail superintendent concerned," the bench said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief (JKLF) is lodged in Tihar jail where he

is serving a life term in the case.

The court listed the matter for further hearing on December 9 and directed that on that day, Malik be made to join the proceedings virtually.

The court was hearing a plea by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) seeking death penalty for Malik in the terror funding case.

Malik had earlier said he wishes to argue in-person against the NIA's plea seeking enhancement of his punishment from life term to death penalty.

On May 29, 2023, the high court issued notice to Malik on the NIA's plea and ► P11

India-China ties hinge on a 'stable' LAC: Jaishankar

NEW DELHI: The Line of Actual Control (LAC) has to be stable for normalising relations between India and China, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said, asserting that any disturbance along the border will have consequences.

Jaishankar also linked expansion of trade and investment ties between the two countries to peace and tranquillity along the border.

"The point we make to the Chinese is: 'If you want a normal relationship, if the rest of the relationship is to move, it's common sense -- It is a no-brainer that the boundary has to be stable and



that we need peace and tranquillity in the border areas'," he said.

Jaishankar, speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum on Tuesday

evening, noted that the situation along the LAC has "settled down" to a great extent since 2024 and that the relationship is "commensurately moving towards ► P11

Air India flight diverted amid hijack warning

JAIPUR: An Air India aircraft from Frankfurt to Delhi was diverted to Jaipur on Wednesday morning following a hijack alert, according to sources.

However, the alert turned out to be false.

The flight AI2030, operated with a Boeing 787-9 aircraft, made an emergency landing at the Jaipur International Airport and was taken to an isolation bay for security checks, the sources said.

The flight had 293 passengers and ► P11

India advises its nationals in Saudi Arabia to stay indoors

DUBAI: India on Wednesday advised its nationals in Saudi Arabia to stay indoors in case of an aerial attack and follow the instructions issued by local authorities.

The new advisory comes amid tensions in the Gulf kingdom due to a series of deadly drone and missile attacks targeting civilian infrastructure by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels.

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh also asked Indian nationals to refrain from circulating videos or news related to ongoing events.

"In view of the current situation, all Indian nationals are advised to continue to follow local authorities' instructions, stay indoors in

case of aerial attack, and refrain from circulating videos or news related to ongoing events," the Indian embassy posted on X.

Providing an update on the Indian nationals injured in an attack on Riyadh airport on October 10, it said two people continue to be in the ICU while one person has been shifted from the ICU to HDU (High Dependency Unit).

Four other Indian nationals continue to receive medical care in a normal ward, and one person was discharged from the hospital, the embassy said.

An Indian national was killed in the attack on King Khalid International ► P11