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THOUGHT of the DAY

I attribute my success to this: I never gave or took any excuse.
–Florence Nightingale

INBRIEF

India reaffirm its resolve to fight against terrorism: MEA

NEW DELHI: India on Tuesday reaffirmed its resolve to counter all forms of terrorist activities, particularly cross-border terrorism after Pakistan sought to dismiss the busting of an ISI-backed terror network as merely a distraction from internal security challenges.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said over 200 operatives of the ISI-backed terror group, Shahzad Bhatti Network, were arrested during coordinated operations in 14 states ahead of Independence Day, thwarting plans of the organisation to launch subversive attacks.

In its reaction, Pakistan's foreign ministry rejected Shah's allegations linking Pakistan to the arrests.

Terrorism is taken very seriously by India, ▶ P11

LG chairs 81st Meeting of J-K Rajya Sainik Board

Sinha considers issues pertaining to Veterans, Veer Naris, widows

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired the 81st Meeting of Jammu Kashmir Rajya Sainik Board, at Lok Bhavan.

The Board deliberated on key issues concerning veterans, Veer Naris, widows and dependents, covering welfare delivery, grievance redressal, healthcare and institutional strengthening. These include establishment of a ZSWO at Kishtwar and improved coordination on pension-related matters.

The meeting was attended by Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Northern Command; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Maj Gen Paramvir Singh Dagar, Chief of Staff, HQ White Knight Corps; Maj Gen KS Dhadwal, Chief of Staff HQ Chinar Corps; Shailendra Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Chanderkar Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Neena Mishra, Principal Director, Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare, GoI; Brig. Pankaj Chib (Retd.) Director Sainik Welfare Department, J&K; Brig ▶ P11

Lt Guv reviews Shri Amarnathji Yatra track devp

SRINAGAR: Brigadier Chirag Ghura, Chief Engineer, Project Beacon of the BRO, on Tuesday called on Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here at the Lok Bhawan and briefed him about the track development for the Shri Amarnathji Yatra. The chief engineer was accompanied by Brigadier S Deepak, Chief Engineer ▶ P11

Omar reviews readiness for J&K's First Film Fest

CM calls for showcasing UT's heritage, cuisine

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday reviewed preparations for the maiden International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK), scheduled to be held here from September 7 to 10.

The four-day festival is being envisioned as a premier international platform celebrating cinematic excellence, cultural exchange, creative collaboration and emerging filmmaking talent, while providing an opportunity to forge partnerships with film fraternity across different countries and showcasing the rich cultural and cinematic heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.

Commissioner Secretary Information, R Alice Vaz, briefed the Chief Minister on the festival, which includes screenings across categories such as International Competition, Cinema of the World, Bharat Panorama, J&K Select, Best Debut Film, Documentary/Hybrid and Short Films. The programme will also feature masterclasses, panel discussions, in-conversation sessions, round tables and workshops involving filmmakers, actors, critics, scholars and other prominent personalities from the film industry.

The meeting reviewed arrangements at the principal festival venues, including Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), INOX Shivpora Srinagar and Waves Cinema Jammu, besides the proposed floating cinema at Lalit Ghat. Preparations for the Gulmarg excursion for a select group of filmmakers were also discussed, including visits to the Gondola, Golf Course, Gulmarg Club and other prominent attractions.

The Chief Minister emphasised the need for close inter-departmental coordination and timely completion of all arrangements to ensure a seamless experience for filmmakers, artists, delegates, guests and audiences.

He directed all concerned departments and agencies to remain ▶ P11

Suspicious movement leads to multi-district search ops

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Security forces launched search operations at several locations following reports of the movement of suspected persons in Udhampur, Reasi and Kathua districts of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Tuesday.

The police, in collaboration with the CRPF, began a cordon-and-search operation after receiving information about the movement of two suspected individuals.

These individuals allegedly knocked on the door of Prakash Chand in Udhampur's Talot village late Monday night and asked for food, officials said.

They said that the residents did not respond to the repeated knocks for several minutes. Concerned, they alerted the security forces after the suspected individuals, who were wearing shawls, left the area heading towards the Khuban side.

Responding quickly to the information, joint teams from the police and CRPF arrived at the village and initiated the operation, the officials added.

Additionally, security forces conducted search operations in the Sadini forests in Reasi and in several villages near the International Border in the Hiranagar sector of Kathua.

These operations are ongoing in all areas where recent reports have been received, according to the officials.

Court issues warrant against LeT terrorist

JAMMU: A special NIA court in Jammu has issued a non-bailable warrant against operational commander of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) for his involvement in terror activities in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Tuesday.

The non-bailable warrant (NBW) was issued last month against absconding accused Mohammad Yaqoob, a designated terrorist of Pakistani origin who is also known by the aliases Abu Sumama, Sumama Ilyas and Waris Ali, the officials said, citing an order issued by the NIA court.

Yaqoob is the second top LeT terrorist against whom the NIA ▶ P11

MoD bars import of 405 strategic Defence items

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has notified the sixth positive indigenisation list comprising 405 strategically important items with an estimated business potential of Rs 3,070 crore, a move that seeks to reduce dependence on imports and boost the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

ITEMS COVERED:

- Advanced Light Helicopter, Light Utility Helicopter,
- Su-30MKI, Light Combat Aircraft and AL-31FP Engine
- Armoured platforms including T-72, T-90 & BMP-II
- Warships and other critical defence equipment
- Missile systems such as Konkurs-M, Invar and MRSAM
- Defence electronics including radars, sonars, fire control systems & satellite communication systems
- High Explosive Anti-Tank ammo & other equipment

The list contains line replaceable units, sub-systems, sub-assemblies, spares, components and raw materials. These include 16 items of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and 389 items of Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), the defence ministry said in a statement.

The items cover a ▶ P11

RSS to brainstorm on "Demographic Imbalance" today

VISAKHAPATNAM: The RSS will deliberate on demographic imbalance and drug abuse affecting youth during its forthcoming three-day "Akhil Bharatiya Samanvay Baithak," here in Andhra Pradesh.

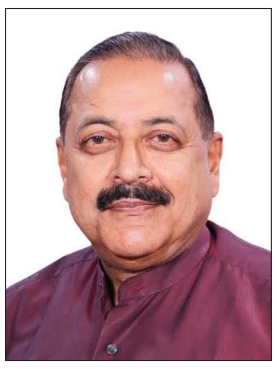
The All India Coordination Meeting will be attended by over 30 organisations.

Sunil Ambekar, Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Pramukh, RSS said the meeting will commence at 9 am on August 19 and will continue till Friday evening at Vijnana Vihara School in Gudilova, near Visakhapatnam.

"The upcoming annual meetings will primarily deliberate on critical issues such as demographic imbalance and drug abuse affecting the youth," he said in a press release.

Key functionaries ▶ P11

AI, Quantum transform governance: Dr Jitendra



NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State in PMO, Dr Jitendra Singh on Tuesday said that AI, Quantum, Cybersecurity and Digital tools are rapidly transforming governance and emphasised the need for continuous learning and adaptation among civil servants as governance processes and technology evolve rapidly.

Addressing participants of the 15-Day Refresher Course for Lateral Entry Joint Secretaries, Directors and Deputy Secretaries, the Minister said that the rapidly changing administrative environment requires officers to remain curious learners and continuously update their knowledge and skills.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the refresher course should be viewed as an opportunity for two-way communication and learning through dialogue, rather than merely a platform for delivering lectures. He emphasised that participants, having acquired substantial professional experience and maturity, should actively engage in discussions and provide feedback on their learning requirements.

The Minister highlighted the rapid pace of technological change, noting that developments in Artificial Intelligence, quantum technologies, cybersecurity and digital tools are increasingly influencing governance and administrative processes. He stressed that continuous learning is essential for officers to effectively understand and respond to these emerging technologies.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also ▶ P11

J&K Bank expands salary portfolio with two MoUs

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Further strengthening its institutional partnerships through customised employee-banking solutions, J&K Bank signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) under its Corporate Salary Package with FIL Industries Private Limited in Srinagar and Brahmrishi Bawra Shanti Vidya Peeth Higher Secondary School in Udhampur.

In Srinagar, Zonal Head (Srinagar) Sheikh Mohammad Muzaffar signed the agreement on behalf of J&K Bank, while Managing Director FIL Industries Junaid Altaf Bukhari represented the company. The agreement was signed in the presence of Cluster Head Syed Tasaduq Madni, Branch Head (SSI) Ubaid Ashraf and other senior officials from both organisations.

The MoU will bring nearly 600 employees of FIL Industries - one of the leading business groups in the Union Territory - within the ambit of the Bank's Corporate Salary Package.

Speaking on the occasion, Zonal Head Sheikh Mohammad Muzaffar said, "This MoU reflects our continued endeavour to ▶ P11

NEET Protest: SC to compose panel to judge police excesses

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it would constitute a high-powered committee comprising retired apex court and high court judges, a former DGP, and an ex-CBI director to examine allegations of police excesses against student protesters in Delhi recently and violence against police personnel.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana said an order for constituting the committee would be released on Wednesday after it receives suggestions from different parties on other members to be ▶ P11