

LG inaugurates J&K Police's Martyrs Memorial Hockey Tourney

Terror networks must be crushed with decisive action, people backing: Sinha

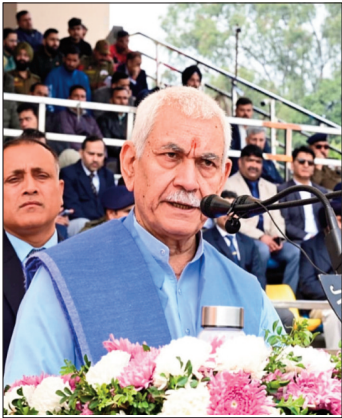
■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday directed the police to strike decisively against terrorism and collaborate with every individual in society to eradicate the terror network in the Union Territory entirely.

He reiterated his commitment to the eradication of the drug menace, saying that the police are acting tough against the menace and urged society to come forward to partner in eradicating it.

"We need to strike decisively against terrorism and collaborate with every individual in society to eradicate the terror network entirely," Sinha said while speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the Police Martyrs Memorial Hockey Tournament at K K Hakku Hockey Stadium in Jammu.

This year's event will feature 14 competing teams as the tournament resumes after a gap of more than 10 years.



"J&K Police's unbreakable resolve and message to the nation is that adversity will not crack our spirit. We will cross every barrier to claim new milestones as we advance," the LG said.

He said that the J&K Police's brave personnel, who sacrificed their today for the nation's tomorrow, wore their uniform as a duty towards all and prized national honour above life, and must live on in

our memories.

The LG observed that real tributes to bravehearts do not fade but pulse with life and run through the veins of future generations.

"Our police martyrs embodied the philosophy of duty and self-sacrifice. Our duty is to pass on those values and build the strong character of the youth," Sinha said.

He commended the J&K police force for empowering youth through the civic action program.

"J&K Police's civic action program isn't just a government scheme—it's a mindset showing society that lasting peace flows from mutual trust. It proves security strengthens through relationships and community involvement," he said.

He called upon every section of society to rise up against drug abuse.

"We reaffirm our vow for a drug-free J&K, and the police martyrs memorial hockey tournament declares that commitment," he said. Nalin Prabhat, DGP ► P11

Case filed over unauthorised circulation of Narvane's book

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police has registered an FIR over the circulation of an unpublished book of former Chief of Army Staff Gen M M Naravane on social media, an official statement said Monday.

"The Delhi Police has taken cognisance of information circulating on social media platforms and online news forums claiming that a pre-print copy of a book titled 'Four Stars of Destiny' is being circulated without mandatory clearance from competent authorities," the statement said.

According to the police statement, it was also reported that the necessary clearance for publication of this book is yet to be received from the relevant authorities.

"Upon verification, it was found that a PDF copy of a type-set book with the same title and apparently prepared by M/s Penguin Random House India Pvt Ltd is available on certain websites and, also, some online marketing platforms have displayed the finished book cover as if it is available for purchase," it read.

The police said a case has been registered with the Special Cell in order to carry out a thorough investigation into this purported leak or breach of ► P11

ULB, panchayat polls soon, SEC post still vacant: Omar

'J-K hydropower capacity to cross 7,300 MW'

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said that the government is making necessary arrangements to hold elections to urban local bodies (ULBs) and panchayats in the Union Territory at the earliest, but said the post of State Election Commissioner (SEC) is presently vacant.

In a written reply to a question of Congress MLA Tariq Hameed Karra in the Legislative Assembly, Abdullah said the superintendence, direction and control of preparation of electoral rolls and conduct of elections under the J&K Panchayat Raj Act, J&K Municipal Act and J&K Municipal Corporation Act, 2000, rests with the State Election Commission.

"The Commission (SEC) is making necessary arrangements for holding panchayat and urban local bodies elections at the earliest. ► P11



Remote habitations to get electricity: CM

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said that with rising population, expansion of villages and new habitations coming up, it will take time, but the Government is committed to reaching every household and providing electricity.

"The population is increasing, villages are spreading, and new houses are being built. Electrifying them is not a ► P11

'De-freezing of teacher posts under discussion'

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Education Minister Sakeena Itoo announced on Monday that the government is actively considering the de-freezing of teacher positions to address the shortage of educators in schools across Jammu and Kashmir.

In response to a question from MLA Pawan Kumar Gupta of the BJP during the Legislative Assembly session, the minister explained that the recruitment of teacher positions was frozen by the lieutenant governor-led State Administrative Council in 2018.

She emphasised that the government is making efforts to lift this freeze to expedite the recruitment process within the department.

Itoo noted that 594 lecturer positions in 27 disciplines have been referred to the J-K Public Service Commission. Additionally, 727 non-teaching posts and 43 multi-tasking staff positions have been sent to the finance department for revival or concurrence.

Regarding the filling of vacant teacher positions, she said that these posts have been frozen for the transition of Regularised Rehbar-e-Taleem (RRETs), Teacher Grade II and III, to resolve salary issues for educators engaged under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan program.

The education minister also mentioned that in 2025-2026, a total of 258 senior lecturers have been elevated as in-charge principals, besides 56 PG Masters and ► P11

House witnessed noisy scenes over SASCI scheme; BJP stages walkout

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Monday witnessed a disruption after a PDP leader accused the government of pushing the Union Territory into a debt trap by introducing Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme.

PDP legislator Waheed Ur Rehman Para, who was joined by his party colleagues and Independent MLA Sheikh Khurshid, was countered by the National Conference, leading to heated exchange of words between the two sides.

Later talking to reporters outside the house, National Conference's chief spokesperson and MLA Tanvir Sadiq accused Para of misleading the House and lacking understanding of the programme.



Sadiq also claimed that the PDP leader was carrying a mike and demanded an inquiry into it.

Mubarak Gul, who was holding the chair, made repeated attempts to control the situation and finally adjourning the house half-an-hour before the ► P11

quity into it.

Speaker takes serious note of Mic Issue

JAMMU: The Speaker of Jammu and Kashmir legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today said that the matter would be examined after MLA Altaf Ahmad wani raised the issue that MLA Waheed Ur Rehman Parra has allegedly carried a microphone inside the House.

Taking serious note of the issue, the Speaker stated that bringing a microphone into the House by a ► P11

Maoism never benefitted society, only caused destruction: HM Shah

JAGDALPUR (CHHATTISGARH): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said Maoism never benefitted any society and spread destruction wherever it existed, citing examples of nations like Colombia, Peru and Cambodia.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the three-day division-level 'Bastar Pandum 2026' cultural event at Jagdalpur, the headquarters of Chhattisgarh's Bastar district, Shah reiterated that the Naxal menace will be uprooted completely from the nation by March 31.

He appealed to Naxalites to surrender and join the



mainstream, promising them dignified rehabilitation.

"The Maoist rehabilitation policy of the Chhattisgarh government is the most at-

tractive," the minister asserted.

He also expressed concern over the fact that the remaining Naxals still ► P11

J-K draws Rs 14.94 cr investment post-FY23

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary on Monday said Jammu and Kashmir has attracted private investments worth Rs 14,948 crore in past four years, generating employment for 64,515 people in the industrial sector.

Replying to a question by BJP MLA Sunil Bhardwaj in the Legislative Assembly, the Deputy Chief Minister also said said 1,452 industrial units have been set up in Jammu and Kashmir since 2022-23.

Giving details, he said 629 industrial units were established in 2022-23 with an

investment of Rs 2,153.45 crore, generating employment for 15,719 people. In 2023-24, 234 units attracted Rs 3,389.37 crore investment and generated 29,969 jobs, while 405 units in 2024-25 brought in Rs 4,145.59 crore investment, creating 11,396 jobs.

He said that during 2025-26 till December, 184 industrial units attracted Rs 5,260 crore investment and generated employment for 7,431 persons.

Choudhary said that the government has formulated multiple policies and schemes to attract private investments in the Union Territory. ► P11

Unemployment in J&K higher than national average at 6.7%

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir has remained consistently higher than the national average over the past several years, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary said on Monday, citing official data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS).

In a written reply to a question by legislator Mubarak Gul in the J&K Legislative Assembly here, he said the overall unemployment rate stands at 6.7 per cent in the Union Territory,

which is significantly higher than the national average of 3.5 per cent.

Quoting the PLFS of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the deputy chief minister who is minister incharge Labour and Employment department said the unemployment rate among persons aged 15 years and above in Jammu and Kashmir has remained higher than the national average over the last six years.

In 2024-25, the unemployment rate in the UT stood at 6.7 per cent against the all-India average of 3.5

per cent. The rate was 6.1 per cent in 2023-24 compared to India's 3.2 per cent, while in 2022-23 it was 4.4 per cent against the national figure of 3.2 per cent, he said.

In 2021-22, unemployment in J&K was estimated at 5.2 per cent as against 4.1 per cent nationally, 5.9 per cent in 2020-21 compared to 4.2 per cent for India. In 2019-20, the unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir stood at 6.7 per cent, significantly higher than the national average of 4.8 per cent, the deputy chief minister said.

According to a ► P11

Terror accused stabbed to death in Faridabad jail

FARIDABAD: A 20-year-old terror accused, Abdul Rehman, who was lodged in Neemla Jail for his alleged involvement in a conspiracy to carry out an explosion in Ayodhya, was murdered by a fellow inmate following a brawl inside the prison premises on Monday, police said.

According to the police, the murder is allegedly the handiwork of another prisoner, Arun Chaudhary, who was recently transferred the facility from Jammu and Kashmir.

The incident occurred around 2.00 am in Chakki No 2 of security ward 3B, located near Barrack No 3. During a heated altercation, Chaudhary allegedly ► P11

Rs 19 Cr cocaine haul busted in fake currency investigation

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Questioning of an accused arrested in a counterfeit currency case led to the seizure of cocaine worth over Rs 19 crore in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district, police said on Monday.

On February 3, a written complaint was lodged at Bari Brahmana police station by a branch manager of Punjab National Bank, regarding depositing of fake currency notes.

The bank official had alleged that Dil Mohd, a resident of Digiana Ashram, had deposited fake currency notes having a face value of Rs 9,000, a police spokesman

said.

He said a probe was launched after registering an FIR over relevant sections of BNS at Bari Brahmana police state. During the investigation, police obtained bank account statements of the accused who is presently residing at Jalalabad locality of Sunjwan in Jammu.

Scrutiny of the accounts revealed balances of about Rs 18 lakh in J&K Bank and Rs 2.40 lakh in PNB, the spokesman said, adding a special investigation team was set up by the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Samba to ascertain the source of the bank balances, given that the accused was working

as a driver by profession.

During questioning, he said the accused disclosed that he is selling cocaine since long and had earned the said amount through drug trafficking.

Police recovered two packets of cocaine, weighing approximately 1937.80 grams, in cardboard boxes wrapped with cello tape hidden in the garage at his workplace in Bari Brahmana, the spokesman said, adding relevant sections of NDPS Act were added in the case.

More arrests and recoveries are expected at the disclosure of the arrested drug peddler, he said.

Meanwhile, ► P11

45-year-old Pak national repatriated

JAMMU: 45-year-old Pakistan national was handed over to the Rangers on Monday, a day after he was apprehended by Border Security Force (BSF) personnel while crossing into India across the International Border (IB) in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

Zaffar Iqbal, a resident of Pindi village of Zafarwal tehsil in Sialkot, was apprehended on Sunday evening and questioning revealed that he had inadvertently crossed into India under the influence of intoxicants, officials said.

They said the BSF established contact ► P11

Budgam-Banihal special train service extended up to Katra

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Nearly a week after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah advocated increase in frequency of the trains between Kashmir and Jammu regions, the Northern Railway on Monday extended the service of Budgam-Banihal special train to Katra with effect from February 11.

The service of special train numbers 04688 and 04687, earlier operating between Budgam and Banihal, has been extended up to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra railway station, Public Relations Inspector, Jammu Division, Raghvender Singh said in a statement.



He said the extension has been undertaken with the objective of making travel more convenient and comfortable for passengers and strengthening rail connectivity between Jammu and Kashmir.

On February 3, the chief minister while welcoming rail connectivity between the two regions of Jammu and Kash-

mir had said the frequency of the trains and the number of coaches needed to be increased.

The special train number 04688 will continue to operate between Budgam and Banihal as per the existing schedule, with no change in timings or stoppages. From Banihal, the train will ► P11