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JKLF's shutdown call hits life in Valley

SRINAGAR
Authorities snapped the mobile Internet link in the Kashmir Valley on Sunday, as life was affected by the shutdown called by the banned Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front and the Hurriyat to mark the seventh anniversary of the execution of Parliament attack case convict Afzal Guru.

NEWS PAGE 12

First meeting of Ram temple trust on Feb. 19

NEW DELHI
The Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust, established for the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya, is likely to have its first meeting on February 19. Sources said the agenda might include announcement of a date for the start of construction.

NEWS PAGE 12

SHUBHRA RANJAN
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Anti-CAA protesters back at Gate No. 7 of JMI

NEW DELHI
Two days after shifting their anti-CAA protest site from Gate No. 7 of Jamia Millia Islamia to Gate No. 4 in light of the Delhi Assembly elections, the protesters returned to the original site on Sunday. The number of people who turned up at the protest was less than on previous weekends.

CITY PAGE 2

Bus touches power cable in Odisha, 10 killed

BERHAMPUR
Ten persons, including five women, were electrocuted and more than 25 injured when the bus they were travelling in came in contact with a low-hanging 11 kV power transmission cable at Mendarajpur under the Golanthara police station area of Odisha's Ganjam district on Sunday.

NATION PAGE 9

EDUCATIONPLUS PAGES 16 & 17

J&K administration offers investors 'uninterrupted' Internet, WiFi access

IT policy document highlights low crime, clean air in Union Territory

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI
The Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) administration is highlighting good quality air and low crime rate in the newly created Union Territory to attract investors.

As per the J&K Information Technology (IT) Policy 2020, the administration is offering an incentive to IT companies to operate in three-shifts and to facilitate women working during the night by providing transportation and security.

At least 15% of "plug and play" premises in designated IT parks will be reserved for women entrepreneurs, the policy says. The policy document says that J&K contributes only 0.1% of the total cognisable crimes under the Indian Penal Code.

The document, shared with investors, says that two IT parks with an area of 5,00,000 sq ft are being developed in Jammu and Srinagar, which will have "dedicated and uninterrupted broadband connectivity and WiFi access".

Across 14 sectors
Investment opportunities in 14 sectors in the Union Territory were unveiled at an investor conference in the National Capital last month.

Internet has been snapped in the Union Territory since August 5 last year after Home Minister Amit Shah moved two Bills in the Rajya Sabha to revoke the special status under Article 370.

Following the Supreme Court's directions, 2G mo-



Link failure: The sprawling IT hub at Rangreth on the outskirts of Srinagar wears a deserted look, in this photo of September 19, 2019. ■ VIJAITA SINGH

mobile connectivity was restored last month with access only to 301 government-approved websites.

The policy says that "as a special dispensation for IT units, the land allotment would be decided on top priority" and the government would encourage priv-

ate sector participants to become Internet service providers to enable high-speed connectivity in all panchayats of J&K.

The Real Estate Policy states that a vast land bank owned by the government would be disbursed to "private developers" through a

transparent bidding process.

The Union Home Minister had told a delegation from J&K on September 3 last year that "only government land would be used to establish industries, hospitals and educational institutions" and "nobody's land would

be taken away". Participating in the debate in the Rajya Sabha on August 5, Mr. Shah said no industry could be set up and tourism could not develop in J&K because of restrictions on land purchase due to Articles 370 and 35A. The two revoked provisions of the Constitution let the J&K legislature decide the "permanent residents" of the State, prohibiting a non-J&K resident from buying property in the State and ensuring job reservation for residents.

Local concerns

Several groups in Jammu have demanded domicile rights, amid fears of losing land and jobs to outsiders.

"The existing land acquisition laws would be amended to incorporate the landowners as stakeholders in housing development... the authorities without going into the compulsory land ac-

quisition will either partner with private players on equity basis or facilitate land assembly by acquisition or pooling through private players as done by development authorities in other States," the policy says.

The developers will have to reserve 20% dwelling units in group housing projects for the economically weaker sections and the lower income groups. The UT of J&K is offering 100% exemption on stamp duty, land use charge, permission, construction and processing fee for the housing for the economically weaker sections and LIG groups.

The policy says that the government will persuade the National Housing Bank, HUDCO, financial institutions, commercial banks and the insurance sector to extend operations in J&K to provide affordable housing credit to people.

nCoV toll hits 811 as China gears up to reopen offices, schools

Fatalities cross 2002 SARS epidemic; white-collar employees to work from home

REUTERS
SHANGHAI/BEIJING
The death toll from the novel coronavirus (nCoV) outbreak in China rose to 811 on Sunday, as authorities geared up for millions of people returning to work after the extended Lunar New Year break.

Many cities have almost become ghost towns over the past two weeks as Beijing ordered virtual lockdowns, cancelled flights, closed factories and shut schools. On Monday, several workplaces and schools will remain closed and many white-collar employees will work from home. The State Council's special coronavirus group said workers should return in "batches" to reduce infection risks.

"At this moment, it is very difficult to predict when we are going to have an inflection point," China's Ambassador to Britain Liu Xiaoming told the BBC. "We certainly hope it will come soon, but the isolation and



Away from the epicentre: Spectators watching dancers dressed in dragon costumes during the Chinese New Year parade in San Francisco. ■ AP

quarantine measures have been very effective."

China's National Health Commission recorded 89 deaths on Saturday, pushing the total well above the 774 killed by SARS in 2002/2003. The confirmed coronavirus cases in China stood at 37,198, the Commission's data showed.

MORE REPORTS PAGE 14

Modi offers help to Xi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India has offered assistance to China to deal with the coronavirus outbreak, sources said on Sunday.

"In a letter written to Chinese President Xi Jinping, Prime Minister Modi offered India's assistance to face the

challenge. PM offered condolences at the unfortunate loss of lives," said a source confirming that Mr. Modi also conveyed appreciation for China's support in the evacuation of Indian nationals from Wuhan.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Punjab village fights drugs with youth power

Bhai Desa in Mansa district promotes community service to raise awareness

VIKAS VASUDEVA
BHAI DESA

Punjab's youth have opened a new front in the battle against drug addiction. Mansa district in the State is deploying youth energy to prevent idle time and potential addiction. They run campaigns on single-use plastics, stubble burning, tree planting, road safety, and against drugs. The motto: 'mera pind-mera maan' (my village, my pride).

About 10 km from the headquarters, in Bhai Desa village (population 1,700), the streets are clean and green, and the walls shout out positive messages – the work of youth volunteers.

Anti-plastic drive

At Bhai Desa, youngsters persuade a shopowner to discard plastic bags, to meet



Doing their bit: Youngsters taking part in community work at Bhai Desa village in Punjab. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the village's March target to go plastics-free.

They are members of Naujawaan Ekta Club. They are assured by Majorjeet Singh, the grocery shop owner, that his current stock of plastic bags will be his last. The club bagged the top award at the district level for community work on Republic Day.

"A year ago we decided to clean up, and paint the walls of all dwellings. Families

contributed money. The sarpanch extended support. We planted over 5,000 trees, and started morning and evening walks to promote health. Women, children and elders joined in. Littering is prohibited," says Balbir Singh, 40, the club's patron.

"Drug addiction is a serious problem in Punjab. We want to save youth from its grip," says Kewal Singh, 30, farmer, and club president. Deputy

Commissioner Apneet Riyait launched the 'mera pind-mera maan' contests last year.

Mr. Kewal Singh says, "Already 70% of people here use cloth bags. Creating awareness of the hazardous effects of plastic is our priority. Also we are introducing scientific waste management. Mohali-based RoundGlass Foundation is giving us technological know-how. There are close to 270 houses in the village."

Shopowner Majorjeet Singh believes that busy youngsters are not attracted to drugs. "We have six shops and none sells any tobacco-based products," he says. Applauding the club's activities, sarpanch Harbans Singh says, "Youth in Punjab are trapped by drugs, but in my village there is negligible addiction."

Gargi College students allege molestation during fest

SIDHARTH RAVI
NEW DELHI

Scores of students from Delhi University's Gargi College have alleged that they were sexually harassed and groped during the college's annual festival 'Reverie' on Friday. Around 4.30 p.m., hundreds of "outsiders" barged into the campus, the students said.

Videos from the day show scores of people pushing their way into the campus and some even jumping the gates despite deployment of security personnel.

Multiple students whom *The Hindu* spoke to alleged that they were groped by men, catcalled and masturbated at. The police, however, said that no PCR call was made and they have not received any complaint.

DETAILS PAGE 3

'No delay in Delhi poll turnout data'

62.59% of voters exercised their franchise, says CEO

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Denying allegations that the release of the final voter turnout data had been delayed, Delhi Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Ranbir Singh on Sunday announced that 62.59% of the enrolled voters had cast their ballot in the polling for the Delhi Assembly elections on Saturday.

"Whenever data from the 13,780 polling stations come in at night, each [data point] is added and then an exact number is given, which can be shared," Deputy Election



Ranbir Singh

Commissioner Sandeep Saxena said. "Each piece of data and each voter has been accounted for. This takes time... There is no question of delay. It is a process. And when it is com-

pleted, it is shared."

Mr. Singh said polling went on well past 6 p.m. at several booths in the city.

Thereafter, EVMs were deposited in strong rooms and scrutiny of data began, starting 11 p.m. in some constituencies. "Our returning officers were busy through the night and then with scrutiny... We have to appreciate that... we have to ensure accuracy. And I think it has been done in good time," he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
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Shri Anil K. Sinha (Retd. IAS) * Executive Director National Institute of Disaster Management Govt. of India	Dr. G.C. Srivastava (Retd. IAS) * Ex-member Secretary 12th Finance Commission * Vice Chairman Central Administrative Tribunal
Shri Skand Ranjan Tayal (Retd. IFS) Former Ambassador to South Korea, Uzbekistan	Shri B.B. Srivastava (Retd. IAS) Former Secretary to the Govt. of India Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)
Shri A.K. Upadhyay (Retd. IPS)	Prof. Rajveer Sharma (Retd. Prof. of Political Science D.U.)
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