

From Front page...

Ram Sena Man Announces Rs 10 L Bounty For Killing Amulya

BENGALURU: An activist of the right wing group Sri Ram Sena has announced a bounty of Rs 10 lakh for killing Amulya Leona who shouted pro-Pakistan slogans at an anti-CAA event here recently.

In a video footage, the activist Sanjeev Maradi is heard asking the government not to release the woman or else he will kill her.

Maradi is heard saying "The state and the central government should not release her under any

circumstances.

If she is released, we will kill her in an encounter," Maradi is heard saying at a protest rally organised by the outfit in Ballari against Amulya Leona on Saturday.

"We on behalf of Sri Ram Sena will give a bounty of Rs 10 lakh to the person who kills her," he added.

Ballari Superintendent of Police C K Baba said he has not seen the video or heard about any

such "announcements."

"Let me go through it. I haven't seen what he has said. I will have a look...," the official added.

At an anti-Citizenship Amendment Act event in the city on Thursday, Amulya Leona, who has been arrested on sedition charges and remanded to judicial custody, had raised "Pakistan Zindabad" slogan thrice in the presence of AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi who denounced her act.

Amit Shah Acting Like 'Hate Minister': Brinda Karat

AGARTALA: Alleging that Home Minister Amit Shah was working like the "hate minister" of the country, CPI(M) politburo member Brinda Karat on Saturday said the BJP-led central government was "fulfilling its agenda of communal polarisation".

Karat, addressing the inaugural session of the 22nd central conference of CPI(M)'s tribal wing, slammed Shah for his comments on the Shaheen Bagh protesters during campaigning for the Delhi assembly polls. "Home Minister Amit Shah...

asked people to push the buttons in EVMs so hard that Shaheen Bagh gets electric current from it. I think this kind of comment is unfair. That is why I say Amit Shah is not the home minister, he is doing the work of hate minister," she said.

Campaigning for a BJP candidate in January in Delhi, Shah had said, "When you press the button (of EVM) on February 8, do so with such anger that its current is felt at Shaheen Bagh."

Karat said the central government with its "brute majority" in Parliament was "fulfilling the

agenda of communally polarising people".

"BJP thought they are at liberty to fulfil their agenda in the name of religion as they had sheer majority. But after 2019 Lok Sabha election, a new direction in politics was observed. People are now speaking against this government," she asserted.

The senior CPI(M) leader alleged that cases of mob lynching, communal violence and an "environment of hatred" were results of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Shah's "hate politics".

She also claimed that tribals in the northeast would be the worst hit by the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

"People of the northeastern region would not accept any citizenship on the basis of religion, because it is against the spirit of the Constitution," Karat said.

"There is no work in the rural areas, farmers aren't getting proper wages, the BJP is looting money from poor people and rights of indigenous people are being persecuted every day," she added.

Nationalism, 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' being misused to construct militant idea of India: Manmohan

NEW DELHI: Nationalism and the slogan of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' are being misused to construct a "militant and purely emotional" idea of India that excludes millions of residents and citizens, former prime minister Manmohan Singh said on Saturday, in an apparent attack on the BJP.

Addressing a gathering at the launch of a book on Jawaharlal Nehru's work and speeches, Singh said that if India is recognised in the comity of nations as a vibrant democracy and, if it is considered as one of the important world powers, it was the first prime minister who should be recognised as its main architect.

Nehru had led this country in its volatile and formative days when it adopted a democratic way of life, accommodating divergent social and political views, Singh said.

India's first prime minister, who was very proud of Indian heritage, assimilated it and harmonised them into the needs of a new modern India, he said.

"With an inimitable style, and a multi-linguist, Nehru laid the foundation of the universities, academies and cultural institutions of Modern India. But for Nehru's leadership, independent India would not have become what it is today," Singh said.

"But unfortunately, a section of people who either do not have the patience to read history or would like to be deliberately guided by their prejudices, try their best to picture Nehru in a false light. But I am sure, history has a capacity to reject fake and false insinuations and put everything in proper perspective," he said.

The book, 'Who is Bharat Mata', by Purushottam Agrawal



and Radha Krishna, contains selections from Nehru's classic books Autobiography, Glimpses of World History and the Discovery of India; his speeches, essays and letters from pre and post independence years; and

some of his most revealing interviews. It was first brought out in English and now its Kannada translation has been released.

The book also comprises reminiscences and assessments of Nehru by some of his contem-

poraries such as Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Vallabhbhai Patel, Abul Kalam Azad, Aruna Asaf Ali, and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, among others.

"It is a book of particular relevance at a time when nationalism and the slogan of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' are being misused to construct a militant and purely emotional idea of India that excludes millions of residents and citizens," he said.

Singh also extensively quoted Nehru, saying he had asked, "Who is this Bharat Mata? whose victory you wish?"

"The mountains and rivers, forests and fields are of course dear to everyone, but what counted ultimately is the people of India... spread out all over vast land," Singh quoted Nehru as saying.

Nehru declared unequivocally that 'Bharat Mata' is essentially these millions of people, and victory to her is victory of these

people, he said.

In the pages of this carefully compiled anthology, Nehru emerges as a remarkable man of ideas and as a leader who, despite the compulsions of politics, remained a true democrat, the former prime minister said.

Nehru's legacy continues to be of immense significance -- "perhaps more today than at any other time in our history", he said.

"The purpose of this book is to show to the entire world and more particularly to India, how Pandit Nehru and his idea of India, built on Gandhian principles, harmonising the past and the present free from communal discords, is the only way to promote the inevitable plurality of our country," he said.

Nehru makes a very significant and time relevant remark on the dangers of leadership falling into a trap and getting removed far away from the common people

whom they are supposed to serve, Singh said.

"Conceit, like fat on the human body, grows imperceptibly, layer upon layer and the person whom it affects is unconscious of the daily accretion. Fortunately, the hard knocks of a mad world tone it down or even squash it completely, and there has been no lack of these hard knocks for us in India.

"The school of life has been difficult one, and suffering is a hard task master," he quoted Nehru as saying.

In an atmosphere, when emotions are deliberately provoked and the gullible are misled by false propaganda, misusing communication technology, this book makes a refreshing breakthrough, Singh said.

An understanding of Nehru's political and intellectual journey is a pre-condition for India's survival as a democratic polity as a humane, compassionate society, Singh said.

Trump To Raise Kashmir Issue

tensions in the region," the official said.

On Thursday, Pakistan expressed hope that the US President will take "some concrete practical steps" on his offer of mediation on Kashmir during his two-day visit.

At the weekly media briefing in Islamabad, Foreign Office Spokesperson Aisha Farooqui hoped the offer of mediation expressed by President Trump "will be taken forward through some concrete practical steps."

A report in the English daily The Hindu added that the US President is also expected to raise U.S.'s concerns around the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) with PM Modi.

"The administration is concerned about these issues and that Mr. Trump will talk about these issues with Prime Minister Modi. Particularly, Mr. Trump is expected to raise the "religious freedom issue" which is extremely important to the current U.S. administration as well as discuss shared traditions of democracy and religious freedom both in public remarks and certainly in private," the official said in response to a question.

Responding to a question on the Afghanistan peace process, the official said the US would just encourage India, as it does with regional countries, to do whatever it can to support this peace process so that it can be successful and can potentially end 19 years of military, diplomatic, economic engagement.

"You know, that we can end the military engagement. We will be continuing our diplomatic and economic engagement, which has been there over the last 19 years. But we certainly would look to India to support this peace process -- an important country in the region, important to the overall stability of the region. So I think if the issue comes up, that is what would be the request from the president," the official said.

Trump and First Lady Melania Trump will lead a 12-member American delegation to Ahmedabad, Agra and New Delhi on February 24 and 25.

Sikh Leader Urges Community

to fear psychosis and panic among the Sikhs living in the valley. The whole India seems to be busy in making preparations for Trump's visit, but for Sikhs of Kashmir, the visit has brought with it the fears that the members of the community are yet again on the radar," All Parties Sikh Coordination Committee (APSCC) chairman Jagmohan Singh Raina said in a statement here.

"The Sikhs are feeling insecure and they fear that something untoward might happen on the eve of the US President's visit," Raina added.

He said the scars inflicted on Sikhs of Kashmir during the visit of former US President Bill Clinton were afresh even after 20 years.

"Although 36 Sikhs of Chatsisinghpura, Anantnag, were killed in March 2000 during Clinton's visit, till date the people who carried out the crime are yet to be identified.

"It is highly unfortunate that neither the government of India nor the successive state governments have reached to any conclusion with respect to identifying the killers of the Sikhs. The people at helm have just been making claims and truth of the matter is killers continue to roam free," Raina said.

The APSCC chairman said the episode of Chatsisinghpura was followed by a "fake encounter at Brakpora in Anantnag district and thereafter 10 persons were killed after security forces opened fire on the people

protesting against the fake encounter".

"There was fear among the Sikhs living in north and south villages of Kashmir on the eve of Barack Obama's visit as well," he said.

Raina demanded a fair, thorough and impartial probe into the Chatsisinghpura incident so that the killers are brought to book.

Domicile Law For J-K Coming

underemployed youth by the incumbent government, National Panthers Party Chairman and former minister Harsh Dev Singh had said not a single post, out of the promised 50,000 jobs, had been advertised for filling up in the new UT after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions.

"Everything will be done. It will not be like when your government was in power and ruined the future of the youths by backdoor appointments and corrupt practices. The youth who were provided jobs have turned 35 years but are still waiting for their regularisation," the Union minister said.

He said the jobs will be provided under rules which will be in the best interest of the youth and those who have been deprived of it.

Asserting that India is going through "one of the best phases under the leadership of Modi", he said a lot of development had taken place over the last five years and the country is looking forward to become a part of the global economy.

"On the one hand India is eyeing five trillion economy, don't you want that Jammu and Kashmir should also be part of that. It is possible only when our youth reaches such a stage to live up to the parameters which are followed globally and therefore, even if some of us have any doubts, confusion and skepticism or still unconvinced, ask yourselves that don't you want your children to be part of five trillion economy.

"If you understand it, I think all the murmuring and whispering which is generated from thoughtless minds will vanish away," Singh said.

The minister said Jammu and Kashmir is also under the process of a new industrial policy and a new scientific policy.

"The greatest disadvantage that has happened from Jammu and Kashmir remaining in isolation because of Article 370 is that we become lazy and lethargic. We learnt to live on easy freebies," he said.

India, Pak Troops Trade Fire For

This comes a day after Pakistan restored to ceasefire violation in the same sectors.

Earlier this month, a 60-year-old civilian was killed and three others were injured in Pakistani firing at the LoC in the Shahpur sector of Poonch.

2 Lashkar Militants Killed In Anantnag

arms and ammunition were recovered from the site of the encounter.

In a separate incident, the DGP said, police have arrested a commander of Hizbul Mujahideen outfit from Baramulla district in north Kashmir.

"Acting on specific information, Baramulla police arrested a Hizbul Mujahideen commander Junaid Farooq Pandit, a resident of Pattan area. A pistol and 30 rounds have been recovered from him," the top cop said. Singh said Pandit was tasked to undertaking

selective killings like the recent incident at Narbal on the outskirts of the city here on February 5 when militants fired at a team of security personnel. Two militants and a CRPF jawan were killed in the incident.

240-250 Militants Active In Kashmir:

in the valley," the DGP told reporters at a press conference here. He said in the last two months, the number of reported and confirmed infiltrated militants is three.

"One of them a JeM militant was killed in an operation in Tral recently, Singh added. He said nearly a dozen successful operations have taken place till now in 2020, which included 10 in the Kashmir valley and two in the Jammu region.

"Till now, 25 militants have been killed in these operations. Nine militant operatives have been arrested in the valley, while three or four in Jammu. More than 40 OGWs (overground workers) -- who were involved in promoting and supporting militancy activities in some form or the other -- have been arrested," the DGP said.

Referring to the misuse of social media through virtual private networks (VPNs), Singh said more cases had come to the fore and police was acting tough against them. "More cases of misuse of social media have come to the fore. Waseem Dar, a resident of Handwara, was arrested for posting some irresponsible content on (social) media with intent to instigate the public sentiment. We are taking notice of such incidents and action will be taken," he said.

Asked about an SSP-rank officer receiving threats on social media, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, who flanked the DGP at the presser, said police will take action against the person.

"The account name (from which threat was received) is Hafiz Suhail. We have verified and the user's real name is Suhail Wali, a resident of Dalipora Pulwama. We conducted a search at his house but his parents told us he is presently in Dubai. A case will be registered against him and we will take further action," the IGP said.

To a question about the security arrangements for a proposed march here by Kashmiri Pandits, the DGP said, "First, there should be a permission by the civil administration and when that is there, we will take adequate precautions."

Kashmir Schools To Reopen On Monday

a high level meeting convened here today. The meeting was attended by Joint Directors, Chief Education Officers and Zonal Education Officers of Kashmir Division.

The Director urged the teachers to work with dedication for building capacities of the students for their better future. He said that last year students proved their metal and now it is our responsibility to extend our support to them and redouble efforts to get their syllabus completed well in time.

The field Officers were instructed to visit schools regularly to monitor the follow up of academic planner for timely accomplishment of set targets.

Our Next Goal Is Pak-Controlled Kashmir:

The senior BJP leader said the 20th century India was a "romantic and reticent" nation, carrying the dreams of a newly independent people, but the current generation is pragmatic and ambitious.

"The 21st century Bharat is different from the 20th century Bharat that was romantic and reticent as it had dreams of newly independent people and was ruled by freedom fighters. But the 21st century Bharat is pragmatic, pro-active and ambitious as it belongs to the youth."

Madhav said it is the destiny of India to emerge as a global leader on the basis of its large population of youth and economic might.

J-K Institute, Canadian Firm Ink

plant having lot of medicinal values and with the signing of this agreement, we are reintroducing this ancient product with all good properties," Singh said addressing the gathering after the signing of the agreement.

The Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office shared the efforts made by the IIIM Director Ram Vishwakarma over the past two years to get a nod from the government for the project.

He said when a patent developed from this, it would be a major source of revenue for the UT and India as a whole.

"Incidentally, it is happening at a time when the UT government is trying hard to attract investors from outside," he said.

"Other investors are yet to come but one of the first major foreign investment is happening in Jammu and Kashmir," Singh said.

He said the IIIM had remained under-utilised.

"I am sure today, it will mark the beginning of a new journey when it will get the deserved recognition and glory. The new dawn is unfolding for Jammu and Kashmir," the minister said referring to scrapping of J-K's special status.

He also referred to the upcoming biotechnology park in Kathua, saying it will be completed in the next six months.

Vishwakarma said the cannabis had been associated with the Indian culture and medicine since centuries but due to its misuse as psycho-active substance, it was banned worldwide in 1980s onwards and put under narcotic list.

"The current scientific collaboration between the CSIR-IIIM and IndusCann on cannabis research will totally transform the uses and application of cannabis," he said.

I Pray For Mehbooba, Abdullahs

but later on it was rampantly used against political opponents and activists seeking Kashmir settlement. Amnesty International has termed it a "lawless law".

On September 17, Farooq Abdullah became the first Chief Minister of the state to be booked under the PSA. Abdullah, 81, was charged with disturbing public order.

Over four months later, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti, both former Chief Ministers of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state were booked under the controversial PSA.

Govt Designates Commercial Courts

in all districts of J&K as courts for trying offences under electricity law. The change was effected due to J&K's transition to Union Territory.

Cab Falls Into Kathua Gorge, 9 Dead

launched a rescue operation. Police parties rushed to the spot after being informed about the incident and joined the locals in carrying out the operation.

The rescuers pulled out nine bodies from the vehicle and sent five critically injured people to a local hospital, the officials said.

They said three women and three children were among those killed and the identities of the deceased were being ascertained.

The injured were later referred to the Government Medical College Jammu, the officials said.

Truck Falls Into Ramban Gorge,

official said. Rescuers immediately swung into action and pulled out the driver's body, he said.

The body was handed over to Kumar's family after completion of legal formalities, the official said.

DTO Suspended On Alleged Graft

the Deputy Commissioner against the DTO. Taking cognizance of the complaint, the Deputy Commissioner immediately initiated a preliminary investigation into the matter.

Later, the DC submitted a report to Divisional Commissioner's office indicating a series of verbal as well as anonymous complaints of corruption against the incumbent.

The DC also submitted a video clip, raising question on the integrity of the erring officer and recommended his immediate suspension.

Meanwhile, Iqbal Ahmad Pandit, Accounts Officer in the office of Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara has been directed to look after the work of the District Treasury Office, Kupwara.

Amarnath Yatra Arrangements

the district administration and other officials to construct 20 additional toilet blocks with washrooms, macadamize inner roads, repair drainages, install backup generators and additional public address systems and develop other basic amenities in the transit camps.

The Pahalgam Development Authority has submitted a Rs 30 lakh proposal for tabular fencing at Nunwan base camp. The Authority was asked to ensure all basic amenities at Nunwan base camp besides installing 10 CCTV cameras in and around the location.

Khan also directed to install additional lights at Manigaam, Ranga mode and Y Junction at Baltal base camp.

He asked the district administration of Ganderbal to ensure all facilities at Baltal camp including installation of additional Public Address Systems, backup gen-sets and other basic amenities.

He directed the officials to setup basic facilities at Pantha Chowk and HMT transit camp for the Yatris.

Khan also asked the concerned agencies to install signage mentioning halting points, name of transit camps, number of kms, petrol pumps at various locations from Jawahar tunnel to Baltal via National Highway in Hindi and English.

Directions were given to audit dysfunctional street lights along the National Highway and repair the same.

The officials were asked to conduct physical verification of transit camps after a fortnight and strategize a plan of action so that work is started within the stipulated timeline.