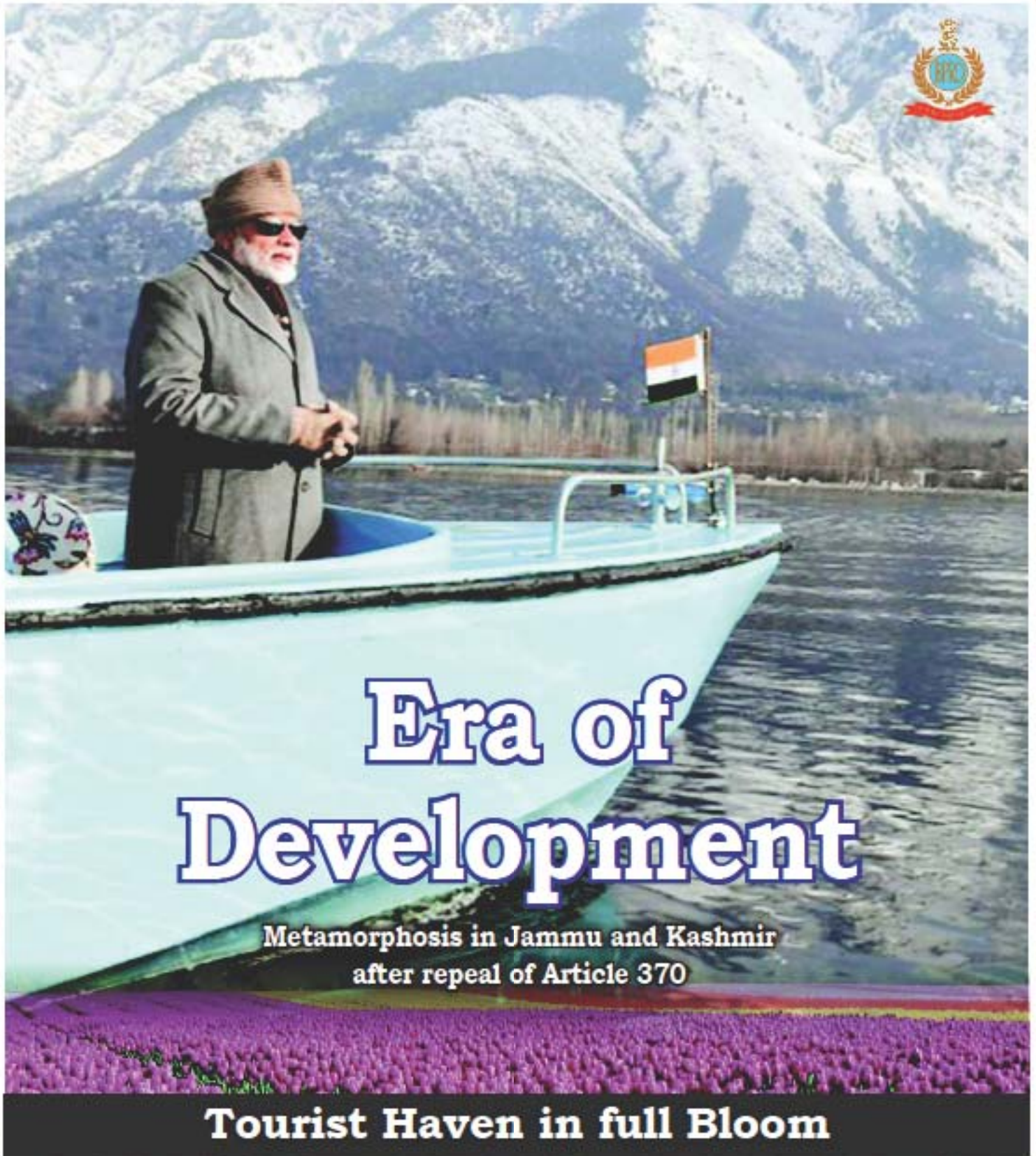


Peace, Security and Prosperity

Vigilant India

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Complimentary Copy



Era of Development

Metamorphosis in Jammu and Kashmir
after repeal of Article 370

Tourist Haven in full Bloom

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in full Bloom

From the Editor



Balaji Srivastava

Director General, BPR&D

“

Thanks to the well-crafted strategy of the Government of India under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, Jammu and Kashmir has ushered in a novel era of peace and prosperity after years marked with political turmoil.

”

Unity and integrity of a country based on uniform federal principles are crucial for a vibrant democracy. In this context, the need for reformative measures to restore peace and development in Jammu and Kashmir, which witnessed decades of insurgency and unrest, was of utmost significance.

Thanks to the well-crafted strategy of the Government of India under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir has ushered in a novel era of peace and prosperity after years marked with political turmoil. Significantly, while these path-breaking measures have laid the foundation for a thriving democracy, it has also ensured the participation of various stakeholders.

Aiming to establish peace in the region, the Government of India has prioritised dialogue and engagement with different sections of society. This initiative has shown remarkable results in reducing tensions and creating an atmosphere of peace and progress. The abrogation of Article 370 by the government was an initiative of utmost importance to address longstanding issues enhancing the integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country. This move has resulted in greater economic development and improved governance, with the extension of the Union's laws and provisions in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, the Government of India has undertaken an unwavering mission to combat terrorism, boost the electoral process at grassroots levels, and restore political activities. Active presence and integrated efforts of Central Armed Police Forces including CRPF and BSF have made significant contributions while creating an atmosphere of peace and security in Jammu and Kashmir.

Alongside the counterterrorism initiatives, the Government of India has prioritised the development activities in the Union Territory. While addressing the root cause of radicalisation and discontent, the Government has paid special attention towards boosting the socio-economic prospects of communities affected by terrorism.

In a marked initiative, the Government has recognized the untapped potential of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. Concerted efforts have been made to attract domestic and international tourists by showcasing the region's heavenly landscapes and cultural heritage. The development of infrastructure projects such as hotels, resorts, and other recreational facilities is on the fast track. This is creating a conducive environment for tourists and investors. The construction of highways and tunnels has enhanced transportation networks and opened up new avenues for progress and development, thereby boosting the regional economy.

This edition of 'Vigilant India' is especially dedicated to highlighting the transformation that Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed in the recent past.

We look forward to your feedback and suggestions while presenting this 6th issue of 'Vigilant India'. You may like to send your suggestions to dg@bprd.nic.in

Jai Hind.



कई वर्षों के बाद हुए 'वितस्ता-द फेस्टिवल ऑफ कश्मीर' से देशभर के लोगों को न सिर्फ राज्य की समृद्ध संस्कृति और विरासत को जानने का मौका मिला है, बल्कि यह कार्यक्रम देशवासियों को भी एक सूत्र में धरोने का शानदार प्रयास है।

-श्री नरेंद्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री



जम्मू-कश्मीर देश के शीर्ष वीरो के अदम्य साहस व वीरता की कर्मभूमि रही है। ऐसे ही वीरो के परछम को चिरजीवी बनाने के लिए श्रीनगर के प्रताप पार्क में 'बलिदान स्तंभ' का शिलान्यास किया। यह स्तंभ बलिदानियों की स्मृति को अमर कर युवाओं को देशभक्ति की प्रेरणा देगा।

-श्री अमित शाह, केंद्रीय गृह एवं सहकारिता मंत्री



ब्रह्मा बर्काने के पवन दर्शन के लिए श्री अमरनाथ जी की पवित्र यात्रा आरंभ हुई है। यह यात्रा देश की महान सनातन संस्कृति को प्रदर्शित करती है। देवाधिदेव महादेव की असीम कृपा सभी श्रद्धालुओं और भक्तों पर बनी रहे।

**- श्री नित्यानंद राय
केंद्रीय गृह राज्य मंत्री, भारत सरकार**



Led by the various reforms & significant far-sighted economic decisions, #NewIndia, under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodi ji is on its way to becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25.

- Sh. Nisith Pramanik, Minister of State (Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports)



गीता प्रेस को गांधी शांति पुरस्कार 2021 से सम्मानित किए जाने पर बधाई। गीता प्रेस ने समाज में सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक परिवेश को आगे बढ़ाने की दिशा में पिछले कई दशकों से सरहनीय सहयोग किया है। गीता प्रेस परिवार को हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं।

**-श्री अजय मिश्रा
केंद्रीय गृह राज्य मंत्री, भारत सरकार**



केंद्रीय गृह एवं सहकारिता मंत्री श्री अमित शाह ने जम्मू में CFSL सामाजिक शिलान्यास और विभिन्न विकास योजनाओं का उद्घाटन किया।

-केंद्रीय गृह मंत्रालय



राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग एवं अवसंरचना
विकास निगम लिमिटेड

जोजिला सुरंग पर
कार्य प्रारंभ

मुख्य अतिथि

श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी
प्रधानमंत्री

गरिमाययी उपस्थिति

एन. एन. बोहरा
सचिव, जम्मु और कश्मीर

श्री महाबूबा मुफ्ती
मुख्यमंत्री
जम्मु और कश्मीर

श्री नितिन रा
मंत्री, परिवहन, परिवहन
और परिवहन, जम्मु और
कश्मीर

डॉ. जिलेन्दु सिंह
सचिव, राजस्व, जम्मु और कश्मीर

श्री श्रीधर
सचिव, जम्मु और कश्मीर



Era of Development

Metamorphosis in Jammu and Kashmir after repeal of Article 370

✦ Jammu and Kashmir marches on the Path of Peace and Progress

✦ Ladakh also witnesses Streams of Development

Bureau



What Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh are today was not the same few years ago. Violence and unrest were the defining characteristics of the region, which was otherwise considered one of the most beautiful places on Earth. Terrorist and stone-pelting incidents were quite frequent. Strikes lasting not less than 100 days in government offices per year were the norm,

and people would wait for moments of peace to venture out and get their work done. Schools and colleges would remain closed for days and months, and there would be uncertainty about when markets would shut down due to fear of violence or terror attacks. Tourists were also reluctant to visit the area.

However, the situation has significantly changed now. Schools are open, colleges are bustling with young boys and girls eager to learn, teachers are present in the classrooms, shops are open, streets are safe, and there are no stone-



जम्मू व कश्मीर सरकार

प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना के तहत परियोजनाओं का ई-उद्घाटन

अनुमोदित लक्ष्य राशि 55.23 करोड़

श्री अजय राह

पर्यटन, सड़क परिवहन और ग्रामीण सड़क



pelers on the roads. Strikes in government offices are a thing of the past, and people are able to complete their work on time. There are no disruptions in transportation, and the number of tourists is breaking records.

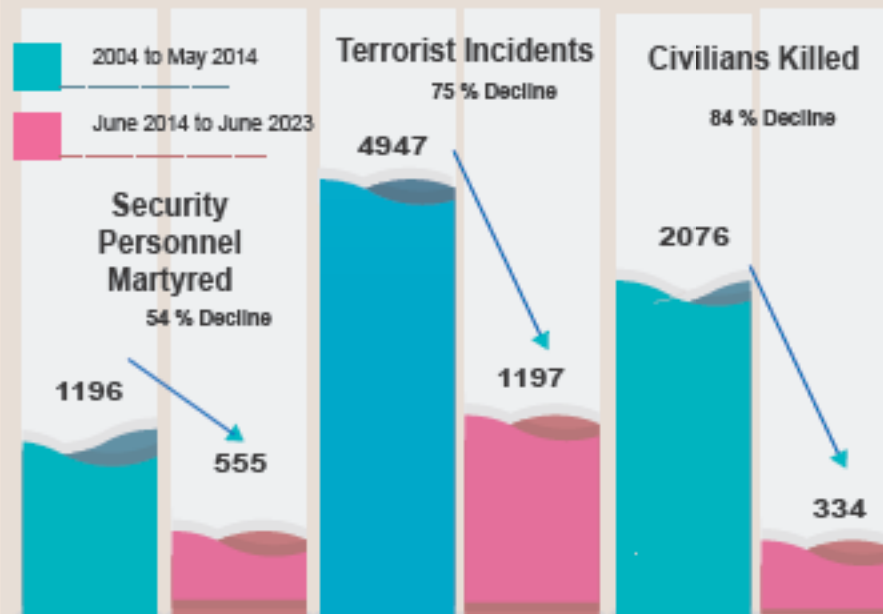
This is the new Jammu and Kashmir, which reshaped itself after the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution on August 5, 2019. The region has undergone a complete transformation from its previously terror-ridden state. Thanks to the post-Article 370 abrogation scenario, comprehensive development is taking place, and the restlessness of the

people is fading away as their eyes are filled with hope. The abrogation of Article 370 was accompanied by efforts to establish peace through a two-pronged strategy: cracking down on terrorists and separatists, and creating confidence among the people by ensuring sustainable peace and development. The Central Reserve Police Force, Police, and Border Security Force, through their continuous vigilance, are working as sentinels of peace, ensuring the safety of all and posing a threat to terrorists and anti-social elements. While the backbone of the terrorists has been broken, cross-border

infiltration of terrorists via the Line of Control has also been contained.

Infrastructure development has witnessed significant progress, with the establishment of a comprehensive road network connecting the Line of Control (LoC) to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and ten major highways. Bollywood has made a comeback to the valley, infusing cultural vibrancy and artistic expression. The region's world-renowned products, such as saffron, dry fruits, basmati rice, and apples, are now spreading their

Consistent Improvement in the Security Situation





“ In most of the schemes and laws formulated for the country earlier, it was written – ‘Except J&K’. Now, this is a matter of history. The path of peace and development on which Jammu and Kashmir is moving has also paved the way for new industries to come up in the state. Today, J&K is contributing to the self-reliant India campaign.

- Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

aromatic essence in India and abroad.

The government's commitment to zero tolerance against terrorism, which began with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's assumption of office in 2014, has yielded positive results. In the Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir, the government has successfully curbed uncertainty and unrest fueled by a country across the western border and its agents. Strengthened security measures, along with strict actions against stone-pelters, separatists, and terror financiers, have significantly weakened the terrorist network. The vigilant security forces have successfully thwarted the malicious intentions of terrorist handlers situated across the Line of Control.

Employment and business opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir have long grappled with cross-border terrorism, but the government's zero-tolerance policy has significantly improved the security situation. The Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Police have played a commendable role in combating terrorism, resulting in a decline in the number of individuals involved in terrorist activities. In April 2023, a comprehensive review meeting was held in New Delhi to assess the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir,



Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, and with the combined efforts of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, the Police, including the Central Armed Police Forces, significant progress has been made in the development of Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh over the course of 9 years. The improved situation in Jammu and Kashmir has now gained recognition on a global scale, effectively conveying a positive message to the entire world.



reaffirming the government's commitment to counter-terrorism. These measures have created confidence among the youth to prepare for government and private jobs creating employment opportunities through business activities.

Enhanced coordination among security agencies and the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) has played a pivotal role in dismantling terrorist networks operating within the region and emanating from across the border. The efforts of the security forces have led to a significant decline in terrorist incidents and civilian casualties, bringing a glimmer of hope to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Home Ministry data between 2016 and 2021 demonstrates a notable continuous improvement in the security situation in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Additionally, after the Jammu Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill was passed in 2021, provisions were made for the inclusion of IAS, IPS, and IFS officers from the current Jammu Kashmir cadre into the AGMUT cadre.



Promotion of Industrial Development for Jammu & Kashmir

The Central government, driven by the core mantra of 'Antyodaya' and the spirit of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, and Sabka Vishwas', has breathed new life into the neglected region of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Under a ground-breaking industrial promotion scheme, the government is set to take industrial development to the block level in J&K. Aiming for the transformation, the government has allocated ₹ 28,400 crore over the next 15 years through a new Central scheme. The incentive programme will open doors to fresh avenues of development in the region. With the approval of the new Central Regional Plan, J&K's industrial development will receive a substantial boost. A sum of ₹ 1,123.84 crore has already been allocated through various special package schemes. This initiative is remarkable for promoting domestic manufacturing, reducing import dependence in J&K, and bolstering its export potential. The new scheme offers attractive incentives for both large and small units of MSMEs, setting the stage for a new era of industrialisation in the region. The scheme is poised to bring about a significant shift in J&K's existing industrial ecosystem, with a specific focus on creating skilled opportunities and paving the way for sustainable development. This project is set to make a significant impact, as it is expected to generate around 4.5 Lakh direct and indirect jobs in various sectors, including agriculture, horticulture, silk industry, and dairy industry. Moreover, a capital interest subsidy of 8% per annum will be available for a maximum of seven years on loan amounts up to ₹ 500 crore in these sectors. The scheme also offers a GST-linked incentive of 300% of the eligible value of actual investment made in manufacturing and services for a decade. Existing units will receive a working capital interest incentive at an annual rate of 5% on amounts up to ₹ 1 crore for a maximum of five years. The scheme also encourages new investments, creating a favourable environment for economic growth. This transformative plan aims to position J&K as a prominent industrial destination, enabling it to compete on a national level. The overarching objective is to drive industrial development, which will have far-reaching positive effects throughout the region.





Data shows the Story

- From 2019 to June 2022, 29806 people have been recruited in public enterprises in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Total 890 laws of the Centre have come into force in Jammu and Kashmir after the removal of Article 370.
- Before August 2019, on an average only 6.4 km of road was built every day, but now 20.6 km of road is being built every day.
- There has been a 70% decline in terrorist incidents in 9 years.

The region witnessed an accelerated pace of development through the implementation of numerous government schemes and policies. Infrastructure projects were initiated to improve connectivity, enabling seamless travel and trade. Investments poured in, creating employment opportunities and bolstering the local economy. The landmark step of abrogating Article 370 aimed to further integrate Jammu and Kashmir into the national mainstream while also ensuring equal opportunities and rights for its residents.

Union Minister for Home and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, visited Jammu and Kashmir on June 23, where he inaugurated several development schemes for the UT. During his address to a public meeting, he stated that due to Article 370, development could not happen in Jammu and Kashmir. When comparing the situation of the last 20 years, he highlighted that in the past 9 years, there has been a 70 per



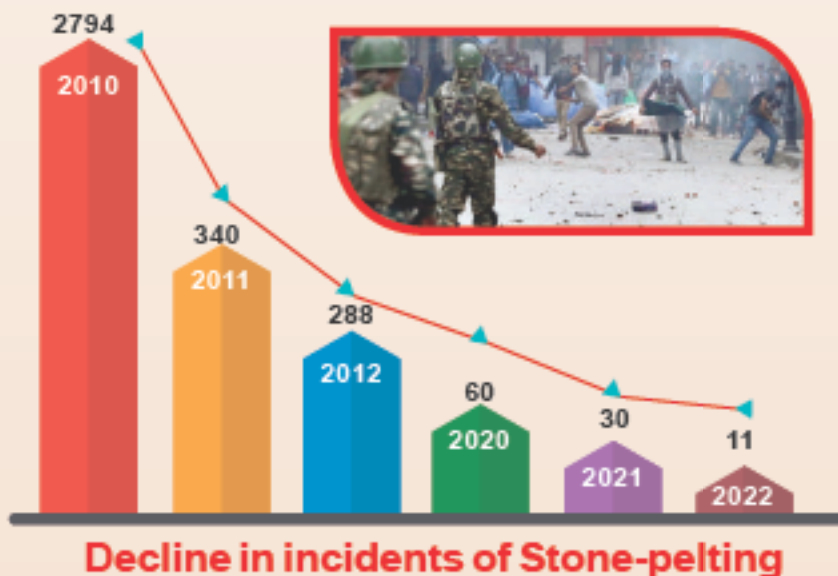
By removing Article 370, Shri Narendra Modi has given the right of reservation to the hill community, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women and senior citizens. Only Shri Modi can do this justice. After the abrogation of Article 370, only 32 calls for 'hartal' and 'bandh' were received in the last 47 months, while the incidents of stone pelting have also come down by 90%.

Shri Amit Shah, Union Minister for Home and Cooperation

cent reduction in violence.

Moreover, the government launched initiatives to promote tourism, recognising the immense potential of Jammu and Kashmir as a global tourist destination. The international community was able to witness the unrivalled transformation of the region during events like the G20 Tourism Working Group meeting held in Srinagar between 22 to 24 May 2023, where 60 delegates from the most important countries of the world marvelled at the scenic splendour and the warmth of the local people. The international community commended India's efforts to foster peace and development during the G20 conference held in the Kashmir Valley. The event served as a testament to the transformative journey of Jammu and Kashmir.

Jammu and Kashmir stands as a testament to the triumph of hope over adversity. With each passing day, the region moves closer to realizing its true potential and becoming a shining example of progress and prosperity. The government's dedication and the unwavering spirit of the people ensure that Jammu and Kashmir will shine even brighter, attracting visitors from far and wide to experience its magnificence and witness its inspiring journey of transformation. ■



Jammu and Kashmir Soars on Action Oriented Schemes



Jammu and Kashmir is experiencing a new wave of action oriented schemes. The Union Territory has embarked on a journey of accelerated progress in 'Amrit Kaal'.

Bureau

In a historic event last year, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) hosted the National Panchayat Conference on National Panchayati Raj Day. During the conference, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated a 500 KW solar power plant in Palli. This remarkable achievement made Palli the first panchayat in the country to become carbon neutral. The Prime Minister spoke to the Gram Sabhas of the country through an online programme held at Palli panchayat in Samba district. During his address, Shri Modi acknowledged that after India's independence, Kashmir had lagged behind in development for many years. However, the current government has tried to fulfil Babasaheb's dreams by implementing various schemes efficiently. The government has worked towards reducing the time taken for scheme implementation in the Valley, which used to involve lengthy bureaucratic processes. The goal of giving more authority to panchayats is to turn them into genuine centers of empowerment. The increased power and funds allocated to panchayats will energise village development. The government also places great importance on enhancing the participation of women in the Panchayati Raj system, ensuring that sisters are actively involved in decision making processes. By empowering panchayats and focussing on inclusive development, the government aims to uplift rural areas and bring progress and prosperity to the villages of J&K.

Major Achievements in Jammu & Kashmir since 2019

Government Medical College: Four government medical colleges were sanctioned at Kathua, Rajouri, Doda and Udhampur in Jammu. Except for Udhampur, government medical colleges at the other three places are functional. The construction work of Udhampur Medical College is in progress. ₹ 672 crore will be spent on these four projects.

AIIMS Jammu : Construction work of AIIMS at Jammu's Vijaypur is in full swing. Presently, its administrative complex is operating from Jammu. The estimated cost of the project is ₹ 1,253 crore.

IIT and IIM Jammu : One phase of IIT Jammu has been completed, and the remaining construction work is in full swing. Presently, the administrative block and classrooms are operational at IIT Jammu. The estimated cost of this project is ₹ 577.08 crore. Similarly, the construction work of IIM Jammu is in progress. The administrative block and classrooms are functional in shift arrangement. The estimated cost of this project is ₹ 376.82 crore.

Government Medical College : The government has approved the construction of two medical colleges in Anantnag and Baramulla in Kashmir. The estimated cost for building these colleges is ₹ 230.02 crore. Additionally, a Government Medical College is currently being built in Handwara.

AIIMS Awantipora : Construction work is underway for the AIIMS facility in Awantipora, with an estimated project cost of ₹ 1,828 crore.

NIFT, Srinagar : The college is now operating from its new campus in Ompora, which costs approximately ₹ 325.36 crore to construct.

Unani Hospital & College, Ganderbal : The college's construction cost is estimated to be ₹ 32.50 crore, and it was inaugurated in September 2021.

Roads and Highways : The expansion of National Highway 44, from the Udhampur to Chenani section, to four lanes, as well as the second phase of the Jammu-Akhnoor Highway, will provide much needed relief from traffic congestion in the city of Jammu. The estimated cost for these projects is ₹ 272.77 crore. The construction of the Ring Road in Jammu is in full swing, with only the tunnels at the extreme end

requiring completion. This project is estimated to cost ₹ 1,339 crore. The Navyug Tunnel has been completed, allowing smoother traffic flow to the Kashmir Valley. The tunnel runs from Banihal to Qazigund in the Ramban district. Another completed project is the two lane road connecting religious villages Sudhmahadev and Mantalai, from Chenani to Sudhmahadev. The estimated cost for this project is ₹ 155.04 crore. The construction work for the Delhi Amritsar Katra Expressway is progressing rapidly, which will greatly enhance travel convenience for pilgrims and other passengers travelling from Delhi to Katra. In addition, the process of expanding the roadway to four lanes between Akhnoor and Poonch is currently in progress, which will enhance accessibility up to Pir Panjal. These infrastructural developments are aimed at enhancing transportation facilities and connectivity in the region.

'Yatri Niwas' at Ramban for Shri Amarnathji pilgrims by SASB: A Yatri Niwas has been constructed at Ramban to provide accommodation and facilities to the pilgrims during the Amarnath Yatra. The estimated cost of this project is ₹ 46 crore. This Yatri Niwas can accommodate 3,600 pilgrims.

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam Temple: The TTD temple was recently inaugurated in Jammu has become a major attraction of religious tourism.

Jambu Zoo: The construction of the Jambu Zoo in Jammu is a major attraction for tourists and locals. The estimated cost of this project is ₹ 62.48 crore.

Jammu Smart City Limited: Beautification of the city of Jammu has been taken up under Jammu Smart City Limited. Several projects have been initiated and successfully completed. The estimated cost of these projects is ₹ 236.80 crore.

Industrial Area: During the 2022-23 fiscal year, the industrial area of Jammu received a significant investment



of ₹ 1,416.09 crore. This investment led to the creation of 10,506 jobs, which is the highest number of jobs generated in the area compared to previous years.

Stadium: The Bakshi Stadium underwent a renovation as part of the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP), with an estimated cost of ₹ 44 crore. The stadium was inaugurated in 2021-22, and the old indoor stadium was also renovated at an estimated cost of ₹ 16 crore.

Navyug Tunnel: The Banihal Qazigund Road Tunnel, which cost over ₹ 3,100 crore to build, was inaugurated in 2021. This tunnel provides a faster route for highway commuters, saving them 45 minutes of travel time.

Tourism: Tourism in the area has been boosted by developing new tourist circuits that cost approximately ₹ 80.85 crore. As part of this, 75 off beat destinations, 75 Sufi sites, and 75 new trekking routes have been identified and promoted for visitors to enjoy.

Srinagar Smart City Limited: The beautification of Srinagar city has been taken up under Srinagar Smart City Limited. Numerous projects have been undertaken and successfully completed. The estimated cost of these is ₹ 345 crore. ■

Moving ahead with Policy Initiatives

The government's relentless efforts in combating terrorism in J&K have yielded positive results. The Union Minister for Home and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, stated that under Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's guidance, the Indian government took decisive actions to crack down heavily on terrorist activities. Shri Shah emphasised that by revoking Article 370, the Prime Minister bestowed the rights of reservation upon hill communities, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women, and senior citizens. Only Shri Modi's strong leadership could have ensured this long awaited justice. The Union Minister for Home and Cooperation underscored a significant decline in terror related incidents in the last few years. According to Shri Shah, there were 7,327 terrorist incidents resulting in the deaths of 2,056 civilians during the previous government's 10-year term. However, in the last nine years, there has been a decrease of about 70%, with only 2,350 terrorist incidents resulting in the deaths of 377 civilians. He said that after the abrogation of Article 370, only 32 calls for strike and 'bandh' were reported, while the incidents of stone pelting have also come down by 90% in the last 47 months. Shri Shah admired the Prime Minister's commitment to economic growth. He said that during the last nine years, Shri Modi has worked towards making India the fifth largest economy in the world. To promote the development of J&K, the government has introduced several policies and initiatives. These included the Industrial Policy, Industrial Land Allotment Policy, Private Industrial Estate Development Policy, Wool Processing, Handicraft and Handloom Policy, as well as the New Film Policy in 2021. These policies have facilitated an increase in investments and continuous growth in tourism. In 2022, a record breaking 1.88 crore tourists visited Jammu and Kashmir. Moreover, Shri Shah highlighted the government's commitment to providing employment opportunities to the region's youth. He emphasised that from 1947 to 2014, J&K faced a severe scarcity of jobs. However, under Shri Modi's guidance, the government has addressed this issue effectively. A total of 28,000 government jobs had been provided to the youth, along with the establishment of 51,000 units for self employment. ■





Tourist Haven in full Bloom

Bureau

Once plagued by prolonged insurgency and political upheaval, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has undergone a remarkable transformation and emerged as a tourists' paradise of the country. J&K has realised its true tourism potential thanks to the government's multipronged strategy comprising peace and developmental initiatives.

The region has experienced a remarkable surge in the number of tourists in the year 2022. A record breaking 1.88 crore tourists visited Jammu and Kashmir in 2022, compared to 1.13 crore in 2021. Notably, the Kashmir Valley welcomed 26.73 lakh tourists in 2022, surpassing the previous highest recorded figure by more than double.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi made a special address to the nation on August 8, 2019, emphasising the potential of tourism in the Leh region, including Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed that Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh have the capability to become the world's largest tourist destinations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that he needed support of the people of India too in creating new atmosphere in the valley! He also called upon film industries to come and begin shooting of films. He assured that the whole political environment and administrative set up had been changed now to suit the new situation that would encourage tourists to visit.

He urged the Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil film industries, as well as associated individuals, to consider investing in Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh, including film shooting, setting up theatres, and other ventures.

Dal Lake, Srinagar's most popular identity, draws national and international tourists with its magnificent landscape and serene beauty. Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah said that the government wants to make Dal Lake the most attractive tourist centre of the country, for which a scheme of about ₹ 85 crore has been formulated

Jammu and Kashmir Welcomes Record Number of Tourists

- ◆ The government notified Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Policy 2020 to promote investments in the tourism sector.
- ◆ Accord of the status of Industry to the tourism sector resulted in Private Investment of around ₹ 250 crore in the tourism/hospitality sector.
- ◆ Significant Increase in the number of tourists in Jammu and Kashmir (over 1.88 crore in 2022, as against 1.13 crore in 2021).
- ◆ In the calendar year 2022, 26.73 lakh tourists have visited the Kashmir Valley, which is more than double the peak of 12.99 lakh in 2016.
- ◆ Identification of 75 offbeat destinations, 75 Sufi/religious sites, 75 heritage sites and 75 new tracks and infrastructure arrangements by the government of Jammu and Kashmir has created an enabling environment by opening up new areas.
- ◆ Allocation of ₹ 42 crore under the Central Sector Scheme for the development of Hazratbal shrine.



on a preliminary basis. He said that due to this upgrade, children from across the country would like to visit Dal Lake and Tattoo Ground adding that this will result in exponential increase in the number of tourists. Jammu and Kashmir has made significant progress in its infrastructure, showcasing remarkable landmarks such as the world's highest rail bridge called the 'Chenab Bridge,' surpassing the height of France's Eiffel Tower. Additionally, the region boasts India's longest highway tunnel, the Chenani-Nashri tunnel, which is also the longest bi-directional tunnel in Asia. These remarkable



Celebrations at Kheer Bhawani Temple

The Kheer Bhawani temple in Tulmula, Ganderbal, holds immense significance for Kashmiri Pandits. Despite adverse conditions that had prevented people from visiting in the past, the temple garnered nationwide attention when Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah offered prayers there in October 2021. Every year, during the auspicious occasion of 'Jyestha Ashtami', Kashmiri Pandits flock to the 'Mata Raganya Devi' temple to seek blessings. This year, from May 26 to 28, the annual Kheer Bhawani fair was celebrated with great enthusiasm by both the Kashmiri Pandit community and the other local residents of the Kashmir Valley. On this momentous occasion, Shri Amit Shah, the Union Minister for Home and Cooperation, conveyed his best wishes and extended congratulations to Shri Manoj Sinha, the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Union Home Minister also hailed the efforts of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), the Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the local administration for the successful holding of the event. The Ganderbal district administration had made elaborate arrangements to ensure the comfortable stay of the devotees, in addition to ensuring law and order on the ground.



“ The Kheer Bhawani Mela held on Jyestha Ashtami in Kashmir occupies a sacred place in the spiritual realm of the Kashmiri Pandit sisters and brothers. More than 25000 devotees attended the Mela this year. May the divine grace of Maa Kheer Bhawani always be with us.

-Shri Amit Shah
Union Minister for Home
and Cooperation

infrastructure projects have become major attractions in the tourism sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

The government's proactive measures have played a pivotal role in driving the remarkable growth of tourism in recent years. Notably, the identification and promotion of various offbeat destinations, Sufi/religious places, and heritage sites are among significant achievements. By focusing on these sectors and investing in infrastructure development, the government has opened up new opportunities in tourism. Furthermore, a substantial allocation of ₹ 42 crore has been dedicated under the Central Sector Scheme to develop the iconic Hazratbal shrine.

In line with the increasing number of tourists, the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department has prioritised the promotion of home stays as an alternative accommodation option. Over 1050 homestays have been registered so far, with many more in the pipeline. These homestays offer visitors a chance to experience Jammu and Kashmir closely, fostering cultural exchange and supporting the local economy. Moreover, by empowering local communities, these homestays ensure direct participation in the economic benefits generated by the tourism sector, providing a unique and immersive experience for visitors.

In 2021, the government introduced a film policy aimed at transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a preferred filming destination. This policy streamlines the filing process through a single-window clearance system, attracting various production houses for films, web series, documentaries, and music videos. Furthermore, to maintain global standards for houseboats and 'shikaras', the government implemented the Houseboat Policy. Registered houseboat and 'shikara' owners avail subsidised rates for wood, ensuring the quality and preservation of these boats, which represent the region's heritage. Ladakh is renowned as one of India's prominent hill tourist destinations, known for its stunning mountains, unique landscapes, high-altitude lakes, rich culture, and traditions. Tourism plays a vital role in the region's economic development, generating employment opportunities in transportation, hospitality, and catering sectors. Tourism has a positive impact on economic activity, even in the most remote areas of Ladakh. Over the past few decades, tourism in Ladakh has witnessed substantial growth. The Leh district, in particular, has emerged as the preferred destination for foreign tourists. Situated at an altitude of 14,000 feet above sea level, Pangong Lake is considered the highest, deepest, and longest lake in the world. ■



G20 Meet in Srinagar Makes Waves Globally

Bureau

Recently, when the G20 Tourism Working Group meeting took place in the Kashmir Valley, the efforts of the Indian government for peace and development were appreciated worldwide.

The conference held at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre on the banks of the famous Dal Lake saw the participation of over 60 foreign delegates. Vigilance was maintained from the sky to the ground. The Dal Lake was guarded by the commandos who were vigilant enough to protect it from any untoward eventualities.

During the G20 meeting, the delegates enjoyed a golf session and also explored the famous Mughal Gardens along the banks of the Dal Lake. They had a delightful experience riding in the famous Shikara boats on the Dal Lake in Srinagar. The Shikara boat ride was highly appreciated by the visitors. These moments were captured and shared widely on social media, with some even posing for pictures in traditional Kashmiri attire.

In reality, this conference has showcased the fact that the environment in Jammu and Kashmir, which witnessed the shadow of terrorism for decades, has now transformed. People are happy in this changed environment, and the transformation is being felt. After the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, Jammu and Kashmir is on the path of progress. It feels like a decade of peace has returned to the Kashmir Valley. The three day G20 Working Group meeting on tourism showcased the present situation and beauty of Kashmir in front of the world and also the nation. Kashmir is considered a paradise on Earth, renowned for its natural beauty, snow-capped mountains, abundant wildlife, magnificent landmarks, warm hospitality, and local craftsmanship. The happiness on the faces of the locals in the presence of domestic and foreign guests was evident. Now, the local people trust that being in unison with the country and following one

The announcement of the G20 Tourism Working Group meeting taking place in Srinagar had come as a surprise to everyone in diplomatic circles. It also raised eyebrows in some Indian domestic sectors regarding its feasibility and the potential for peaceful proceedings. People questioned whether there would be any repercussions on the evolving situation in the Kashmir valley, and how separatists would react.

constitution pave the way for development.

During this G20 Working Group meeting, discussions were held on five priority areas: green tourism, digitization, skills, MSME, and destination management. These priorities may form the basis for transforming the tourism sector and





achieving the goals of sustainable development by 2030. The purpose of the G20 Tourism Working Group meeting is to strengthen economic development, preserve cultural heritage, and promote the region's sustainable development. The Union Ministry of Tourism called upon nations, and international organizations to work collectively towards advancing the tourism sector and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations by 2030. In fact, it is a significant achievement of the union government that the same Jammu and Kashmir, which used to face criticism and misinformation on global platforms, has now become an integral

part of India in the eyes of representatives from G20 and other invited nations. They came here and left with happy memories. While Pakistan and China were spreading misinformation about Kashmir worldwide, all countries except Turkey, China, and Saudi Arabia attended the G20 meet in Kashmir, appreciating the atmosphere here. Foreign visitors had the opportunity to experience the beauty and culture of Kashmir for three days. The G20 representatives acknowledged that they were deeply impressed by the situation, beauty and hospitality of Kashmir. They minced no words in saying that their visit will remain memorable for them forever. ■

Kashmir is Magnificent, Say Foreign Delegates

Jammu and Kashmir, once known for violence and unrest, is a peaceful and magnificent region now. Foreign delegates were overwhelmed by the splendid landscape and the friendly behaviour of the people.



Chang Jae-bok
South Korean

Chang Jae-bok, the South Korean Ambassador to India, stated that the G20 Tourism Working Group meeting in Kashmir was successful on all counts. He praised the beauty of the region and commended the welcoming gesture of the people of the UT.

Gustavo, the Brazilian delegate for the G20 meeting, averred that Kashmir is one of the best places in the world for tourism. He



Gustavo
Brazilian

enjoyed engaging in adventure activities such as skiing, mountaineering, and trekking, as well as indulging in leisurely experiences like 'Houseboat stays' and 'Shikara' rides. Gustavo expressed his desire to visit Kashmir again.

Simon Wong, Singapore's High Commissioner to India, said tourists

from all over the world should visit Kashmir. He said that there is no place on earth more beautiful than Kashmir. He also marvelled at the wonderful handicrafts of the region. Wong shared that he practised yoga after coming to Kashmir. He said he was at a loss for words to describe the magnificence of the places he visited in the UT.



Simon Wong
Singapore

He also practised yoga after coming to Kashmir. He said he was at a loss for words to describe the magnificence of the places he visited in the UT.

Yoga Unites the World

Bureau

At the United Nations Headquarters in New York, a historic Yoga session led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought together representatives from 135 countries. This momentous event took place on 21 June 2023, the International Day of Yoga. The iconic North Lawn of the UN Headquarters became a unifying space as Yoga practitioners from various nations joined together with mats and yoga dresses. This achievement was not only a testament to India's exceptional diplomacy under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi but also a global tribute to the enduring practice rooted in ancient India. Recognizing the display of unity by UN member states, the session was included in the Guinness Book of World Records, and a certificate was presented to India's Permanent Representative to the UN.

The theme of the historic Yoga session was "Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "Yoga for the World as a Family," coinciding with the G20's theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future." The event garnered an overwhelming response from thousands of yoga enthusiasts including diplomats, officials, academicians, health professionals, technocrats, industry leaders, media professionals, artists, spiritual leaders, and yoga practitioners. A video message from UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was also played.

Distinguished personalities in attendance included Csaba Korosi, President of the 77th United Nations General Assembly, Eric Adams, Mayor of New York City, Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also addressed the gathering of Yoga

practitioners, emphasizing that "Yoga means to unite." He described Yoga as a truly universal practice, free from copyrights and patents, originating from India. The Prime Minister highlighted Yoga's adaptability to people of all ages, genders, and fitness levels. During his address, Prime Minister Modi also called for the elimination of internal conflicts through yoga, urging individuals to overcome obstacles and resistances.

The proposal for Yoga Day was put forward by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his address to the UNGA in September 2014, receiving overwhelming support from member nations of the UN General Assembly. Acknowledging its universal appeal, the United Nations officially declared 21 June as the International Day of Yoga on 11 December 2014. Since its inception in 2015, the International Day of Yoga has been commemorated with numerous sessions and events showcasing the benefits and universal appeal of Yoga at the UN, Times Square, and other iconic locations worldwide. ■





PM conferred with 'Order of the Nile'

Bureau

P rime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has been honoured with yet another prestigious award during his foreign visit. On 25 June 2023, the President of Egypt, Mr. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, presented the 'Order of the Nile', Egypt's highest civilian award, to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at a special ceremony held at the Presidency of Cairo. The Prime Minister expressed his gratitude to President El-Sisi on behalf of the people of India for this esteemed recognition. Earlier on the same day, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was warmly received by President El-Sisi at Al-Ittihadia Palace. During the bilateral meeting, both leaders fondly recalled President El-Sisi's State visit to India as the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations in January 2023. They also recognized the effectiveness of the newly established India unit within the Egyptian cabinet in advancing bilateral cooperation. The two leaders engaged in discussions to further enhance the partnership between India and Egypt, particularly in areas such as trade and investment, information technology, defense and security, renewable energy, agriculture, health,

The President of Egypt Mr. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi conferred the 'Order of the Nile', the highest civilian award of Egypt, to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 25 June 2023 at a special ceremony held at the Presidency of Cairo. This is the 13th highest state honor that has been conferred on the Prime Minister by other countries.

culture, and people to people ties.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Mr. El-Sisi also discussed enhancing cooperation in the G20, underlining issues such as food and energy insecurity, climate change and the need to raise a united voice for the Global South. The Prime Minister looked forward to receiving President El-Sisi at the G20 Leaders' Summit to be held in New Delhi on 9-10 September 2023. The Prime Minister of Egypt, HE Mr. Mustafa Madbouly and several other senior ministers of his cabinet were also present on the occasion. External Affairs Minister, National Security Advisor and senior officials were present from the Indian side.

Modi, who was on a state visit to the country at the invitation of the Egyptian President, held one on one talks with Mr. El-Sisi and they reviewed important developments in the region and the world. This was the first bilateral visit by



an Indian Prime Minister to Egypt in the last 26 years. Views were exchanged on a number of regional and international issues of common interest. President El-Sisi expressed Egypt's confidence in India's active chairmanship of the G20 Summit, which contributes to curbing the negative impact of international challenges on the global economy.

Remarkably, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is the first Indian to receive this award. Prime Minister interacted with members of the Indian community in Cairo on 24 June 2023 during his state visit to Egypt. In his interaction with members of the Indian community, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi appreciated the Indian community's contribution in strengthening India-Egypt relations. The event was attended by over 300 members of the overseas Indian community including students, professionals and businessmen. ■



Amarnath Yatra Amid Foolproof Security

- Deployment of Central Armed Police Forces along with Police personnel
- Radio Frequency Identification Cards (RFID) for the pilgrims
- Pilgrims praise the Police Forces working tirelessly for them
- Insurance of ₹ 5 lakh for Amarnath Pilgrims and ₹50,000 for animals

Bureau

The Government of India has made comprehensive arrangements for the Amarnath Yatra, which holds immense religious significance for millions of devotees. Through improved coordination among the police, Army personnel, and the Central Armed Police Forces, the yatra has been made entirely secure. Additionally, the government has ensured essential healthcare facilities and amenities during the yatra.

Amarnath Yatra, which started on July 1, will continue until August 31, 2023. The government's utmost priority is to ensure that the pilgrims have a smooth and hassle-free 'darshan' experience without encountering any difficulties.

Aiming to address the arrangements for the Amarnath Yatra, Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah on June 9 held a meeting with Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Governor Shri Manoj Sinha, Union Home Secretary Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla, and other senior officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The meeting covered various aspects related to the pilgrimage. Several senior officials, including the Intelligence Bureau Director, Border Security Force and Central Reserve Police Force Director Generals, Border Roads Organisation Director General, J&K Chief Secretary, and other high ranking officers from the Central government and J&K administration attended the meeting.

Ensuring the convenience and safety of Amarnath pilgrims is of utmost significance to the government. Shri Shah directed the implementation of robust security arrangements along

the entire Amarnath Yatra route. Special emphasis was placed on facilitating smooth travel arrangements from airports and railway stations to the Yatra base camp.

Shri Shah also instructed to provide night time air services from Srinagar and Jammu to facilitate passengers. He also highlighted the importance of ensuring proper healthcare facilities, which includes the availability of oxygen cylinders, their refilling, and maintaining an adequate stock of medical supplies. Instructions were given to deploy additional teams of doctors and ensure ample medical beds, ambulances, and helicopters to address any medical emergencies.

The Union Minister for Home and Cooperation made sure that the necessary arrangements were in place for the Amarnath Yatra, including travel, accommodation, electricity, water, communication, and healthcare facilities. Additionally,





instructions were given to deploy machinery to quickly handle any communication disruptions or landslides that may occur along the Yatra route.

The 62 days journey holds immense significance, and the Central government has ensured the safety and security of every devotee participating in the Amarnath Yatra. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has taken proactive measures to prepare the travel route in advance, including clearing snow, widening roads, repairing footbridges, constructing handrails, and installing safety measures. To ensure the smooth conduct of the Shri Amarnath Yatra 2023, as many as 49 officers from the J&K administrative services have been appointed as Camp Directors and Additional Camp Directors at various Yatra routes. These officers will report to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board. An important development is the provision of Radio Frequency Identification Cards (RFID) to all pilgrims, allowing their location to be tracked. Every Amarnath pilgrim will receive insurance coverage of ₹ 5 lakh, and every animal will be insured for ₹ 50,000.

Additionally, there will be provisions for a tent city, Wi-Fi hotspots, and adequate lighting along the entire Yatra route. Online live 'darshan' of 'Baba Barfani', live telecast of the morning and evening 'aarti' at the holy Amarnath cave, and religious and cultural programmes will also be organised at the base camp.

The government ensures comprehensive preparations to conduct the Amarnath Yatra in a safe and peaceful environment each year. The Jammu and Kashmir administration has formulated a robust security strategy based on the guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs, with the Central Armed Police Forces playing a crucial role. This year, 45 companies of Central paramilitary forces have been deployed from other states to ensure passengers' security. The security of the pilgrims and the base camps will be handled by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the police, with the CRPF having the main



Shri Amarnathji's journey is a divine and grand form of our heritage. I wish that with the blessings of Baba Barfani, new enthusiasm and energy are infused into the lives of all devotees and our country moves rapidly on the path of 'Sankalp se Siddhi' in Amritkal.

-Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

responsibility. A team from the CRPF will accompany the vehicles from Jammu to the Pahalgam and Baltal base camps. Additionally, a vehicle with CRPF jawans will be stationed in the middle of each batch. To ensure security, Army personnel will be deployed along the Jammu-Srinagar highway, specifically from Udhampur to Qazigund. They will collaborate with the police and the CRPF to conduct search operations in major markets, villages, surrounding mountains, and forests along the highway. ■

Devotees Embark on Amarnath Yatra with Enthusiasm



Shivam Desai

The government has made extensive preparations to ensure the security and smooth travel of the pilgrims, and the devotees are highly satisfied with the arrangements. **Shivam Desai**, who traveled from Gujarat, said that every aspect of passenger welfare is being taken care of, whether it is the security personnel responsible for safety or the staff managing food and beverage arrangements.

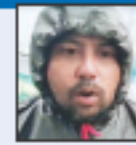
Rahul Patel, another resident of Gujarat, remarked that the well-being of the passengers is given utmost attention, even in adverse weather conditions, to prevent any inconveniences.

Ravi Dixit, a resident of Gorakhpur, mentioned that CRPF jawans and officers remain dedicated to their duty at various locations, even in unfavorable weather.

Aarti Sharma, hailing from Delhi, expressed her gratitude for the comprehensive facilities and security provided by the CRPF throughout the journey, from Jammu to Amarnath, saying that they encountered no issues whatsoever.

All passengers appreciated the efforts of the paramilitary forces including BSF and CRPF. **Sonika**, a resident of Haryana, shared that the personnel of the Central Armed Police Forces are diligently focusing on cleanliness, accommodations, and security. The J&K Police, in collaboration with the BSF and CRPF, are taking every precaution to ensure the convenience of all passengers.

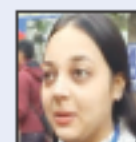
Similarly, **Sonia** emphasized that the current situation in Jammu and Kashmir is vastly different contrary to earlier perceptions. People now trust the government for safe and accessible travel. The number of participants in the Amarnath Yatra has increased significantly. Many passengers expressed their gratitude for the unwavering support and assistance provided by CRPF jawans and officers at every stage of the journey.



Rahul Patel



Sonika



Sonia



Ravi Dixit



Aarti Sharma

Development Gains Momentum in Ladakh

Bureau



Consistent efforts of the government towards developmental activities in Ladakh have led to significant outcomes in the region. The Government of India, following the revocation of Article 370, has prioritised education, healthcare, and other sectors in the Ladakh region. To further enhance educational opportunities, the government has taken the decision to establish a Central University in Ladakh at the cost of Rs 750 crore. This university will provide local students with access to higher education without the need to travel elsewhere, ultimately elevating the standard of education in the region.

It is important to note that after the President's order, the Central Government announced the removal of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir, leading to the separation of Ladakh from Jammu and Kashmir, with both regions being designated as separate union territories. Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah highlighted the long standing demand of the people of Ladakh to be recognized as a distinct Union Territory, enabling its residents to achieve their aspirations.

Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the first winter grade diesel outlet in the Ladakh region on November 17, 2019, aiming to address the challenges faced by people due to the loss of fluidity in diesel fuel during extremely cold winter conditions. Panipat Refinery's winter grade diesel has a pour point of -33 degrees Celsius, making it capable of maintaining its fluidity even in the harshest winter weather of the region. This is unlike normal diesel, which becomes difficult to use under such conditions.

The winter grade diesel will not only facilitate smooth

- Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah inaugurated Ladakh's first winter-grade diesel outlet in the year 2019
- Total ₹ 1681.51 crore approved for the construction of the 4.1 kilometer long Shinku La Tunnel
- India's largest solar project of 7500 MW at a cost of ₹ 50,000 crore along with a 9 MW Hydroelectric project to be completed in the next 4 years
- Ladakh envisages to gradually reduce AT&C losses from 48.17% in the base year 2020-21 to 27.85% by 2024-25



Now, the development of the people of Ladakh is the special responsibility of the Government of India. The capability of people of Ladakh will be utilised appropriately and new opportunity of development will come without any discrimination. Now the innovative spirit of youth of Ladakh will get boosted, they will get good institutes for good education, people will get good hospitals; and infrastructure will be modernised with priority.

- Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

travel and transportation during the peak tourist season in extremely cold conditions but also give a boost to tourism, meet the region's supply needs, and contribute to overall economic development.

The revocation of Article 370 has ushered in a new era for the Ladakh region, as the Central Government is dedicated to bringing its people on par with the rest of the country. It signifies the government's commitment to advancing the development of Ladakh. The change in Ladakh's status, coupled with increased budget allocations, has paved the way for comprehensive progress in the region. The government's top priority lies in the development of Ladakh, as demonstrated by the approval of ₹ 1,681.51 crore for the construction of the 4.1 km long Shinkun La tunnel, scheduled for completion by 2025. The tunnel will ensure all weather connectivity to Ladakh, generating favourable conditions for tourism and appreciation from the residents of Zaskar's Lungnak Valley, which is regarded as the most underdeveloped area in Ladakh.

Moreover, the introduction of local taxation provisions will bolster the region's financial resources. The completion of India's largest solar power project, with a capacity of 7500 MW and with an outlay of ₹ 50,000 crore, will contribute to the prosperity of the region. Additionally, the construction of a 9 MW hydroelectric project, combined with the 7500 MW solar project, will be accomplished within four years, stimulating both development and employment opportunities in Ladakh. ■



Pencil Village

Bureau

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ulwama in Kashmir will no longer refer to the terror that struck on February 14, 2019. Instead, it will represent an image of New India. Thanks to the initiative of the Government of India, Oukhoo in Pulwama is now known as the 'Pencil Village'. This transformation has made Pulwama synonymous with educational tools for children across the country. One may be surprised to know the fact that about 90% of the pencils in the country are produced in Pulwama. The Oukhoo village in the Pulwama district has rapidly become a manufacturing hub of these pencils. With the abrogation of Article 370, Kashmir is poised for a new era of development, and the government is actively working to integrate Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) into the nation's development trajectory. Previously, the village only supplied pencil slates (wooden strips) to the rest of the country. However, complete pencils will now be manufactured in Kashmir and distributed throughout India. This village will be transformed into a special zone, creating more employment opportunities. Over 400 people are involved in this business, but with further expansion, this number will increase. Last year, the village generated a revenue of ₹ 107 crore from the sale of pencils. Similarly, many villages in the Anantnag district also engage in pencil manufacturing. By giving Oukhoo the title of 'Pencil Village', the local residents will receive subsidies and contribute further to the industry, thereby boosting business opportunities. In the 1960s, Cedar trees were used to produce pencils in this region, but this practice harmed the forests and the environment. As a result, Poplar trees replaced Cedar as the primary source of wood for pencil manufacturing. Currently, only 10% of the wood used in pencil production is sourced from Kerala, while the majority comes from Pulwama. The Central government's initiatives not only strengthen the "Vocal for Local" campaign but also

Young Cricketers from J&K Rise and Shine

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has made its presence felt in the cricketing world. This was evident during the recent IPL season. Significantly, a considerable number of players from J&K participated in the IPL. Five players were part of different teams, while six were associated as net bowlers for various teams. Notably, the net bowlers included Wasim Bashir for Mumbai Indians, Abdi Mushtaq and Mujtaba Yousuf for Lucknow Super Giants, Saath Umar Nazir for CSK, and Samiullah Dar for Kolkata Knight Riders. This IPL season marks a historic moment as J&K witnessed a substantial representation in the tournament.

Notably, among the selected net bowlers, some players have not yet played for J&K. This development showcases the talent that exists within the region. Besides, for the first time in Jammu, people will have the opportunity to watch the semi-finals and finals of the IPL live on large screens, adding to the excitement surrounding the game. Moreover, the region is also known for cricket bat manufacturing. J&K's cricket bat industry, with a rich history of 102 years, has now emerged as a strong competitor to the renowned English Willow bat manufacturers. The popularity of bats made from Kashmir Willow has grown as an increasing number of cricket-playing nations have started using them. Cricket bats made from Kashmir Willow made their debut in the qualifying round of the 2023 Cricket World Cup, marking a significant milestone in India's bat manufacturing history.



promote a self-reliant India through the encouragement of local industries. Now, instead of relying on other states for raw materials, complete pencils will be manufactured in Pulwama and find their way into the hands of people all over the country. ■



New Milestones in the Growth Journey of J&K

Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah reviewed the development projects during his two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir.

Bureau

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) continues to forge ahead in its path towards development, marking new milestones in its journey of growth and prosperity. A significant addition to this growth narrative unfolded when Shri Amit Shah, the Union Minister for Home and Cooperation, inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for 84 development projects worth ₹ 586 crore in Srinagar on June 23. This momentous occasion signifies a major boost to the region's progress and showcases the Indian government's commitment towards strengthening J&K's socioeconomic landscape. Shri Shah highlighted the impact of the developmental projects, which are expected to benefit approximately 22 lakh people in J&K. He emphasised the significance of providing pure drinking water directly to households, relieving women from the burden of fetching water from distant sources, and improving the overall health of families.

When pure drinking water reaches a house, it not only removes the problem of the woman who has to fetch water from far away but also brings a qualitative improvement in the whole family's health, he said. Shri Shah underscored the government's commitment to modernise 100 schools in the region, ensuring children receive access to quality education. He lauded Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's determination to bring watershed changes and a better quality of life to the people, particularly in the Valley. Shri Shah added that every citizen of the Union Territory is now covered under the 'Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Yojana' through the 'SEHAT' scheme, providing health expenses coverage up to ₹ 5 lakh. This approach reflects the government's people-oriented governance efforts at the grassroots level in J&K, emphasising holistic development for all.

Shri Shah highlighted the advent of democracy in J&K, with 35,000 elected representatives actively shaping the future of their villages, tehsils, and districts. He expressed confidence that in the coming days, the region will witness the emergence of new leaders, including MPs and MLAs, from within these communities. Shri Shah commended the government led by Shri Modi for effectively implementing Panchayati Raj at the grassroots level in J&K, thereby percolating and strengthening democracy. The establishment of Panchayati Raj in J&K under the Prime Minister's leadership has become a permanent reality, marking a significant change. Shri Shah attributed this transformation to a deep-rooted commitment to democracy and praised the Prime Minister for instigating positive changes in J&K. Shri Shah highlighted the developmental activities that the region has witnessed in the last couple of years and also talked about some ongoing projects. He emphasised Shri Modi's commitment to enhancing the region's educational infrastructure, citing the establishment of AIIMS, IIMs, and IIITs in J&K. ■





Vitasta Festival showcases Kashmir

The 'Vitasta' Festival aims to showcase Kashmir's rich cultural legacy, diverse traditions, and distinctive aspects to the global audience.



Bureau

The Vitasta Festival serves as an ambassador, spreading Kashmir's distinctive essence to India and rest of the world. It stands as the most significant cultural gathering to occur in Kashmir over the past 25 years. The festival derives its name from the original Sanskrit appellation of the Jhelum River. The event showcased the talents of 1,900 artists from Kashmir and 150 artists from various regions of India, resulting in a vibrant blend

of diverse cultures across the country. Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah hailed the "Vitasta Mahotsav" as a testament to Kashmir's all-encompassing ideology and culture. He emphasised that it was in this region where music and knowledge reached great heights, as evidenced by Adishankar's recognition of it as "Sharda Kshetra" and the establishment of "Sharda Peeth". The Vitasta Festival in Kashmir provided a platform for approximately 1,900 artists from the Valley and around 150 artists from across the country to display and exchange their artistic expressions. ■

Jammu-Kashmir: A Testament to Indomitable Courage and Bravery of Soldiers



The security situation in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has witnessed a remarkable turnaround. The government has implemented various measures to dismantle the terrorist network. Proactive operations have been carried out against terrorists, and efforts have been made to identify and apprehend their supporters on the ground. Actions have been taken against individuals associated with banned



organisations, and security measures, such as intensified night patrolling and enhanced deployment, have been carried out. Coordination meetings between different security agencies have been held, particularly in cases related to terror funding. The enforcement of strict legal measures has contributed to the restoration of peace in J&K.

The central government has been actively attending to the needs of the security personnel, ensuring they have all the necessary facilities. Furthermore, immediate support is provided to the families of soldiers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. In a symbolic gesture to boost morale of security personnel, Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah recently inaugurated the 'Balidan Stambh' (Sacrifice Pillar) in Jammu and Kashmir. This monument aims to inspire patriotism among the youth and provide solace to the families of martyred soldiers. During the ceremony, Shri Amit Shah emphasized the bravery and valour exhibited by the country's bravehearts from Jammu and Kashmir. To commemorate these heroes, the foundation stone for the Sacrifice Pillar was laid in Pratap Park, Srinagar. This monument will immortalise the memory of the martyrs and foster a sense of patriotism among the youth. Shri Shah also met with the families of martyred soldiers from the Jammu and Kashmir Police, giving them appointment letters. He praised the countless J&K Police personnel who sacrificed their lives to protect innocent civilians from terrorists, highlighting the region's commitment to peace.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, substantial efforts have been made in the past 9 years for the development of Jammu and Kashmir. According to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, there has been a decline in terrorist incidents, with no reported cases of stone pelting. This progress can be attributed to the sustainable development initiatives led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Notably, there has been a 54 % reduction in terrorist incidents, an 84 % decrease in security forces casualties, and a 22 % decline in terrorist recruitment. Recently, the Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah held a meeting in New Delhi to review the security arrangements in Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed satisfaction with the record low number of terrorists present in the Union Territory. The Home Minister instructed top security officials to intensify efforts in eliminating the remaining terrorists, thereby ensuring long-lasting peace. ■

Efforts to Achieve Goals



Bureau

In the endeavor to create maximum employment opportunities across different sections of society, the Union Government is implementing the Agneepath scheme to recruit as many young people as Agniveers as possible. These Agniveers, after their training, will bear the responsibility of safeguarding the country's borders from external aggression or intrusion. Both young boys and girls have shown interest in joining this new scheme, and as part of the recruitment drive, Shri Nityanand Rai, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, met with women aspirants in the Lakhisarai, a town of Bihar. He encouraged the aspiring girls to make adequate preparations to crack the Agnipath Scheme exam. The program held on June 26, 2023, the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai, highlighted that the 'Agnepath' scheme, espoused by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, offers employment opportunities to the youth. He said that the scheme also provides young Agniveers with a chance to serve the country through the Indian Army. He said that the government was actively working on various fronts to empower youth by creating job opportunities, with the 'Agnepath' scheme as part of this objective. He mentioned that he was witnessing a sense of enthusiasm among young men and women towards this scheme in all parts of the country.

Union State Minister Nityanand Rai emphasized that the Union Home Ministry, Ministry of Defense, other Central Ministries, and Public Sector Undertakings have already made provision for implementing the policy of reservation for 'Agniveer' candidates in their further recruitment. These government departments and undertakings will introduce several relaxations for them in jobs.

On the occasion of the 9th International Yoga Day, Shri Ajay Kumar Mishra, the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, participated in a Yoga session with local residents in Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh. In his address after performing Yoga, Shri Ajay Mishra said that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, through his performance of Yoga at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, showcased the strength of Indian culture. The United Nations declared June 21st as International Yoga Day, marking the successful realisation of Prime Minister Shri Modi's dedicated efforts towards the promotion of Yoga. During the Yoga program, Union State Minister Ajay Kumar Mishra said that Yoga serves as comprehensive health insurance with zero premiums. He said that Yoga plays a vital role in achieving health objectives.

Earlier, on June 19th, Shri Ajay Mishra visited the Geeta Press office in Gorakhpur. As government has announced that the Gandhi Peace Prize 2021 would be bestowed upon Geeta Press, the Union State Minister's visit was meant to pay respect to the institution. Praising Geeta Press for disseminating knowledge about the 'Sanatan' culture through books over the past decades, Shri Ajay Mishra commended the dedicated employees of Geeta Press for their substantial contribution towards creating a constructive socio-cultural environment in society.

Shri Nisith Pramanik, the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, visited South Africa between 15-20 July, where, along with other official engagements, he met with people of the Indian diaspora. In the meeting with the diaspora members, Union Minister of State Pramanik said that seeing the successful and vibrant Indian community in South Africa was an exhilarating experience. From their rich cultural heritage to their contribution in various fields, they are a symbol of unity and diversity. ■



Boosting Security and Development



The Union Home Secretary met the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to India

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Multiple meetings and conferences highlighting India's commitment to maintaining peace, enhancing cooperation, and boosting medical facilities for security personnel were held by the Union Home Secretary Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla during the last fortnight.

- The Apex Committee, led by the Union Home Secretary convened on 14 June 2023 to discuss arrangements and measures for successfully hosting the G20 conference on crime and security. With participation from G20 and nine invitee countries, as well as representatives from governments, industry, and academia, the conference will address the challenges posed by NFTs, AI, and the Metaverse in the realm of security.
- The 53rd DG BSF-BGB Level Border Coordination Conference held in New Delhi from 11 to 14 June 2023 paved the way for enhanced mutual cooperation between the Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB). DG- BGB met the Union Home Secretary on 13.06.2023 and expressed his satisfaction over the outcome of the conference and reiterated commitment to work jointly for maintaining peace and tranquility at the border. Efforts have been taken for strengthening mutual cooperation through agreed events undertaken as Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). Further, mutual cooperation between BSF and BGB paved the way for starting of construction of Single Row Fence and development works in Tripura.
- The Sri Lankan High Commissioner, Mr. Milinda

Moragoda, met the Union Home Secretary on 20 June 2023. The meeting focussed on capacity building initiatives for Sri Lankan police officers and cooperation between Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Sri Lanka Police Force. The discussions touched upon areas of mutual interest, fostering closer ties between the two nations.

- India's Ambassadors to China and the UAE engaged in bilateral security discussions with the Union Home Secretary during the fortnight. These dialogues emphasised the importance of addressing mutual security concerns and promoting collaboration between nations.
- The Central Armed Police Forces Institute of Medical Sciences (CAPFIMS) is being developed and is set to become a state-of-the-art medical institute and an 800-bedded hospital. The construction of CAPFIMS is nearing completion and in order to operationalize the project at the earliest, a review meeting with AIIMS, New Delhi was held on June 14 under the chairmanship of Union Home Secretary, in consultation with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and NITI Aayog, to discuss various provisions of the Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) to be executed between CAPFIMS and AIIMS, New Delhi.
- The 62nd meeting of the Executive Council of the National Foundation for Communal Harmony was chaired by the Union Home Secretary on June 20. The council reviewed ongoing activities and approved the budget for the fiscal year 2023-24, highlighting India's commitment to fostering communal harmony within the nation. ■



Shri Ashok Prasad*

From Turmoil to Triumph: New Dawn for J&K

Gone are the days when Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) faced frequent incidents of insurgency, terrorism, separatist protests and cross-border infiltration, resulting in an atmosphere of fear and unrest in the region.

Thanks to the path-breaking measures of the Government of India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the region, renowned for its heavenly beauty and rich cultural heritage, has embraced a new era of peace and progress in the last few years.

Establishing an atmosphere of security and peace among the people was crucial for the J&K region, which had witnessed recurring incidents of militancy and violence in the last few decades, resulting in the loss of innocent lives. Moreover, the prolonged period of unrest and instability obstructed developmental activities, leading to the deterioration of the socio-economic fabric of the whole region.

The Government of India chalked out an integrated plan of action, comprising multi-pronged policy measures, to restore normalcy and establish democratic principles in J&K. Keeping in view the fact that Article 370 and Article 35A were hindering the all-round development of the region; the Centre took a historic decision to repeal it. After October 31, 2019, all the provisions of the Constitution of India have been made applicable to the erstwhile State of J&K. Similarly, the Government of India has done remarkable work of percolating democracy and strengthening it by bringing Panchayati Raj to the grassroots level in J&K. Elections in 4,290 Gram Panchayats, comprising 33,592 Panchayat constituencies, were held in 2018, after a gap of seven years.

Similarly, elections were conducted in 1,145 wards of urban local bodies between November and December 2018 after a gap of 13 years, and polls in Block Development Councils were held for the first time in the history of J&K in October 2019. All these landmark initiatives are ushering in a new era of justice, bringing the region into the mainstream. This is also bringing J&K and Ladakh on par with other States and UTs. This has bolstered the local economy by increasing investment. Moreover, reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in jobs and educational institutions has led to ample employment opportunities in the region.

All Central laws, including progressive

Thanks to the path-breaking measures of the Government of India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the region, renowned for its heavenly beauty and rich cultural heritage, has embraced a new era of peace and progress in the last few years.

laws, such as the Right to Education, National Commission for Minorities Act, etc., were made fully applicable to the Union Territory. The application of these laws guarantees equity and fairness to all, including SCs, STs, women, children and senior citizens. Establishing law and order is vital for long-lasting peace and prosperity. Backed by the Central government's integrated action plan, paramilitary forces, including Border Security Force and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), have been working in close cohesion with the police system, dismantling terrorist networks and

eradicating insurgency in the region. This has led to positive results, and a major decline has been recorded in the number of terror incidents in the region in the last nine years. While the number of terrorist-initiated incidents has come down from 228 in 2018 to 125 in 2022, the security forces casualty has decreased significantly from 91 in 2018 to 31 in 2022.

To place J&K on the transformative trajectory, encompassing all-round development, the Government of India has formulated various policies, including Industrial Policy, Industrial Land Allotment Policy, Private Industrial Estate Development Policy, Wool Processing, Handicraft and Handloom Policy, New Film Policy, and Home Stay and House Boat Policy for Tourism. These consistent policy measures have succeeded in drawing the attention of investors as well as tourists in the last few years. The scope of investments in J&K, along with tourist activity, is rising. In 2022, a record 1.88 crore tourists visited J&K. Earlier, unemployment was a significant issue for the youths of this region. However, sustained administrative efforts have led to ample job opportunities. The Government of India has provided 28,000 government jobs to youngsters, established 51,000 units of self-employment, provided livelihood to 70,000 youth under the Mission Youth and allocated an industrial package of 28,400 crore with complete transparency.

The focussed and well directed efforts of the Government and the all-agency approach adopted, has clearly launched J&K on the path of all round progress. With the most significant hurdles having been removed, the State is poised to unleash the full potential of its people to establish J&K as one of the most-developed and peaceful regions of the country. ■

*Ex DGP, J&K, and Special Director, IB



Union Minister for Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah Inaugurated CREDEAI Garden People's Park in Ahmedabad, Gujarat on 20th June.

Union Minister of State for Home Shri Ajay Kumar Mishra gave appointment letters to the candidates recruited in government departments during the employment fair organised in Jaipur on 13th June. Total 198 appointment letters were distributed in the programme. He inspired the candidates to actively participate in the development of their institutions and the nation by doing their job with morality and honesty.



Yoga Day was celebrated by 21st Battalion ITBP, Srinagar (J&K) on the occasion of 9th International Day of Yoga. Yoga sessions were organised at various places of the battalion. Simultaneously, ITBP jawans across the country performed yoga at their workplaces.



BPR&D signed an MoU with Delhi Prisons & Osmania University to conduct Unnati Programme in Tihar Jail, in the presence of Smt Anupama N Chandra, ADG, BPR&D, Dr. Beena Chintalapuri, Prof P Laxminarayana, Registrar and Shri H P S Sran, Addl. IG, Tihar Prisons.



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GUIDELINES

- ◆ You can donate directly to individual braveheart's account (upto max of ₹ 15 lakhs) or may donate to the Bharat Ke Veer corpus.
- ◆ To ensure maximum coverage, a cap of ₹15 lakhs is envisaged per braveheart and the donor would be alerted if the amount exceeds ₹15 lakhs, so that they can choose to either decrease their contribution or divert part of the contribution to another braveheart's account, or to the Bharat Ke Veer corpus.
- ◆ Bharat Ke Veer corpus would be managed by a committee made up of eminent persons of repute and senior government officials, in equal number, who would decide to disburse the fund equitably to the braveheart families on need basis.



Now, the incidents of stone pelting and bandh on the call of neighboring country are disappearing in Jammu and Kashmir and terrorist incidents have mostly come under control. Today schools, colleges, industries are running here, 1 crore 88 lakh tourists came to Jammu and Kashmir in 2022, which is the biggest figure ever since independence.

-Shri Amit Shah, Union Minister for Home and Cooperation



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