

15TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION HEADLINES TODAY Voice To The Voiceless

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HEAT WAVE: At 37.4°C, 72 Year Record Breaks in Srinagar

HT News Desk SRINAGAR, JUL 05: In the ongoing heatwave across Kashmir, Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has surpassed the seven-decade-old record, witnessing the hottest July temperature since 1953 on Saturday at 37.4 degrees. According to the Meteorological department (MeT), the all-time third highest maximum temperature at 37.4 degrees over Srinagar was recorded today, while the second highest temperature of 37.7 degrees was recorded on 5 July 1953. Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad told the news agency that the all-time highest maximum temperature was recorded at

BEAT THE HEAT Record Breaking Temperature Observed Across Kashmir Valley



Young Boys Braving the Heat wave at Srunj Fall Near Muradabad Kreeri; HT: Photo By Ashiq Hussain

Operation Sindoor Shows Modi Govt's Resolve for Swaraj: HM Shah

HT News Desk / KNS GUJARAT, JULY 5: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said 'Operation Sindoor' reflects the Modi government's strong commitment to safeguarding Swaraj, the self-rule envisioned by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Speaking at the foundation stone cer-



emony of the country's first national cooperative university — Tribhuvan Cooperative University — in Anand, Shah said the institution represents Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dedication and determination towards strengthening the cooperative sector. "It is the responsibility of 140 crore Indians to make India the way Shivaji

AMARNATH JI YATRA 2025

LG Sinha Orders Safety Steps After Pilgrim Bus Crash

36 yatis suffer minor injuries, rejoin pilgrimage after first aid

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUL 05: Following a collision between the buses on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway ferrying Amarnath pilgrims to Pahalgam, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday directed the officials to implement comprehensive safety measures. An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that an accident took place at Chanderkote in Ramban District on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway when a Pahalgam bound vehicle collided with other stationary vehicles due to brake failure. "Thirty six pilgrims received minor injuries. They were discharged after preliminary treatment and now on their way to the holy cave."



The Lieutenant Governor said, "By the blessings of Lord Shiva, all the devotees are safe. Our priority is the safety of all pilgrims. Directed the officials concerned to implement comprehensive safety measures

47,000 Pilgrims Visit Amarnath in 3 Days

HT News Desk

JAMMU, JUL 05: Amid stringent security arrangements and multi-layer protection more than 47,000 pilgrims have paid obeisance at the holy Amarnath Cave Shrine, nestled in Himalayas, in first three days, officials told that on Saturday.

According to data, 21,109 pilgrims visited the shrine on July 5 (Saturday), which included 16,159 males, 3,921 females, 226 children, 250 sadhus, 29 sadhvis, 3 transgender devotees, and

Case Filed Over Muharram Unrest Attempt in Srinagar

HT News Desk / PTI

SRINAGAR, JUL 5: A case has been registered against several individuals for allegedly attempting to provoke unrest and disturb public order and communal harmony during a Muharram procession in the city, police said on Saturday. "In violation of laid-down conditions, certain individuals committed deliberate and unlawful acts during the Muharram procession on MA Road on Friday," a police spokesperson said.

He said the actions were aimed at provoking unrest, disrupting public order and disturbing communal harmony. Accordingly, legal action has been initiated and a case has been registered

CM Omar Pays Tribute to Imam Hussain (AS) on Ashura

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 5: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today paid solemn tribute to Imam Hussain (AS) and the revered martyrs of Karbala, describing their unparalleled sacrifice as a timeless beacon of courage, steadfastness and resis-

tance in face of trials. In his message on occasion of Ashura, the Chief Minister said that the tragedy of Karbala is not just a historical incident, but a moral lesson for all humanity. He said Imam Hussain (AS), the beloved grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), upheld the



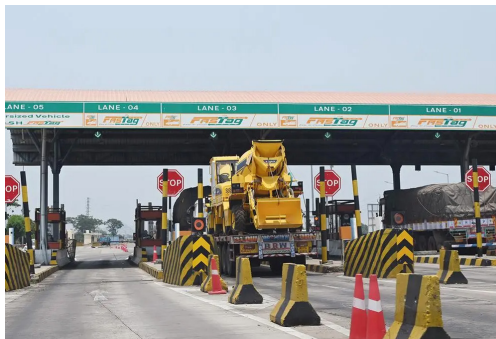
highest principles of truth, dignity and justice, choosing martyrdom over submission to injustice. "Imam Hussain's stand at Karbala inspires generations to stand firm against falsehood and uphold human dignity, even in the face of brutal repression. His legacy belongs to all, transcending

sects, regions and eras," the Chief Minister said. Omar Abdullah added that the values of sacrifice, patience, and truthfulness, embodied by Imam Hussain (AS), are particularly relevant today when societies face moral and social challenges.

Govt Cuts Toll by Up to 50% on Highways with Bridges, Tunnels

United News of India

NEW DELHI, JUN 5: The government has reduced the toll rates up to 50 per cent for the sections of National Highways that have structures like tunnels, bridges, flyovers or elevated stretches, a move which will lower travelling cost for motorists. User charges at fee plazas on National Highways are collected as per NH Fee Rules, 2008. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways



Summer Break Extension Decision Likely Today: Sakina Itoo

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUL 5: Jammu and Kashmir's Education Minister, Sakina Itoo, on Saturday said that the government will take a final decision on the possible extension of summer vacations on Sunday, keeping in view the ongoing heatwave that has gripped the region. Speaking to reporters, Sakina Itoo acknowledged the growing concerns from students

Dr Jitendra Announces AIIMS Jammu Outreach in Basohli

United News of India

BASOHLI, JUL 5: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Minister of State for Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today held a nearly three-hour long Public Darbar at Basohli in district Kathua, as part of his continued outreach efforts to engage directly with citizens and local representatives

, not only at district level but also at Tehsil, block and Panchayat level. The entire district administration, led by Deputy Commissioner, Rakesh Minhas and senior officers of various departments like PWD, PHE, Education Health, PMGSY etc were present to facilitate grievance redressal on the spot and ensure prompt action. In a major announcement during the Darbar, Dr Jitendra Singh announced the setting up of an

Rise in tourist footfall puts Mughal Road to test

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUL 05: The historic Mughal road, which connects Shopian in South Kashmir to Poonch-Rajouri in Jammu division, is witnessing a surge in tourist and commuter traffic this summer. With every passing year, the volume of vehicles on the scenic 84-kilometer stretch continues to rise—but so do complaints about poor infrastructure and lack of essential facilities. Despite being granted National Highway status three years ago, the Mughal Road remains devoid of basic amenities, leaving both tourists and local drivers in distress.

NC Not Against Polls, But Statehood Needs More: CM's Advisor

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUL 05: Senior National Conference (NC) leader and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's Advisor, Nasir Aslam Wani, on Saturday asserted that holding assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir are not a prerequisite for the restoration of statehood. Talking to reporters, Wani, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The NC is fully prepared for elections whenever they are announced but the restoration of J&K statehood should not be linked to electoral timelines."

J&K House panel to examine rules of land laws

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUL 05: The Jammu & Kashmir Assembly's committee on subordinate legislation has decided to review the rules of land laws in the Union Territory. Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), chairman of the panel and MLA Pampore, Justice (retired) Hasnain Masoodi said that they have decided to scrutinize the rules of land laws to assess whether they align with the statutes. "If there are inconsistencies in them," Masoodi

Kashmir Vendors Brave Intense Heat to Earn

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUL 05: With Srinagar - the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, on Saturday surpassing a 70-year-old record by witnessing the season's highest temperature at 37.4 degrees Celsius, street vendors across the valley said they have no choice but to bear the heat and continue working. On Saturday, Srinagar recorded its

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Sgr Sizzles.....

38.3 degrees over Srinagar on 10 July 1946. An Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng told KNO that Srinagar has recorded the third all-time highest maximum temperature today since 1892; thereby it was the highest July temperature in the last 72 years. He informed that Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, has recorded the all-time second highest July temperature today 34.6 degrees while the all-time highest July temperature was recorded on 28 July, 2024. Similarly in Kokernag, the maximum recorded today at 34.0 degrees, was also the second all-time highest July temperature while the all-time hottest July day was recorded at 34.1 degrees on 28 July, 2024. Pahalgam, a famous tourist destination, however, recorded the all-time highest temperature today at 31.6 degrees while the previous all-time hottest July day was recorded on 21 July, 2024.

In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 35.9 degrees, which was the highest July temperature for the station since 2006. The station recorded the hottest July day on 10 July, 2006 at 36.9 degrees.

According to Keng, hot and humid weather conditions may continue on Sunday, although there will be a relief by a few degrees. Major improvement, he said, is expected from Monday onwards.

However, the Director MeT, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, said that in between July 6 and July 8, the weather would be generally cloudy, with the possibility of intermittent light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places, while a few places may receive intense showers with heavy rain at isolated spots in Jammu division.

The MeT has also issued an advisory, stating that flash floods at a few vulnerable places, along with landslides, mudslides, and shooting stones, are expected during July 6-8.

A rise in water levels in rivers, streams, local nallas, and waterlogging in some low-lying areas is also expected, the advisory added.

Operation.....

Maharaj imagined," Shah said. "We fought for Swaraj when needed, and to protect it, we must be prepared to do so again."

He added that Shivaji's vision also included creating a great India. By 2047, he said, India must stand as a leading nation in the world. Shah described this goal as a shared mission, and called Shrimant Bajirao Peshwa one of the greatest historical figures to guide and inspire the path forward.

Meanwhile, Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said India's upcoming first national university for the cooperative sector in Gujarat will work to end nepotism as only trained persons will get jobs in this sector in the future.

Shah was addressing a gathering at the campus of Anand Agriculture University after laying the foundation stone of Tribhuvan Sahkari University (TSU) on the premises of the adjoining Water and Land Management Institute.

The university has been named after the late Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel, one of the pioneers of the cooperative movement in India who was instrumental in laying the foundation of Amul.

TSU will be built on a 125-acre plot at a cost of Rs 500 crore.

"The upcoming university will work to address the allegations of nepotism in this sector. Unlike the past, when people were first hired and then trained, only trained people will get jobs in this sector in the future," he said.

Shah said the university will also address the existing "weaknesses" of this sector and fill the training gaps in the domain that engages every fourth person of the country, or say about 30 crore people.

He said the cooperatives sector in India has no dearth of talent and what the country requires now is a manpower of trained soldiers, experts and officials.

TSU will fill this "mega vacuum", he added.

Shah also sought to address concerns in some quarters about the upcoming university not being named after Dr Verghese Kurien, the father of the White Revolution, saying his role in the cooperatives sector can never be denied.

"Patel sahab (Tribhuvan Patel) enlightened and nurtured the cooperative movement... it was his vision that the sector is standing strong today," he said.

Congress leaders who raised such questions do not know that Patel was from their party. The BJP did not even exist then, the minister said. (Agencies)

LG Sinha Orders.....

for vehicles of pilgrims undertaking Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra and ensure safety checks at all key locations and uninterrupted availability of food and medicines at Yatra route".

Earlier, the Lieutenant Governor spoke to Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner

Jammu and Mohammad Alyas Khan, Deputy Commissioner Ramban to provide all necessary assistance to injured pilgrims.

He asked the senior officials to remain on alert and ensure all necessary arrangements for hassle-free journey of pilgrims. The Lieutenant Governor applauded the swift response of the district administration and health officials.

Collison at Chanderkote According to the details gathered by KNO at least 36 Amarnath pilgrims, hailing from different states, suffered minor injuries when five buses slammed into each other near Chanderkote in Ramban district on Saturday.

The buses were part of a convoy headed for the Pahalgam base camp of the pilgrimage in south Kashmir from Jammu's Bhagwati Nagar. All the injured persons rejoined the yatra after receiving treatment at the Ramban district hospital, an official told KNO.

"The accident took place at around 8 am due to the failure of the brakes of one of the buses in the convoy.

Union minister Jitendra Singh said he spoke to the Ramban deputy commissioner after learning about the road accident. "... There is no reason for concern. All arrangements for the pilgrims are in place and are being constantly supervised by the administration," Singh said in a post on X.

Ramban Medical Superintendent Sudarshan Singh Katoch said 10 of the injured pilgrims were discharged after being administered first aid and the rest after the conduct of necessary tests.

"The district administration arranged special vehicles for their onward journey to Pahalgam after they expressed their desire to continue the pilgrimage," he said.

The convoy left for its destination early in the morning after the damaged buses were replaced, the officials said—(KNO)

47,000 Pilgrims.....

521 security personnel. This brings the cumulative total to 47,972 yatis since the commencement of the Yatra.

Meanwhile, the fourth batch comprising 6,979 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu early Saturday and proceeded towards the twin base camps of Baltal in Ganderbal and Nunwan in Pahalgam, Anantnag, under tight security.

As per the details gathered by KNO, the convoy departed in 312 vehicles, including 136 buses, 70 medium motor vehicles (MMVs) and 106 light motor vehicles (LMVs). The group consisted of 5,196 males, 1,427 females, 24 children, 247 sadhus, 84 sadhvis, and 1 transgender pilgrim. Of them, 2,753 pilgrims opted for the Baltal route, while 4,226 proceeded via Pahalgam.

Pertinently, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday had said that devotees are coming from all parts of the country to have darshan of Baba Amarnath. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir are welcoming them with an open heart. The UT administration, the Government of India, and the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board have expanded services to ensure a safe and spiritually fulfilling journey for all."

He had said, "Pilgrims arriving earlier than stipulated date will be accommodated, however I advise them to wait since those devotees who have prior registration will be given priority."

Case Filed.....

under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the spokesperson said.

The accused have been identified and legal proceedings are underway, he added. (PTI)

CM Omar.....

He urged the people to reflect on the message of Karbala and renew their commitment to principles of justice, equality and peaceful coexistence.

The Chief Minister expressed solidarity with all those commemorating Ashura and the sacred memory of Karbala and called upon the administration to ensure smooth and peaceful observance of Muharram-related events across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister also extended prayers for peace, harmony, and the well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Govt Cuts.....

has made amendment to 2008 rules and notified a new method or formula for calculating toll charges.

"The rate of fee for use of a section of national highway comprising of structure or structures shall be calculated by adding ten times the length of structure or structures to the length of the section of national highway excluding the length of structure or structures, or five times the total length of section of national highway, whichever is lesser," said the notification dated July 2, 2025.

'Structure' means an independent bridge, tunnel or flyover or elevated highway.

To explain the new toll charges, the ministry has cited examples.

In one of the examples, it said that if a section of a national highway has a total

length of 40 kilometers, comprising of structure alone, the minimum length shall be computed: '10 x 40 (ten times length of structure) = 400 kilometers or five times the total length of section of a national highway = 5 x 40 = 200 kilometers'.

"User fee shall be calculated on the lesser length i.e. for 200 kilometers" and not 400 kilometers. In this case the user charge is only on half (50 per cent) of the road length.

According to the extant rules, users pay ten times the regular toll for every kilometre of structure on national highways.

A senior official of National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) said the existing toll calculation method was meant to offset higher construction cost associated with such infrastructure.

The revised notification issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways reduces the toll rate for stretches such as flyovers, underpasses and tunnels up to 50 per cent, the official said. (Agencies)

Summer Break.....

and parents alike, saying the department has been receiving numerous calls requesting the government to extend the summer break. "We have received a lot of phone calls from worried parents and students urging us to consider an extension in summer vacations due to the persistent heatwave," she said.

The education minister, however, noted that a formal decision would be taken after assessing weather conditions on Sunday. "We are monitoring the situation very closely. If the heatwave persists tomorrow, we will announce an appropriate decision in the interest of children's health and well-being," she added.

Expressing concern over the intense weather, Sakina Itoo said she hoped for rainfall and divine mercy. "We pray for rain and hope Allah shows mercy upon us. The well-being of our students remains our top priority," she said.

The Kashmir Valley has been witnessing unusually high temperatures over the past several days, prompting repeated appeals from various quarters for an extension in the summer holidays. The existing break, announced earlier for government and recognized private schools, is currently scheduled to end tomorrow (Sunday).

Dr Jitendra.....

AIIMS Jammu Outreach Centre at Basohli, addressing a long-pending demand of the region.

The facility, AIIMS Outreach Centre, the Minister said, will ensure 24x7 availability of super-specialty doctors and surgeons as well as Emergency services. He informed that discussions are already underway between AIIMS Jammu authorities and the Government of Jammu & Kashmir to finalise the location and to put in place a roster system for specialist medical personnel to serve the new branch. Director AIIMS Vijaypur Jammu, Dr Shakti Gupta had updated him about it this morning also, he said.

A separate district for Basohli -Billawar is top on our agenda, said Dr Jitendra Singh and will be pursued vigorously whenever the J&K government sets up the next District Reorganisation Committee.

About Basohli being notified as a Heritage town, the Minister informed that the UT authorities have been asked to send a proposal in a proper format so that it can be taken up at the Centre.

During the public interaction, Dr Jitendra Singh listened patiently to the grievances and demands raised by individual citizens and public delegations. Several issues were resolved on-the-spot, while in other cases, the Minister issued directions to the concerned district officials for swift and time.

During today's Public Durbar, the administration also provided the Union Minister with the updates on several pending matters that were raised in previous such public interactive meetings. He assured the attendees that he would personally monitor the progress of the issues brought to light today and ensure that the district administration acts upon them without delay.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Jitendra Singh emphasized that elected representatives have a responsibility not only to solve the genuine issues of the people but also to make them feel available, heard and cared for. "The Public Durbar initiative is one of the most effective means of strengthening the bridge between the people and their government," he said

Dr Jitendra Singh also announced the widening of the Dhar Road, a key move to ensure smooth and secure movement of commuters as well as security forces given its strategic significance. In addition, he informed the gathering that the much-anticipated Ujh Multipurpose Project is being revived. Apart from enhancing irrigation and power generation capacities, the project will also serve a critical security role, as the region has been identified as vulnerable to cross-border infiltration.

Reiterating the commitment of the NDA Government under Prime Minister Shri

Narendra Modi, Dr Jitendra Singh stated that the aim is to deliver transparent and efficient governance to the doorstep of every citizen, transcending the barriers of region, caste, or political affiliation. He said these public outreach programmes are driven by the mantra of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas.

The Public Durbar witnessed the presence of a cross-section of the society, including Panchayati Raj Institution members, civil society representatives, and local youth.

Dr Jitendra Singh has been consistently touring the Udhampur-Doda-Kathua Parliamentary constituency in recent months, taking the governance model closer to the people by interacting with them in such forums. The Minister underlined that such initiatives help reinforce the people's faith in responsive and accountable administration.

Rise in tourist....

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), officials said that footfall has significantly increased in recent months. Tourists from both the Poonch-Rajouri and Shopian sides are thronging destinations like Peer Ki Gali, Dubjan and Aliabad Sarai, drawn by the region's breathtaking natural beauty.

However, visitors say the scenic drive comes at the cost of safety and comfort.

"The views are stunning, but you're completely cut off from the world once you enter the stretch. There is no mobile network, no roadside help and not even basic washrooms," said Shabina Jan, a visitor from Srinagar, who visited Peer Ki Gali with her family.

Locals and regular travellers echoed similar concerns, urging the government to address the lack of infrastructure.

"The road feels like paradise, especially from Hirpora to Peer Ki Gali—but if your vehicle breaks down, there is no mechanic or help available. You're on your own," said Abdul Majid, a driver who frequently commutes on the route.

"There are stretches of over 20 kilometers without a single shop or eatery. It's a nightmare for tourists and commuters alike," said Fayaz Ahmed, a local transporter from Rajouri.

"In case of accidents or emergencies, it's impossible to call for help due to zero network connectivity. This makes the road risky, especially for those travelling with children or elderly people," added Tariq Lone, a regular commuter.

For women, the absence of public washrooms poses an even more serious issue.

"It's a shame that such a beautiful and important road lacks basic sanitation. It becomes a traumatic experience for women, especially during long journeys," said Nusrat Bano, a tourist from Pulwama. Stakeholders have urged the government to act swiftly and improve facilities along the Mughal Road—not just to ease travel, but also to boost tourism and local livelihoods.

"If roadside facilities, eateries, and communication setups are improved, the tourist footfall will increase tenfold. This will generate employment for locals and additional revenue for the government," said Aijaz Khan, a hotelier in Poonch.

People from both sides have called for mobile towers, emergency helpline booths, public toilets, rest areas, and regular maintenance of the road.

They have sought immediate attention of Omar Abdullah and representatives of both sides in this regard.

NC Not Against.....

"We come to know about such reports only through media leaks or planted stories," Wani said while referring to recent news reports suggesting that assembly elections must precede the return of statehood.

"No official proposal regarding the holding of fresh elections has been communicated to us so far. For Jammu and Kashmir to regain statehood from Union Territory status, the Reorganisation Act needs to be amended and the Legislative Council (upper house) must be restored. Nowhere is it mentioned that elections are a precondition."

He added, "Let me be very clear — National Conference has never been scared of facing the people. We are the only true grassroots party in Jammu and Kashmir. Our demand remains clear: full statehood for Jammu and Kashmir."

Wani also reiterated NC's long-

standing call for the formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a proposal repeatedly advocated by Omar Abdullah to bridge the trust gap between Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits. "There has been a serious trust deficit since the 1990s, and only a credible Truth and Reconciliation mechanism can help heal the wounds and foster understanding between communities," Wani said.

Referring to the turbulent 1990s, Wani highlighted the sacrifices made by NC workers. "Our workers stood by the nation at a time when standing with India cost them their lives. Hundreds of our party men were killed just because they chose the path of democracy and unity. Despite that, we are still asked to prove our nationalism," he said.

He lamented the recurring political experiments in Jammu and Kashmir, saying, "Since I joined politics, I have seen various experiments being conducted in J&K. But whenever the people are given the opportunity to choose freely, they repose their faith in the National Conference. That's because NC wasn't created by Delhi or any agency. It was born out of the aspirations of the people of this land."—(KNO)

J&K House....

said," we will recommend necessary changes."

The committee on subordinate legislation reviews subordinate legislation (rules made under laws) to ensure they align with provisions of the parent laws.

As per procedure, the committee holds meetings to examine rules and seeks clarifications from departments before finalizing its observations.

Once the committee finalises its observations/recommendations, its report is tabled in the Assembly.

It is worthwhile to mention here that J&K's land laws underwent significant changes following August 5, 2019 constitutional changes.

As many as 12 laws related to land and allied issues were repealed, while 14 others were amended—(KNO)

Kashmir.....

highest temperature in over 70 years, touching a searing 37.4 degrees Celsius. For hundreds of street vendors whose daily earnings depend on open-air stalls and roadside sales, the heat is unforgiving, but unavoidable.

In many districts including Srinagar, Baramulla, Kupwara, and areas such as Dargah Hazratbal and Batamalo, vendors working on roadsides and open markets are managing their daily routines under high temperatures without any formal protection from the sun.

"There is no other option. If I sit at home, my children will sleep hungry," Mohammad Yaqoob, a fruit vendor near Batamalo bus stand told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). He wipes his brow repeatedly with a cloth damp from sweat. "We work in the sun all day because this is our only way to survive."

Shazia Bano, who sells children's toys outside the Children's Hospital in Srinagar, said, "I am the sole breadwinner of my family. My husband is unwell, and my kids are still in school. Whether it's cold or heat, I have to be here."

The other vendors earn on a daily basis and say skipping work due to weather isn't an option. They, however, said that high temperatures have reduced customer footfall.

"We try to manage by setting up umbrellas or temporary covers for shade, but during the peak afternoon hours, the heat can still be difficult to work in. Footpaths and roads become hot, and many vendors report tiredness and dehydration," Mohammad Amin, a 50 year old vendor said.

In other markets of the valley, sellers sat under temporary covers or umbrellas. Despite these measures, the ground heats up by afternoon, making it difficult to sit or stand for long periods.

"I have worked outdoors for many years, but this level of heat is unlike anything I have experienced before," said Shabir Ahmad, a vendor in Bandipora. "By midday, it becomes physically exhausting. Still, I come every day, because staying home is not a solution."

Meanwhile, the Met Department stated that Jammu and Kashmir's severe heatwave is caused by weak Western Disturbances, persistent high-pressure zones, and rapid climate change accelerating warming. Urbanization and lack of pre-monsoon showers have worsened the situation, leading to prolonged intense heat—(KNO)

Javid Dar visits Nunwan base camp; inaugurates Waste Management facility, reviews sanitation initiatives

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 5: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, along with MLA Pahalgam Altaf Ahmad Wani, today visited the base camp Nunwan to review the arrangements made for smooth conduct of the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY2025).

The dignitaries inspected the sanitation infrastructure, public facilities and sustainability measures put in place by the Directorate of Rural Sanitation to ensure a clean, safe and dignified experience for the pilgrims.

Secretary Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Aijaz Asad, Director General Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra and senior officers of the Rural Development Department also accompanied the Minister.



During the visit, the Minister interacted with the sanitation workers deployed across various points. He lauded their outstanding contribution in maintaining hygiene and healthy environment along the Yatra route. A special highlight of the visit was the felicitation of a local hero, who displayed exemplary courage during the recent Pahalgam incident. He was honoured with a cheque of appreciation by the department and also recognized as

the Brand Ambassador for Sanitation during this year's Yatra.

The Minister also took stock of several digital and eco-friendly initiatives including introduction of QR code-based feedback systems at toilet blocks for instant grievance redressal and a sanitation feedback kiosk for the yatrists. Other initiatives included installation of Water ATMs to reduce single-use plastic bottles, distribution of eco-friendly cloth bag kits,

enhanced toilet and bathing facilities and dedicated sanitation areas for female pilgrims with female supervisors.

On the occasion, a Nukkad Natak promoting awareness on cleanliness and environmental responsibility was also staged and appreciated by all. Earlier, the Minister inaugurated a state-of-the-art Waste Management Facility at Sarbal, Pahalgam. The utility has been set up to manage the growing volume of waste; estimated at 4 tonnes of dry waste and 7 tonnes of wet waste daily from the Nunwan Base Camp area.

The facility has been equipped with hydraulic bailing machines, automated vertical rammers (AVRs), dual shaft shredders, solid-liquid separators (SLGs) and compost beds for efficient segregation and processing. This initiative is a key step towards realizing the government's vision of Zero Landfill and ensuring a Sustainable Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

Sakeena Itoo visits Shahoo Kulgam, reviews arrangements for 10th Muharram

Also interacts with Shia community, locals.

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, JULY 05: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Imam Baras at Shahoo in Kulgam and took stock of arrangements for the 10th Muharram.

During her visit, Minister Sakeena engaged with local community members, religious leaders and residents to understand their concerns and ensure that necessary arrangements are in place for the smooth and peaceful observance of Ashura. She emphasized the importance of maintaining the sanctity of the occasion and assured full support in addressing any logistical or administrative issues. The Minister highlighted the Muharram holds deep spiritual and cultural significance for the Muslim community and it is our collective responsibility to provide an environment of dignity, safety and comfort to the mourners.

She directed the officers to deploy adequate manpower of



health department along the routes of Muharram processions for the facilitation of mourners. Expressing deep respect for the rich traditions and historical significance of Muharram, the Minister outlined the role of inter-community harmony and urged officials to ensure uninterrupted essential services, security and cleanliness around Imam Baras. She also directed concerned

authorities to coordinate closely with local committees to meet the requirements of the devotees, like proper lighting, drinking water, medical aid as well as traffic regulation. Chief Medical Officer, Executive Engineers of various wings, District and sectoral officers of all the line departments and other concerned officers accompanied the Minister during the visit.

J&K Students Association Revamps Organisational Structure Across India and Abroad

Farooq Rather

Srinagar, JULY 05: The Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA) has successfully concluded a three-day electoral process to revamp its national executive body along with global, state and regional leadership structures. The restructuring aims to infuse fresh energy and efficiency into the association's ongoing efforts for student welfare, representation, and advocacy across India and abroad.

The elections witnessed enthusiastic participation from student leaders and volunteers nationwide. The newly elected office bearers will serve for a one-year term, reflecting the association's commitment to democratic functioning and grassroots leadership. The new leadership structure spans a wide range of portfolios, including organizational affairs, media and communication, legal support, digital outreach, international coordination, university affairs, and community engagement.

At the national level, Mushtaq Habeeb has been elected as Chairperson, with Nasir Khuehami re-elected as National Convenor for a third consecutive term, and Davood Peer elected as Co-National Convenor. Ummar Jamal has been elected National President, while Sheikh Azhar will serve as National Vice President and also coordinate international affairs in the Gulf region. Aadil Bhat has been elected General Secretary (Organizational Affairs) and will also serve on the Advisory Board. Dr. Zubair Reshi has been elected as National Spokesperson, alongside Manzoor Ahmad as National Organizing Secretary. Media outreach will be led by Krishna Sapru, who will also head the Kashmiri Pandits Wing, and Mir Zubair, who will oversee the Jamia Millia Islamia Unit.

The Advisory and Legal Affairs division includes Danish Lone as Chairman of the Advisory Board and Head of the Disciplinary Committee, with Munawar Mehrj elected as Senior Advisor and Head of the Digital and Social Media Department. Faizan Peer has been elected Advisor for Strategic Communications, while Mir Imran and Advocate Badrul Duja will serve as Legal Advisors. Haaid Ahmad has been appointed Secretary to the Chairman of the Advisory Board.

In a major step toward inclusive leadership, the Women's Wing has also been restructured. Osheeba Bashir has been elected as President, with Nazia Israr serving as Vice President and also heading Academic Affairs. Other members include Pariyana as Joint Secretary, Sadia Masoodi as General Secretary, Muskan as Secretary, and Anfoo Mahajan as Spokesperson.

In Jammu and Kashmir (UT), Gazi Muzammil has been elected as UT President, with Ahjaz Ahmad Mir as General Secretary and Pahari Community Coordinator. Suhail Farooq will serve as Joint Secretary and South Kashmir Incharge, while Adnan Ahmed and Shahid Shafi Rather will manage media affairs along with Sumaya Sulata. Owais Shafi and Anfoo Mahajan have been elected as UT Spokespersons.

In Delhi, Sharief Khan has been elected as State President, with Peerzada Kafeel as General Secretary, Tajleel as Vice President, Umar Bashir as Joint Secretary, and Azhar Ahmad as Media Coordinator. Dr. Mujtaba will coordinate JKSA activities at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).

Rajasthan will be led by Aamir Akbar as State President, Kamran Bukhari as Vice President, and Saqib Ahmad as General Secretary.

PSAJK Urges Early School Timings To Combat Heatwave: "Run Classes From 6 Am To 11 Am Instead of Extending Break"

"Every Teaching Day Matters, Let's Not Compromise Students' Future": Says President G.N. Var

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, 05 July 2025: Amid the ongoing heatwave across Jammu and Kashmir, the Private Schools' Association Jammu Kashmir (PSAJK) has strongly appeals to the J&K government led by Omar Abdullah and Education Minister Mrs. Sakeena Itoo not to extend the summer vacation any further. Instead, the association has proposed that schools should operate from 6:00 AM to 11:00 AM so that students' learning is not disrupted.

PSAJK President G.N. Var said

in a press statement, "Our students have already lost almost three months due to the long winter vacation. If we extend the summer break again, it will be impossible to complete the syllabus before exams, which are scheduled in October." He emphasized that this academic session is already under pressure and any more loss of teaching days will affect syllabus, exam preparation and students' overall academic performance. "Many students are also preparing for competitive exams. Every teaching day mat-



ters now. We must act responsibly and give our children more learning time, not less," said Var. PSAJK President further said that "starting schools early in the

morning is a practical and safer alternative. It allows children to study in the cooler hours of the day, avoiding exposure to intense afternoon heat." "Instead of closing schools, let us change the timing. Many hot-weather regions in India and abroad already follow early morning classes during summer months. It works well and can be easily implemented in Jammu and Kashmir too." PSAJK also noted that several rural and urban schools have already lost valuable days due to weather conditions,

power outages and other infrastructure challenges. "We cannot afford any more breaks. Time is short and students are already behind. We must use the available days wisely," the statement read. Var emphasized that "children's education should never be treated casually. We must take education seriously and ensure that our children's academic future is safeguarded." The association stressed that the matter goes beyond the heatwave it directly affects the learning and future of our children's.

Directorate of Ayush Mourns the Sad Demise of Dr Tahir Mufti

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 05: The Directorate of Ayush, Jammu & Kashmir, expresses deep sorrow and heartfelt condolences on the demise of Dr. Tahir Mufti, the founding Director of Indian Systems of Medicine (now Ayush) in Jammu & Kashmir.

His demise marks the end of an era and caused an irreparable loss to the Ayush fraternity across the Union Territory. Dr. Tahir Mufti was a Visionary Administrator, pioneering reformer, and a devoted advocate of traditional Indian medicine.

He is remembered for his historic contribution in structurally and administratively segregating the Indian Systems of Medicine (now Ayush) from the Directorate of Health Services, thereby establishing it as an independent Directorate. His visionary step laid the institu-



tional foundation for focused policy formulation, service delivery, and development of Ayurveda, Unani, Yoga, and other indigenous systems in the region. Under his able leadership, the groundwork was laid for a robust Ayush infrastructure that today serves lakhs of people across J&K through a wide network of Ayush Health and Wellness centres, Educational institutions,

dispensaries, and Research initiatives. His legacy continues to guide the functioning and vision of the Directorate of Ayush, J&K.

Dr. Mufti was widely respected for his knowledge, foresight, and tireless commitment to the upliftment of public health through holistic and traditional systems of healing. He was a mentor to many, and his pioneering contributions will always be remembered with deep respect and gratitude. The Directorate of Ayush, J&K joins the wider Medical and Administrative community in mourning this great loss. Officers and officials of the Directorate extend their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and pray for their strength in this time of grief. The Directorate of Ayush, J&K joins the wider Medical and Administrative community in mourning this great loss. Officers and officials of the Directorate extend their heartfelt.

Sakeena Itoo pays rich tributes to Karbala Martyrs

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 05: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo paid rich tributes to the sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and other martyrs of Karbala. In her tribute, Sakeena Itoo said that the supreme sacrifices by Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions at Karbala exemplify unmatched courage and patience, which will continue to enlighten the mankind.

"The lesson that Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions taught us of not bowing or succumbing before forces of evil, is the guiding light for the entire mankind", Sakeena said.

The Minister urged people to follow principles of martyrs of Karbala for establishing a just society, which symbolizes unity and love for each other.

The Minister also prayed for peace, progress and prosperity of entire Jammu and Kashmir.



World Zoonoses Day Observed at Tangmarg

HT NEWS DESK

TANGMARG, JULY 5: On the eve of World Zoonoses Day, a joint awareness programme was organised at Gogaldara, Tangmarg by the Department of Sheep Husbandry, Baramulla in collaboration with the Department of Microbiology, Government Medical College (GMC) Baramulla. The event was aimed at sensi-

tising the local population, particularly those associated with livestock rearing, regarding the risks, prevention, and control of zoonotic diseases.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from the residents of Gogaldara and adjoining villages, including a significant number of Chopans, Bakewells, livestock-rearing farmers and women participants, highlighting growing awareness and inclusivity in community

health initiatives.

Experts and medical professionals from GMC Baramulla, along with doctors from the Department of Sheep Husbandry, addressed the gathering and delivered comprehensive lectures on a range of zoonotic diseases like Rabies, Brucellosis, Leptospirosis, Toxoplasmosis, Bovine Tuberculosis, Anthrax among others. The experts elaborated on the modes of transmission, clinical manifestations, and

preventive strategies associated with these diseases, while also stressing the importance of vaccination, personal hygiene, and biosecurity measures to minimise the risk of zoonotic transmission between animals and humans.

Meanwhile, the Department of Sheep Husbandry Baramulla carried out a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccination drive, during which approximately 400 sheep were vaccinated.

Members of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel calls on Lieutenant Governor

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 05: Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel, under the Chairmanship of Shri Anurag Singh Thakur, Member of Parliament called on Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha, at Raj Bhawan today. The Committee is on a study visit to the Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir. Shri Anurag Singh Thakur said that the committee's visit to Jammu Kashmir is also a part of the confidence building measures by the Government of India, post the Pahalgam Terror Attack. It will also spread the message across the country that Kashmir is safe and peaceful, he added. The members of the committee



also congratulated the Lieutenant Governor for the reforms and progressive policies implemented across the sectors in Jammu Kashmir. The Lieutenant Governor reiterated his commitment to the inclusive and equitable development of UT of Jammu Kashmir. He also spoke on the pre-

teaching security scenario in the Union Territory. "Common man of Jammu Kashmir wants peace. The people have immense love and dedication for the nation and they know that their future is with India. The kind of protests that were seen on the streets of Jammu Kashmir against

Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in Pahalgam was unprecedented," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor also emphasized on the need to counter fake narrative and propaganda being created by the adversaries.

Kashmir University Scientists Map Fern Diversity Across Himalayas, Offer Climate Change Insights

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: In a groundbreaking study, scientists from the University of Kashmir have, for the first time, mapped how fern species grow and evolve across different altitudes of the Himalayan ranges in Jammu and Kashmir, offering critical insights into the region's biodiversity and its vulnerability to climate change, ETV Bharat reported.

Conducted by the Centre for Biodiversity and Taxonomy at the university, the research surveyed 225 species of pteridophytes, non-flowering vascular plants such as ferns and their relatives, spanning an elevation from 300 to 4,700 metres above sea level. The study revealed that these ancient plants thrive most abundantly between 1,901 and 2,000 metres, where species richness peaks. Kashmir real estate "We found a unimodal hump-shaped curve in species

richness along the elevational gradient," the study stated. "The number of species increased from just 3 at 300-400 m to a maximum of 135 at 1,901-2,000 m, followed by a steep decline up to the highest band, which recorded only a single species."

The research, titled 'Elevational patterns and drivers of taxonomic and phylogenetic diversity of pteridophytes: A case study from the Himalaya', was authored by Sajad Ahmad Wani along with Shabir Ahmad Zargar, Firdous Ahmad Dar, Aadil Abdullah Khoja, Akhtar Hussain Malik, Irfan Rashid, and Anzar Ahmad Khuroo. It highlights how environmental variables such as rainfall and temperature shape the distribution of these moisture-loving plants, which are among the oldest plant groups on Earth. The study identifies the family Aspleniaceae (78 species) as the most dominant among the recorded pterido-

phytes, followed by Polypodiaceae (70 species) and Pteridaceae (46 species). Among genera, Dryopteris led with 28 species, followed by Asplenium (21) and Polystichum (19). Researchers divided the elevation range into 43 vertical bands, each 100 metres wide, to assess both species richness and evolutionary diversity. They found that precipitation, especially during the driest month, was more influential than temperature in determining species distribution. However, evolutionary traits, such as phylogenetic clustering and overdispersion, were more responsive to temperature changes. "This suggests niche conservatism and environmental filtering play major roles in shaping the composition of fern communities along elevation," the authors noted. In simpler terms, ferns tend to stay within environmental conditions their ancestors adapted to, making them.

Div Com Kashmir pays tributes to Martyrs of Karbala on Ashura

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 5: On the eve of Ashura, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today remembered the Martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and paid rich tributes to the Martyrs of

Karbala. In his message, Div Com said that Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) taught resilience, courage & truthfulness to the humanity. On the occasion, he prayed for peace, communal harmony & brotherhood among the people.

Rana pays tributes to Imam Hussain (AS), Karbala martyrs

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 05: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana today paid rich tributes to Imam Hussain (AS), describing him as the embodiment of courage, sacrifice and steadfastness. He also paid homage to the noble martyrs of Karbala. In a poignant message, Rana expressed deep reverence for the unparalleled sacrifice of Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions, who chose martyrdom over submission to injustice, upholding the highest principles of truth, dignity and jus-

ice. The Minister highlighted that Imam Hussain's (AS) unwavering commitment to truth, justice and faith is a beacon of inspiration for the humanity. His legacy transcends sects, regions and eras, inspiring generations to stand firm against falsehood and uphold human dignity, he added. "The values of sacrifice, patience and truthfulness embodied by Imam Hussain (AS) are particularly relevant today, when societies face moral and social challenges, asserted the Minister"

CEO Kokernag Reviews Upgradation Efforts at Dandipora Recreational Park and Daksum.

Farooq Rather.

Kokernag, July 5 : Mohd Rouf Rahman (JKAS), Chief Executive Officer of Kokernag Development Authority (KDA), conducted an early morning inspection of Dandipora Recreational Park to assess ongoing arrangements for its upgradation and maintenance.

The visit comes in the wake of scorching temperatures that have damaged the park's lawns and grass cover.

To address the issue, the CEO promptly sanctioned the installation of a water motor along with pipes to ensure timely watering of the lawns. He also issued on-the-spot directions to KDA staff to repair the viewing decks and the steel



grill surrounding the gazebo. These measures aim to enhance visitor safety and prevent injuries or accidents, particularly for tourists who frequent the area for photography and selfies. Taking a firm stance against vandalism, the CEO warned of strict action against individuals found damaging tourism department assets. Later, Rouf Rahman

visited Daksum, where he took stock of the overall situation, inspected tourism infrastructure, and engaged in meaningful interactions with tourists, local residents, and employees from various departments. The CEO reaffirmed the administration's commitment to providing improved facilities and ensuring a safe, enjoyable experience for visitors to the region.

Drinking Water Crisis Hits Shia-Majority Areas of Khansahib Amid Muharram Ashura Days

Residents in Batapora, Bugchil, Talapora, Sheikhwadipora Say PHE Provides Water Only 2 Hours Daily

Ubaid Mehdi

Budgam, July 5 : Amid the ongoing Muharram observances, several Shia-populated villages in Khansahib area of central Kashmir's Budgam district are reeling under a severe shortage of drinking water, with locals alleging that the Public Health Engineering (PHE) department is supplying water for only two hours in 24 hours. Residents from Batapora, Bugchil, Talapora, and Sheikhwadipora told news that they have been left helpless at a time when water demand has increased due to religious processions and gatherings. "Even during these sacred days, we are getting water for barely two hours. It is impossible to manage cooking, cleaning, or even serving water to mourners during Majlis and processions," said a local from Batapora. The locals urged the administration



to ensure uninterrupted water supply at least during Muharram days. "It's a matter of dignity and faith. The authorities must intervene immediately," another resident from Sheikhwadipora said. Despite repeated pleas, no action has been taken so far, they alleged. The residents have appealed to the Deputy Commissioner Budgam and officials of the PHE Department to restore regular water supply without delay, especially keeping in view the spiritual significance of Muharram.

One-Day Party Convention Held at Town Hall Bandipora

HT NEWS DESK

Bandipora, July 5 (KNS): A one-day workers' convention of the Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party was held today at the Town Hall Bandipora. Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari addressed the gathering and urged workers to strengthen the party at the grassroots level. He emphasised the need for organisational outreach and encouraged supporters to connect

with people on the ground. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the convention, Bukhari said that July 13 holds historical importance in the region as it commemorates the sacrifice of those who laid down their lives in 1931. He said the day marks the beginning of a democratic process in Jammu and Kashmir and should be declared a public holiday. He also called on the government to lift restrictions on tourist

destinations in Jammu and Kashmir. Commenting on the National Conference, Bukhari said the party has not fulfilled the promises made in its election manifesto. He said that despite eight months having passed since the formation of the administration, no significant development work has been started. He urged the government to deliver on its commitments. Several workers from different political backgrounds joined the

Apni Party on the occasion. Bukhari welcomed the new members and said their joining reflects growing support for the party's agenda. He reiterated the party's focus on rights, development, and political representation for the people. Commenting on the National Conference, Bukhari said the party has not fulfilled the promises made in its election manifesto. He said that despite eight months having passed.

Fish farm sabotaged, Rs 10 lakh loss devastates J-K's Tangmarg family

HT NEWS DESK

Tangmarg, July 5 (KNS): In a tragic incident in Hariwatnoo village of Sub-Division Tangmarg, miscreants allegedly stopped the water supply to a local fish farm during the night of July 4, resulting in the death of fish stock worth over Rupees 10 lakh. The fish farm, run by Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat, a resident of Hariwatnoo and the sole breadwinner of his impoverished family was completely devastated overnight due to the sudden halt in water flow.



Mushtaq, a father of three daughters, had taken a bank loan to establish the fish farm, which was his only source of income. Speaking to Kashmir News Service (KNS), Mushtaq Ahmad expressed his deep anguish and called the act

"deliberate and inhuman." "This was our only hope to survive. Everything is gone now. We had no enmity with anyone; I don't know why someone would do this to us," he said. Locals from the area condemned the incident and

demanding swift action from the authorities. They joined the Bhat family in appealing to SDM Gulmarg and Jammu and Kashmir Police to thoroughly investigate the matter and bring the culprits to justice. "This is not just about financial loss; it's a question of survival for an entire family," a local elder said. The villagers urged the administration to provide immediate financial assistance to the affected family and ensure such incidents are not repeated in the future. (KNS)

Dr Andrabi & the Board Management felicitated by the Consolidated Employees Group of Waqf Board "Welfare measures boosted the morale of the Waqf Board employees & engagees: Darakhshan

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar | J&K | Chairperson of J&K Waqf Board & Minister of State Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi participated in the special programme organised by Jammu & Kashmir Waqf Board Consolidated Employees Group at Dargah Hazratbal today. This program was organised to felicitate Dr Darakhshan Andrabi and the Management of Waqf Board for the recent wages hike and other welfare measures for the staff and the engagees of the Board.

On the occasion, Waqf Chairperson was honoured for her impactful and visionary leadership and bold decision making which transformed the entire working system of the Waqf Board resulting in the development and infrastructural boost at places places of importance throughout Jammu & Kashmir. Waqf Board Members Dr Ghulam Nabi Haleem & Peer Syed Mohammed Haqqani & the Executive Magistrate Ishfaq Mohiuddin were also honoured for their contribution in the Board. Gulistaan News Head Ishfaq Gow-



har & KNS Correspondent Tasduq Ahmad were also felicitated by the employees body. Speaking on the occasion Dr Darakhshan said that after streamlining the general management and financial system of the Board, we undertook many reformative steps for development and upgradation of complexes of the Sufi shrines in whole of the union territory. "We took a decision to enhance the salaries and remuneration of all categories of employees who were serving on the emoluments not revised for

decades. We followed all norms to hike the salaries. Welfare measures boosted the morale of the Waqf Board employees & engagees", said Darakhshan. She hails the unanimous efforts of the Board and the staff for working as a dedicated team. "Many big things are in the plans, soon to be executed. We will not rest and will put in our collective efforts to contribute for the further upgradation of our entire Waqf System throughout J&K", said the Chairperson.

HT EDITORIAL

Buck up legislators and do some work

Some days back chief minister of Jammu & Kashmir Omar Abdullah could be seen flagging off a convoy of water tankers meant for the people of Kashmir especially those living in the Shia dominated areas. The flagging off of the water tanker service is a welcome step and is bound to provide relief to the people who are suffering on account of clean and potable drinking water. The step is more than welcome especially during the hot and sultry days.

The water tanker service should have ideally been flagged by the concerned minister and there was no need for the chief minister to do this job. It somewhat belittles the status and position of a chief minister, considered to be the head of a state or a union territory. Besides the chief minister and the Jal Shakti minister Javed Rana the function was attended by a galaxy of important political personalities including legislators of the different constituencies of the Kashmir valley.

The chief minister, cabinet ministers and the legislators have important jobs to carry out and they need to focus on the same. Leaving the important jobs to the side and taking part in a function related to the flagging off the tanker service is not a good thing. It does not augur well for the overall governance of the union territory. The legislators are public representatives and they must understand their responsibilities. They need to devote their attention towards the problems being faced by the masses in their respective constituencies.

Since the governance aspect has to be looked after by the elected representatives it is the responsibility of the members of legislative assembly (MLAs) to work for the betterment and welfare of the people. The common masses are up against multiple problems in their areas and the solution to these problems can be found by the local legislators while raising the same with the concerned authorities. The officers need to be made accountable for their actions and the same is possible only when the legislators put in their efforts.

The legislators have more than four years at their disposal and they should put in all their efforts so as to bring relief to the people who voted for them in the 2024 assembly elections. The MLAs should not make excuses that nothing can be done as long as Jammu & Kashmir is a union territory. They can solve the small issues of the people and as such their focus should be on the same.

The Anatomy of Control: How Biopower Shapes Human Behaviour



■ Yawer Hamid

In the modern world, human beings often believe they act out of free will, yet their behaviors, choices and even desires are deeply conditioned by the structures of society. Michel Foucault's concept of biopower helps unravel this paradox exposing how power operates not through force, but through subtle regulation of life

itself. Biopower, as Foucault explains, refers to the ways in which modern states exert control over populations by managing bodies, health, reproduction, and everyday conduct. Unlike older forms of power that relied on the threat of death, biopower works through the administration of life. It encourages



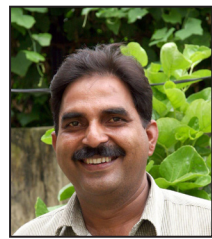
individuals to self-regulate based on norms, statistics, and expectations propagated by institutions such as schools, hospitals, media, and families. In this framework, people are not simply free agents. Rather, they are shaped by

invisible networks of influence what Foucault calls governmentality. For instance, societal ideals about productivity, beauty, success, or gender roles are internalized by individuals, who then modify their behavior to conform. A student studies not only for knowledge, but to fit into a predefined system of achievement. A citizen eats, exercises, and dresses in ways shaped by social and political norms. Thus, human life becomes a site of power not just in terms of law or coercion, but in the deep, daily conditioning of what is seen as "normal." In this sense, individuals are "trapped" not by visible chains, but by expectations and structures that surround them.

Foucault's insight reveals that freedom must be redefined not as the absence of constraints, but as the awareness and resistance of the forces that seek to manage life. Biopower reminds us that our very sense of self is shaped by the gaze of the society around us.

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Akhilesh's Changing Politics: A Hindutva Move from Kashi in the Month of Sawan



■ Sanjay Saxena

For the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav is leaving no stone unturned in his bid to return to power. The foundation of SP's politics in Uttar Pradesh has long rested on the Muslim-Yadav (M-Y) alliance established by Mulayam Singh Yadav. It was this formula that enabled Mulayam Singh to become Chief Minister three times and Akhilesh Yadav once. However, since 2014, the changing political landscape in Uttar Pradesh has posed new challenges for SP. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has succeeded in uniting various Hindu castes under the umbrella of Hindutva, thereby weakening SP's traditional strategy. Akhilesh Yadav is now trying to reshape his party's image in this new political environment and secure broader social support. As part of this strategy, he is scheduled to perform "jalabhishek" (ritual offering of water) at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple on the first Monday of Sawan, 14 July 2025 a move seen in political circles as a soft Hindutva strategy.

SP's political base in Uttar Pradesh has long been its Muslim and Yadav voter base. However, BJP has effectively painted SP with the image of practicing 'Yadavism' and indulging in Muslim appeasement, which has gradually restricted the party's voter appeal. Akhilesh Yadav now realizes that it is no longer possible to defeat the BJP with only the M-Y formula. This is why he is taking steps to transform his party's image and gain wider social backing. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Akhilesh tried to challenge BJP through the PDA (Backward, Dalit, Minority) formula. This strategy yielded some success for the SP, but the BJP quickly began reworking its political tactics against them. Now, Akhilesh appears to be embracing soft Hindutva, adopting symbols of Sanatan Dharma in the process.

The month of Sawan, which begins on 11 July 2025, holds special religious significance in North India. During this period, lakhs of devotees carry Ganga water from Haridwar and undertake the Kanwar Yatra to offer it to Lord Shiva in various temples. Kashi, considered the city of Lord Shiva, becomes a major pilgrimage site during Sawan. Especially on Mondays, the Kashi Vishwanath Temple witnesses a massive influx of devotees. This year, on the first Monday of Sawan, Akhilesh Yadav will perform "jalabhishek" at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple. Around 50,000 Yadav community members from across the country are expected to join this event. The event is being organized under the banner of the Chandravanshi Gop Samiti, whose delegation recently met Akhilesh in Lucknow and invited him to participate in the religious ceremony.

The tradition of jalabhishek by the Yadav community on the first Monday of Sawan in Kashi dates back to 1952, initiated by the late Teju Sardar. Every year, members of the Yadav community offer Ganga water to Baba Vishwanath after visiting temples such as Gauri Kedarshwar and Tilhandeshwar, and collecting water from Dashashwamedh Ghat. The pilgrimage concludes after visiting temples like Mrityunjay Mahadev, Trilochan Mahadev, and Kal Bhairav. Akhilesh Yadav's participation in this event has sparked considerable discussion in political



“The month of Sawan, which begins on 11 July 2025, holds special religious significance in North India. During this period, lakhs of devotees carry Ganga water from Haridwar and undertake the Kanwar Yatra to offer it to Lord Shiva in various temples. Kashi, considered the city of Lord Shiva, becomes a major pilgrimage site during Sawan. Especially on Mondays, the Kashi Vishwanath Temple witnesses a massive influx of devotees. This year, on the first Monday of Sawan, Akhilesh Yadav will perform *jalabhishek* at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple. Around 50,000 Yadav community members from across the country are expected to join this event.

circles. This step not only reflects his religious devotion but is also seen as part of a larger strategy to break SP's image of Muslim appeasement and enhance the party's acceptability among followers of Sanatan Dharma.

This strategy by Akhilesh Yadav is also a move to steer the party away from the image built during Mulayam Singh Yadav's era. Mulayam had built the SP's foundation on Muslim and Yadav votes, but this equation is no longer sufficient in today's political climate. The BJP has succeeded in unifying various Hindu castes under its Hindutva agenda. Persistent allegations of Yadav-centric politics and Muslim appeasement have made Akhilesh's path to power more difficult. Particularly, discontent among Brah-

min and Thakur communities has grown, partly due to some of Akhilesh's past statements that were perceived as being against them. In this context, Akhilesh's decision to perform "jalabhishek" at Kashi Vishwanath Temple is an effort to boost the SP's acceptability among the larger Hindu population that believes in Sanatan Dharma.

Political analysts believe that since 2014, the influence of Hindutva has significantly increased in Indian politics. The BJP has been successful in consolidating Hindu voters, which has pushed opposition parties to adopt religious symbols and soft Hindutva in response. Akhilesh Yadav's Kashi visit is part of this changing political landscape. He aims not only to strengthen his traditional Yadav vote base but also to garner support from other Hindu communities, especially those who resonate with Sanatan Dharma. However, stepping onto BJP's turf and trying to compete on its narrative won't be easy for SP. BJP has firmly established itself as the preferred choice among Hindu voters, and only time will tell whether SP's soft Hindutva gamble will pay off.

At the same time, Akhilesh Yadav is also attempting to reinforce the agenda of social justice. Instead of being vocal about issues concerning the Muslim community, he is now emphasizing social inclusiveness and the PDA formula. His "jalabhishek" at Kashi is not only a religious act but also politically significant. It provides SP a chance to counter BJP's Hindutva narrative and increase its acceptability among the broader Hindu population. However, the success of this strategy will depend on how effectively Akhilesh can rebrand his party's old image and challenge BJP's political framework.

In conclusion, Akhilesh Yadav's decision to perform jalabhishek at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple on the first Monday of Sawan is a calculated political move. It reflects his evolving political strategy, where he is trying to move beyond the traditional M-Y alliance and adopt the symbols of Sanatan Dharma to garner wider social support. How successful this strategy proves ahead of the 2027 assembly elections remains to be seen, but it is clear that Akhilesh Yadav is making a conscious effort to bring a new dimension to Uttar Pradesh politics.

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Noon Chai: The Soul of a Lost Srinagar



■ Syed Majid Gilani

Noon Chai and Srinagar are never two separate things, they are one — a seamless bond of culture, tradition, and kindness that touches every home, every heart, and every street. Kashmir's soul feels incomplete without that special pink tea, brimming with salt, history, and the fragrance of simple, honest lives stretching across centuries.

Even today, anyone who truly knows Srinagar will tell you that its soul lies in its warmth, in its old rituals, in memories that refuse to fade. Noon Chai is not just a drink, it is a tradition. It starts conversations, ends quarrels, offers comfort in sorrow, and quietly remains a part of every important moment in a Kashmiri's life.

If you ask those who remember old Srinagar, they will tell you the heart of the city was Shehr-i-Khaas, the old town. This was where skilled artisans created beauty with their hands. Paper-mâché, carpet weaving, Namda making, Tilla work, Pashmina weaving, wood carving, copper work, and embroidery weren't just trades, they were inheritances, handed down with pride from generation to generation. As hands worked, the samovar simmered, and cups of Noon Chai circulated.

Maharaj Gunj, Bohri Kadal, and Zainakadal weren't merely markets, they were the city's living rooms. Traders, shopkeepers, and neighbours gathered there daily. Deals were sealed with a handshake and mutual trust, often over a shared cup of pink tea.

In those days, every home's doors stayed open for guests. Visits needed no announcement. It was as natural as sunlight in summer. Streets echoed with friendly greetings, stories, and unfiltered

laughter. No one showed off, no one chased wealth, and no one tried to outshine another. Life was about standing together — in celebration, in sorrow, and in everyday simplicity. And whenever a guest arrived, whether in the bright morning or the dead of night, the first offering was always Noon Chai, carrying the scent of old Kashmiri kitchens and the warmth of cherished memories.

Kashmiri winters were harsh. Heavy snow blanketed the valley for months, often cutting it off from the outside world, but no one complained. Before the first snowfall, families dried vegetables like haakh, gogji, palak, ruwangan, wangan, and ealli. Strings of dried chillies hung from windows, and dry fish was stored for the tough months ahead. In those long, freezing nights, it wasn't just the kangri that kept bodies warm, it was also the scent of Noon Chai rising from steaming samavars that comforted hearts and spirits.

Life was simple, yet far richer than today's world of gadgets and glitter. Happiness came from small, beautiful moments — a neighbour's unexpected visit, a child's mischief, building a snowman, or gathering under a chinar tree. People did not worry about careers, bank balances, or status. Children ran freely through narrow streets, kangris in hand, their laughter blending with the frosty air. Good manners, honesty, and loyalty weren't textbook lessons, they were everyday habits, gently taught by example.

The entire community lived like an extended family. Elders walked freely into any home. Children moved between houses as if every door was their own. Arguments didn't reach police stations or courts, they were settled with a few wise words from elders. Gossip was light, advice sincere, and both joy and grief were always shared, never carried alone.

People might not have been highly educated by today's standards, but they possessed wisdom. They knew the difference between right and wrong. They did not waste time in endless debates over religious differences. They followed a simple code: earn honestly, harm no



one, and remember that Allah watches everything. Goodness showed not in grand speeches, but in kind actions, a gentle word, a helping hand, or a quiet act of charity.

When a guest arrived late at night, when shops were shut and silence gripped the streets, neighbours brought whatever they had, no questions asked. A warm meal was served, dishes gathered from different homes, all beginning with the same love, affection, and a pot of Noon Chai.

Even public spaces radiated warmth. Elders gathered under mighty chinar trees. Their conversations were soft,

their wisdom timeless. Problems were solved with common sense, not legal notices. Solutions did not come from offices, but from hearts that knew how to listen.

Homes were modest, built from Maharaji bricks, with low wooden ceilings and tiny windows. Families stayed close. Nights were lit by laalteens and chatgeers, and warmed by kangris. Evenings were spent in gentle conversation, family prayers, storytelling, and light-hearted laughter.

Days began with the soulful echoes of Dua-e-Subah and Aurad Fath-Hiyah rising from the Khanqah-e-Moulla

shrine and all other mosques, their sacred recitations reverberating through every street, every home, and every corner of the city, filling hearts with peace and gratitude. Festivals like Eid, Nauroz, and Herath weren't private events, they belonged to entire neighbourhoods. A birth brought happiness to every home. A death gathered the entire mohalla in shared grief. No one waited for invitations. People arrived with warmth in their hearts and tears in their eyes.

And perhaps most beautifully, no quarrel lasted long. No argument stayed bitter. A kind word from the elders was enough to settle disputes, heal hearts, and restore harmony.

But slowly, that Srinagar began to disappear. Big, empty houses replaced small, warm homes. People stopped visiting one another. Fights were taken to courts. Festivals turned private. Grief became a lonely affair. The comforting knock on the door was replaced by cold, impersonal phone messages. Concern turned into curiosity, and warmth faded into distance.

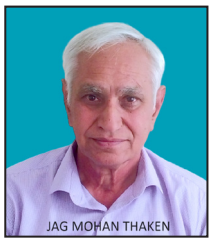
This afternoon, as the hot July sun rests against my reading room window, memories drift in like slow-falling snowflakes, carrying with them the scents, sounds, and warmth of a world long gone. The smell of haakh and munji anchar from my kitchen, an old laalteen gathering dust in a corner, and the familiar taste of Noon Chai on my lips carry me back to that lost world.

That was my Srinagar — a city of open homes, loving neighbourhoods, simple joys, and eternal warmth.

May these memories not merely remind us of what we've lost, but inspire us to reclaim those days of honesty, kindness, and human togetherness, one cup of Noon Chai at a time.

Syed Majid Gilani is a government officer by profession and a storyteller by passion. He weaves narratives about family values, moral wisdom, and real-life emotions. He can be reached at syedmajid6676@gmail.com.

Punjab's New Land Pooling Policy: Urbanization At The Cost Of Agriculture?



■ Jag Mohan Thakern

In India 69 percent population lives in villages, where most of the populace is associated with agriculture and allied activities, but snatching the agricultural land by the governments in the name of urban and industrial development leaves these Ruralites in the lurch with a stigma of landless, unsettled and unemployed. However, the Governments' claim that the agricultural land acquired for the development purposes is sought with willingness of the farmers and they are given lucrative prices and benefits in lieu of the land acquired. If the governments claims are true, then why do these farmers sit on roads to raise their voice against the land acquisition?

With the purpose of urban development and to curb illegal colonies by the land mafias in the state, which are growing in an unplanned and haphazard way, Punjab cabinet on June 02 gave its nod to the new land pooling policy initially being launched in 27 cities and towns of the state. The government claims that the new policy involves landowners, promoters, and companies as stakeholders in the development process and one of the most emphasized features of the policy is its voluntary nature and no land will be taken without the farmer's written consent in the form of a 'No Objection Certificate (NOC)'. Policy states that the land owners will be

given developed residential and commercial plots as per their eligibility and until the farmers receive possession of the developed plots, the government will pay them an interim compensation of Rs 30,000 per acre annually for up to three years. The government is publicizing this policy as the most suitable and profitable one.

But here arises the questions- if the new land pooling policy is so lucrative and beneficial for the farmers, then why is it being criticized by the farmer unions and opposition parties? Why are they warning the government to start agitation against it?

On July 4, a BJP delegation led by its National General Secretary Tarun Chugh and State President Sunil Jakhar met Honourable Punjab Governor Mr. Gulab Chand Kataria in protest against the land pooling scheme of the AAP government. The party claims that on this occasion, 625 farmers from 22 villages registered their opposition to this land pooling scheme by giving written representation. While talking to the journalist, BJP leaders said that the AAP party is openly looting farmers through this scheme, but BJP will never let the AAP party succeed in its evil designs. This scheme will also be challenged in the courts.

Previously also, stating the policy a "Ponzi scheme", Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar, on June 30, had alleged that the land of the farmers is being seized by enticing them with false promises of four times the profit.

"This scheme has been designed with the intention to loot Punjab. Government officials are falsely claiming that farmers will not lose their land. Once a notification is issued, a farmer cannot even sell his land. If an owner cannot sell his land, isn't this a violation of his rights?" Jakhar asked.

Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, president Punjab State Congress, @RajaBrar_INC On June 3 tweeted, "I wonder what is the need of acquiring 24000 acres of

prime agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. It will simply destroy Punjab's economy that is based on agriculture. Let me warn you, when you try to undermine the foundation of the economy, that is agriculture, the entire edifice will collapse and come crashing down."

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal, on July 01, had announced a series of protests to start from Ludhiana on July 15 to safeguard the interests of farmers whose 40,000 acres of land are set to be forcefully acquired for peanuts by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government under a 1995 State land acquisition act aimed at looting farmers and filling its own coffers.

Addressing a press conference, the SAD president said 40,000 acres of land of 158 villages were being acquired under a purported land pooling scheme which was in fact a land grabbing scheme. "The AAP Delhi leadership wants to collect Rs 10,000 crore for the party. This is the reason they have decided to acquire 40,000 acres of land across the State under the Punjab Regional Town Planning and Development Act, 1995 instead of the central Land Acquisition Act, 2013".

Punjab farmers are also anxious about their future fate, what will they do to upbring their family after their agricultural land gets out of their hand?

Sharing the resentment voice of the farmers, Angrej Singh Bhadaur, Press Secretary, Bharatiya Kisan Union Ekta Dakonda, Punjab quotes the concerns raised by the union - Was there really any need to convert so much cultivable land into concrete jungles? Most of the land being acquired under government control is very fertile land that yields three crops a year. Land is such a fixed resource that its supply cannot be increased. Due to the construction of essential projects for urbanization and development, its quantity for agriculture is decreasing day by day. Already, more than 22,000

acres of fertile land in Punjab has been swallowed up by the Bharat Mala project, which Punjabis do not need at all. On the contrary, this project is going to become a tool for corporate loot of the people. How many plots, colonies and constructed residential flats are already lying vacant in the cities, are they not already more than the requirement considering the current demand? In fact, this policy has not been brought to provide land for residential, commercial or industrial purposes but to create a land bank for corporates and land mafias.

The major point of concern is about the displacement of the settled people. The farmers' union doubts if this scheme is implemented indiscriminately, it will have many adverse effects on different sections of the society. Villages will be depopulated, the culture associated with them will end; the agricultural profession will be wiped out; auxiliary businesses related to agriculture like animal husbandry, dairying, vegetable/fruit cultivation etc. will be closed; public interest government schemes like MNREGA will be closed; people doing non-agricultural occupations in villages like tailors, barbers, motor mechanics, small shopkeepers, confectioners, cobblers etc. will be displaced; what is more, this unnecessary urbanization will swallow the villages and become a reason for the displacement of the settled people.

The farmers' union is looking at this scheme as three black laws of agriculture. The union doubts that this issue has deep potential. If the government succeeds in grabbing land, then the villages will be displaced. But the union sees a silver lining in the way it is being opposed and the farmer organizations are coming forward; the people of Punjab will definitely succeed in giving a befitting reply to this attack.

The author is a Senior Journalist, Columnist & Political Analyst

Satish Sharma monitors Shri Amarnathji Yatra convoy accident; ensures swift relief, medical response

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JULY 5: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, expressed deep concern over a multiple-vehicle accident involving the Amarnathji Yatra convoy in Ramban district early today. Upon receiving reports of the mishap, Sharma closely monitored the situation,

coordinating with Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Alyas Khan and Managing Director JKRTC, Rakesh Sarangal. Sharma directed the Regional Transport Officer Jammu, S. Jasmeet Singh and other senior officers, to work with health officials and emergency services to provide immediate relief and medical attention to the injured pilgrims. "It is with profound concern that I have been following the devel-



opments related to the unfortunate collision involving our Yatris," Sharma said. "My thoughts and prayers are with all the injured. I

am relieved that most injuries are minor and all the affected individuals have received prompt medical attention, added the Minister." Sharma has ordered a thorough investigation to determine the exact cause behind the tragic accident. "The safety and well-being of our pilgrims remain our topmost priority. Under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the government of Jammu and Kashmir is committed towards ensuring a safe and smooth Yatra experience for every devotee, maintained the Minister." Sharma assured that the administration and the concerned departments would remain vigilant and responsive throughout the Yatra period, with heightened coordination between transport, health and law enforcement agencies for welfare of the pilgrims.

DDC Chairman inaugurates two-day Dangal event at PG College Baderwah

HT NEWS DESK

BHADERWAH, JULY 05: Chairman District Development Council (DDC) Doda, Dhanan Singh Kotwal, along with Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh today inaugurated a two-day Dangal (traditional wrestling competition) at PG College Baderwah. The event is being organised by the Department of Tourism in collaboration with the District Administration and in association with the Dangal Committee Baderwah. The inaugural ceremony witnessed the presence of several dignitaries, including DDC West Yudhvir Thakur, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Baderwah Sunil Kumar Bhutaty, senior officials from various departments, promi-



nent citizens and wrestling enthusiasts. The event aims to revive traditional sports, promote local talent and boost tourism in the region. Wrestlers from different parts of the Union Territory are expected to participate in the two-day competition, which has drawn significant attention from the public. Speaking on the occasion, the DDC Chairman highlighted the importance of preserving cultural heritage through such traditional events.

ABRSM framed new team at Zone Jourian, District Jammu; Kuldeep kumar as new President of Zone Jourian.

HT NEWS DESK



JAMMU, July 5: A zonal-level meeting was convened for the constitution of Zonal Body for Zone Jourian under the esteemed presidency of Sh. Rakesh Sharma State Executive member and Pawan Sharma, District President with the Special efforts of Sh. Ved Parkash Sharma District General Secretary and Sh. Tarsem Lal District Media Prabhari. The meeting focused on strengthening the Akhil Bharatiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh and formation of zonal committee and a fruitful discussion on various welfare issues concerning the teaching fraternity was also held.

Prominent participants present in the meeting are : Rajinder Singh (Senior Vice President, District Jammu), Jeet Raj District Executive member, Bali Ram, Secretary Zone Akhnoor, Tarseem Kumar, Kuldeep Raj. Additional dignitaries who are assigned with new roles in organisation are: Kuldeep Kumar - Zonal President, Tirath Ram - Senior Vice President, Surinder Kumar - Vice President, Sukhdev ji - General Secretary, Mohan Lal - Media Prabhari, Shinda Kumar - cashier, Khem Raj - Secretary. Other prominent members are: Roshan Bral, Sudesh Kumar, Yash Paul, Rajkumar, Ravi Kumar, Satish Sharma, Viney Kumar. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to enhance coordination among teachers and work unitedly for their rights and welfare.

Police foil bovine theft attempt in Handwara; Accused arrested

Handwara July 05: In a swift operation, Police in Handwara apprehended an individual involved in bovine theft at Mawer Crossing on the evening of July 4, 2025. A police team from Police Station Qalamabad, while conducting night patrolling duty, intercepted a suspicious person leading a group of bovines near Mawer Crossing. Upon noticing the police party presence, the suspect attempted to flee, but the police team swiftly responded, effectively apprehending him on the spot. He has been identified as Mohd Ismaiel Badana, son of Gulam ud Din, a resident of Lahikote Monabal. Further investigation revealed that Mohd Ismaiel Badana had stolen the bovines from the Puthwari Nowgam area and was attempting to transport them illegally towards Qalamabad for sale.

DC Ramban leads swift response to yatri bus accident; Injured pilgrims provided immediate medical aid

36 Yatris sustain minor injuries in Chanderkote mishap; District administration ensures uninterrupted Shri Amarnathji Yatra

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JULY 05: In an unfortunate incident early this morning, the last vehicle of the Pahalgam-bound convoy lost control near the Chanderkote Langer site at around 7:30 am and collided with a few stranded vehicles. The mishap resulted in damage to four vehicles and minor injuries to 36 Yatris. The District Administration, led by Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan, which was already present in the



area as part of the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra arrangements, acted swiftly and evacuated all the injured Yatris to District Hospital Ramban. Immediate medical attention and necessary treatment were provided to the injured. Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan, DIG DKR Range Shridhar Patil, SSP Ramban Kulbir Singh, and ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak rushed to the hospital to oversee the treatment process. They interacted with the injured pilgrims, assessed the

situation and directed the Chief Medical Officer to ensure the best possible care. After providing first aid and necessary medical treatment and upon their discharge from the hospital, the District Administration arranged separate vehicles to facilitate the onward spiritual journey of the Yatris. The timely and coordinated response by the Ramban District Administration ensured the Yatra continued smoothly with minimal disruption and prioritized the well-being and safety of the pilgrims.

District Magistrate Jammu visits Pargwal, Reviews functioning of Revenue Department

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JULY 05: District Magistrate Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, conducted an official visit to Pargwal Tehsil, during which he reviewed the functioning of the Revenue Department and inspected ongoing field activities. As part of his visit, the DM toured several villages to assess public service delivery and issued on-spot instructions to concerned officers for improved efficiency and responsiveness. He emphasized the need for proactive governance and effective public interface. During the tour, the District Magistrate Jammu also inspected a Fair Price Shop under the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs. He directed Tehsildar Pargwal, Manjeet Singh to seal the shop for floating the norms. Acting promptly on the instructions, the Tehsildar



Pargwal sealed the Fair Price Shop on the spot. He was accompanied by Assistant Commissioner (Revenue) Jammu, Rajesh Kumar and Sub Divisional Magistrate Marh Athar Amin Zargar, who were also present during the visit and contributed to the departmental review. The visit concluded with reaffirmed commitments towards strengthening field-level administration and addressing local concerns with prompt redressal.

DC inspects Chandak-Mandi Road, Key developmental works in Poonch

HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JULY 05: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal today conducted an extensive inspection of the ongoing developmental works along the Chandak-Mandi road, with a special focus on upgradation works being undertaken in preparation for the upcoming Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025. During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by the concerned executing officers. While inspecting the project, the DC took stock of the road surface conditions, drainage infrastructure and other vital components. He directed the executing departments to ensure timely completion of macadamization work before the commencement of the Yatra to facilitate smooth and safe movement of devotees. As part of the developmental review, the Deputy Commissioner also inspected two major bridge



construction projects. 150-meter span motorable bridge over the Mandi River at Sathra - The bridge sanctioned under NABARD will provide direct connectivity to over 10 Panchayats across the river. The DC reviewed the site and assessed the pace and quality of ongoing construction work. Bridge on NH-144A - The DC inspected the foundation and girder casting work of this crucial infrastructure project and instructed the executing agency to accelerate progress while strictly maintaining quality and safety standards. The Deputy Commissioner stressed that all ongoing developmental works must be completed in a time-bound manner and as per approved engineering specifications for the benefit of the locals.

NC felicitates newly appointed Additional Spokespersons Asks Party cadre to gear up for strengthening the party at gross root level.

HT NEWS DESK

Jammu, July 5: Sheikh Bashir Ahmad, Pardeep Bali and Ayub Malik Provincial Secretaries Jammu, District Presidents of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference - Chander Mohan Sharma, Raghuveer Singh Manhas, Naresh Bittu, Sunil Verma, Ram Parshotam and other party functionaries felicitated Sandeep Singh Wazir from Jammu and Akash Verma from Udhampur on their nomination as Additional Spokespersons of the party, in a function held at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu. The occasion was graced and blessed by Additional General Secretary and former Minister Ajay Kumar Sad-

hotra, Provincial President Jammu Rattan Lal Gupta and senior party leader and former Minister S. Harbans Singh who congratulated the newly appointed leaders and urged them to uphold the values and vision of the National Conference. During the programme, Zeeshan Rana, Yashu Vardhan, and Imran Qazi, earlier Additional Spokespersons of the party, were also felicitated for their valuable contribution and dedicated service. Addressing the gathering, Ajay Sadhotra raised serious concern over the ongoing dual power structure in Jammu and Kashmir, stating that it is creating unnecessary hurdles in the effective functioning of governance. He said, "People are suffering due to confusion and lack of account-



ability." He strongly reiterated for restoration of full statehood to Jam-

mu and Kashmir and an end to the dual power structure, which he termed as undemocratic and detrimental to public welfare. Rattan Lal Gupta, while speaking on the occasion, said that the best performance of Omar Led government in Jammu and Kashmir the emphasized of the nine months achievement of the Omar Led government. He highlighted key initiatives taken by the NC-led government within the first five months of its tenure, including free travel for women in government-operated buses, enhancement of marriage assistance from Rs 50,000 to Rs 75,000, provision of 200 units of free electricity per month for AAY households, and doubling of the monthly free ration quota from 5 kg to 10 kg per person

for AAY families, enhancement of pension of Old age, widow and handicapped persons from Rs 1000 to Rs 1500, Rs 2000 (Senior Citizen) Per month. Senior leader S. Harbans Singh lauded the performance of the National Conference-led dispensation under Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, stating that the first nine months of the present tenure have reflected a clear roadmap for youth empowerment, development, and inclusive governance. The District Presidents of Jammu present on the occasion assured the leadership that the party's message will be taken to every household and the cadre will remain united and active ahead of the upcoming electoral battles.

Trump says Russian leadership has been able to cope with sanctions

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Moscow/Washington,

US President Donald Trump admitted that the Russian leadership has been able to cope with Western sanctions, adding that in the wake of the recent Russian attack, President Vladimir Putin knows that additional sanctions are coming.

"He (Russian President Vladimir Putin) has been able to handle sanctions," Trump told reporters on board Air Force One.

Trump said the topic of restrictions against Russia was raised in a recent conversation with Putin at length.

"We talk about sanctions a lot, yeah. I would say he's not thrilled with it... he understands that it may be coming, and, you know, he's a professional," he said.

The statement comes amidst Russia's overnight launch of drones and missiles on Ukraine in one of Moscow's largest aerial attacks in the war, where it launched 550



drones and 11 missiles directly at Kyiv.

While Ukrainian air defence systems were able to intercept a majority of them, a sizeable 72 projectiles managed to bypass the systems and target Ukrainian infrastructure.

Trump also noted that he was "very unhappy" with his July 3 telephone conversation with Russian leader Vladimir Putin. "He

wants to go all the way, just killing people. It's no good," he said, reports state media TASS.

Following the attack, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky had called for even greater actions against Russia, asking the West to undertake stringent measures against Moscow.

Recently, the US had suspended a consignment of weapon systems to Ukraine which included Patriot

air defence missiles, GMLRS precision-guided munitions, Hellfire guided missiles, and Stinger portable anti-aircraft missile systems, citing a lack of domestic supply, giving a significant blow to Kyiv whose own supplies are also running low.

Despite the massive sanctions imposed on Russia by the West and NATO, with Trump claiming that he's been harsher with sanctions on Moscow than any other country, including Iran and North Korea, the country has been able to stave off any major economic setbacks, with its economy still managing to grow. Recently, the US had suspended a consignment of weapon systems to Ukraine which included Patriot air defence missiles, GMLRS precision-guided munitions, Hellfire guided missiles, and Stinger portable anti-aircraft missile systems, citing a lack of domestic supply, giving a significant blow to Kyiv whose own supplies are also running low.

Hamas confirms positive response to new ceasefire plan

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Cairo, July 5

Hamas has confirmed it has delivered a "positive response" to mediators for a new Gaza ceasefire proposal with Israel and hostage release deal put forward by the US.

The Ynet portal reported on Thursday that Hamas had given a positive response to Qatar regarding the new plan, which stipulates a 60-day ceasefire with the release of 10 live hostages and 18 dead.

Hamas released a statement on July 3, saying that it had "completed its internal consultations and consultations with the Palestinian factions and forces on the latest proposal of the mediators to stop the aggression against our people in Gaza and has conveyed its positive response to the brotherly mediators."

Ynet reported citing an unnamed Israeli official that Israel had received a response from Hamas via mediators and was studying the details.

Hamas said in its official statement that it was "ready to enter immediately" into a new round of negotiations on the mechanism for implementing this new framework agreement.



On Wednesday, Hamas said that it was holding consultations to discuss a proposal from mediators aimed at reaching a ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip.

On March 18, Israel resumed strikes on the Gaza Strip, citing Palestinian movement Hamas' refusal to accept the US plan to extend the ceasefire, which expired on March 1.

On June 30, Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said that Cairo, along with other mediators, was trying to broker a 60-day ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the release of a number of Israeli hostages. US President Donald Trump said on Truth Social on Tuesday, July 1, that Israel had agreed to the necessary conditions to finalize the 60-day ceasefire.

MoS Pabitra Margherita to visit Malaysia for ASEAN-related meetings, also visit Cambodia

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, July 5

Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita will be visiting Malaysia where he will attend the Foreign Ministers' Meetings under the ASEAN framework, and will also visit Cambodia.

During his official visit to Cambodia from July 7-8, MoS Margherita will be calling on the senior leadership of Cambodia, and would interact with ITEC/ICCR Alumni, as also members of the Indian community. He would also review the extensive restoration and conservation work carried out by India at World Heritage Sites in Cambodia, that are also symbols of our shared culture, a statement said.

Our excellent, close relations with Cambodia are underpinned by shared civilizational heritage and a robust, people-centric development partnership. The visit would further bolster our bilateral ties and provides an opportunity for both sides to exchange views on advancing initiatives and issues of mutual interest in diverse sectors.

MoS Margherita will visit Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from July 10-11, at the invitation of the current ASEAN Chair, Malaysia.

MoS will participate in the Foreign Ministers' Meetings under the ASEAN framework in the format of ASEAN-India, East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

India and ASEAN share cultural and civilisational bonds. ASEAN is the cornerstone of India's Act East Policy and the Indo-Pacific vision. The visit will renew India's deep engagement with the ASEAN-centred regional architecture, underline our strong commitment to ASEAN unity, ASEAN centrality and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and strengthen the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

MoS (PM) is also expected to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from other countries in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on the margins of the ASEAN-related meetings, the statement added. MoS (PM) is also expected to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from other countries in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on the margins of the ASEAN-related meetings, the statement added. India and ASEAN share cultural and civilisational bonds. ASEAN is the cornerstone of India's Act East Policy.

Australian researchers tackle water scarcity by using algae to recycle waste water

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Adelaide, July 5

In an innovative method to tackle water scarcity through a green solution, Australian researchers are using algae to recycle waste water in drought-stricken rural regions.

Flinders University researchers in South Australia are using trial phase enhanced high-rate algal pond (HRAP) systems that incorporate native filamentous algae, enabling faster, more efficient wastewater treatment and easier removal of solids, according to a statement from the university yesterday.

This breakthrough not only improves water quality for non-potable uses like irrigation, but also offers



a low-cost, energy-efficient alternative to traditional sewage treatment, addressing critical water shortages faced by regional communities, the statement said.

Local councils in South Australia

are using HRAP systems, where low-energy paddlewheels circulate wastewater through channels filled with microalgae and bacteria that remove contaminants, researchers said.

"Algae-bacterial granule formation is a positive way for biofilms to form dense, fast-settling biomass and improve treated wastewater quality," said Flinders University PhD researcher Sam Butterworth.

Researchers are now testing advanced "sequencing batch reactor" HRAP technology at a South Australian wastewater treatment plant, aiming to optimise biological processes for faster, more efficient wastewater treatment without major new investment.

Turkey monitoring progress of Azerbaijan-Armenia peace talks: Erdogan

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Ankara, July 5

Turkey is monitoring the progress of the peace talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia and expects an agreement that satisfies Baku's legitimate demands, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said.

Erdogan met Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev on the sidelines of the Economic Cooperation Organization summit in Khan-kendi. During the meeting, bilateral relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan, regional and global issues

were discussed.

"During the meeting, President Erdogan said the Turkey-Azerbaijan solidarity is exemplary and it is important to expand and maintain bilateral cooperation in energy and transport. President Erdogan said Turkey is closely following the comprehensive peace talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia and that an agreement is expected to be signed that will satisfy Azerbaijan's legitimate demands," the Turkish presidential office said.

During the meeting,

Erdogan also said that he "welcomes the ceasefire between Iran and Israel and that it is in everyone's interest to ensure sustainable stability in the region."

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev plan to meet in Dubai in July to discuss a peace agreement between the two countries, Middle East Eye reported earlier, citing sources.

Armenian and Azerbaijani officials have said that they had agreed on the text of a peace agreement to end nearly four decades of con-

flict between the South Caucasus countries, a sudden breakthrough in a fitful and often bitter peace process.

The two post-Soviet countries have fought several wars over Nagorno-Karabakh, a disputed mountainous region, since it declared its secession from Soviet Azerbaijan in 1988. In September 2023, Azerbaijan took control of the territory, prompting a massive exodus of its ethnic Armenian population. The two post-Soviet countries have fought several wars over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Italian lawmakers formally ask govt about spyware attack

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, July 5

Italian lawmakers have questioned the government about the spy attack on journalists. It was possibly performed using technologies supplied by the American-based spyware maker Paragon.

According to reports, the COPASIR parliamentary committee has urged the Cabinet undersecretary Alfredo Mantovano to overlook the matter of whether the spyware targeted reporters or journalists. Some reports also highlighted that Alfredo Mantovano is a close aide of Giorgia Meloni.

The ruling Meloni government has denied any involvement in illegal spying on journalists. But in January this year, Meta pointed out that almost 90 users of its private WhatsApp chat service were spied on by Paragon spyware. Reportedly, some of the spied individuals are Italians.

Another report also highlighted that some of the Italian journalists were spied on. On the other hand, a report published by COPASIR expressed its concerns with Paragon and used the technology on a limited number of people with permission from some prosecutors.

Microsoft puts Pak IT sector in uncertainty

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, July 5

In a shocking event for Pakistan's IT corridors, Microsoft shuts down its 25-year-long operations in Pakistan. The tech major started its Pak operations in 2000, which began with ambitions of digital transformation and tech-friendly collaboration.

The news came just after Microsoft's announcement of layoffs of its 9,000 employees this week.

Microsoft played a major role in developing the Pak IT sector in these 25 years by implementing enterprise solutions across diverse industries, collaborating with the government on different e-governance projects, and overseeing the capacity-building programme for the country.

Microsoft made a quiet move, and the announcement came from Jawwad Rehman (founding country manager of Microsoft Pakistan) in his LinkedIn post.

Rehman played a critical role in establishing Microsoft's presence in Pakistan. He also highlighted the challenges faced by businesses dealing with the current situation in Pakistan.

The Microsoft move came amid Pakistan's facing a severe economic situation. In a post on X, former president Dr. Arif Alvi expressed his disappointment over Microsoft's decision regarding the closure of operations. He also showed his concerns over the bleak economic future of Pakistan.

World's largest Legoland opens to tourists in Shanghai

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, July 5

SHANGHAI, July 5: Visitors were welcomed by a giant Lego man over 26 metres tall named Dada as they arrived at the new Legoland resort in Shanghai. The Legoland resort, which opened Saturday, is the first in China. It is the largest Legoland in the world and was built with 85 million Lego bricks.

The resort was developed in conjunction with the Shanghai government by Merlin Entertainments and the LEGO Group. Among the main attractions in the resort is Miniland, which replicates well-known sights from across the world using Lego bricks. It features sights from across China like Beijing's Temple of Heaven and Shanghai's the Bund waterfront.

Trinidad and Tobago becomes first Caribbean nation to adopt UPI, India's Digi Payment Platform

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, July 5

Trinidad and Tobago has become the first Caribbean nation to adopt the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), India's flagship digital payment platform, while both countries agreed to explore further collaboration in the digital domain, including implementation of India Stack solutions like DigiLocker, e-Sign and the Government e-Marketplace (GeM).

This was done during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recently-concluded two-day official visit to Trinidad and Tobago on July 3-4.

According to a joint Statement issued on the conclusion of the

visit, Trinidad and Tobago requested support from India in digitization and upgradation of the system for state land registration. The two countries also underlined that digital governance and public service delivery could act as enablers of inclusive development, innovation and national competitiveness.

Prime Minister Modi who held talks with his Trinidad and Tobago counterpart Ms Kamala Persad-Bissessar, lauded her ambitious vision of digitizing education and announced a gift of 2,000 laptops to support Trinidad and Tobago's flagship educational programme.

The visit, the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister in 26 years, coincided with the



180th anniversary of the arrival of Indian immigrants to Trinidad and Tobago in 1845. "It reaffirmed the deep-rooted civilizational ties, vibrant people-to-people linkages and shared democratic values that form the bedrock of the longstanding friendship

between the two nations," the Joint Statement said.

In recognition of Prime Minister Modi's "exceptional leadership", both within India and on the global stage, he was conferred the Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago - the country's highest national honour.

The two Prime Ministers held comprehensive discussions on a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest and acknowledged the common threat posed by terrorism to peace and security, reiterating their strong condemnation of and resolute opposition to terrorism. They declared that there could be no justification for terrorism, including cross-border terrorism. The two leaders reaffirmed the

need for comprehensive reforms in the United Nations, including expansion of the United Nations Security Council, to better reflect current global realities.

While recognizing the rising geopolitical tensions and global conflicts, both leaders called for dialogue and diplomacy as the way forward. Trinidad and Tobago reaffirmed its full support to India for permanent membership of an expanded United Nations Security Council. It was also agreed that India would support Trinidad and Tobago's candidature for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the period 2027-28 while Trinidad and Tobago would support India's candidature for the period 2028-29.

Distance no barrier for cultural connect: PM Modi to Indian community in Argentina

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Buenos Aires/New Delhi, July 5

After receiving a warm welcome from the Indian diaspora here, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on a two-day visit to Argentina, said that it is truly moving to see the spirit of India shining brightly through the Indian expatriates.

In a post on X, the Prime Minister wrote, "Distance is no barrier when it comes to cultural connect! Honoured by the gracious welcome from the Indian community in Buenos Aires. It is truly moving to see how, thousands of kilometres away from home, the spirit of India shines brightly through our Indian community." PM Modi's visit to Argentina is aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and exploring opportunities for cooperation between the two nations. PM Modi arrived in Buenos Aires on the third leg of his five-nation tour at the invitation of the President of the



Republic of Argentina, Javier Milei. As rare earth minerals play a critical role in various high-tech industries and the clean energy transition, which has prompted countries to actively engage to secure their access and Argentina is among several countries which is rich in critical minerals such

as lithium, copper, and rare earth elements. Argentina also holds reserves of the world's second-largest shale gas and the fourth-largest shale oil. Upon arrival at the Ezeiza International Airport, he was accorded a ceremonial welcome and was wel-

comed with a traditional Indian dance performance.

Earlier, PM Modi had visited the country in 2018 for the G20 Summit.

Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal, said that this is the first bilateral visit by an Indian PM to Argentina in 57 years.

In a post on X, he said, "Celebrating the enduring friendship between our nations. PM Narendra Modi has landed in the vibrant city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, on an Official Visit. He was accorded a ceremonial welcome on arrival at the airport. This is the first bilateral visit by an Indian PM to Argentina in 57 years, marking a new chapter in India-Argentina ties." In a post on X, he said, "Celebrating the enduring friendship between our nations. PM Narendra Modi has landed in the vibrant city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, on an Official Visit. He was accorded a ceremonial welcome on arrival at the airport.

India negotiating trade deals guided by national interest, not under pressure: Piyush Goyal

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Bengaluru, July 5

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal today said India is now negotiating international trade agreements with confidence and strength, unlike the previous Congress and UPA governments that signed deals which did not align with national interest.

"Today, India negotiates with self-confidence. We can compete with anyone in the world. This is not the weak India of the Congress and UPA era, which entered into agreements that did not serve national interest," Goyal asserted, speaking to reporters on the sidelines of IIMTAA Sangam event held here in the City.

Remarks by Goyal comes in the wake of US President Donald Trump issuing a firm deadline of July 9 for India to conclude a trade agreement, warning that, absent a deal, the US may reimpose a 26 percent "reciprocal" tariff on Indian imports.

The minister emphasised that the Narendra Modi government has ensured that all trade negotiations are driven solely by national priorities and not dictated by external deadlines or pressure. "India does not negotiate under imposed deadlines. National interest is paramount in every agreement we enter," he said.

Listing the progress made since 2014, Goyal noted that India has



successfully concluded free trade agreements (FTAs) with Mauritius, the United Arab Emirates, Australia, and the four-nation EFTA bloc comprising Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Iceland. He added that most recently, an FTA was finalised with the United Kingdom.

India is also engaged in active negotiations with several other developed nations including the European Union, the United States, Oman, Peru, and Chile, the minister said.

Highlighting the transformation in India's global trade strategy, Goyal said the country is now seen as a reliable and capable partner on the world stage. "We are self-confident. We are negotiating from a position of strength," he reiterated.

The minister also underscored that the Modi government's focus is to create equitable trade partnerships that support India's economic growth while protecting domestic interests.

Modi will "meekly bow" to Trump's tariff deadline, alleges Rahul

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, July 5

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, today took a swipe at the Modi government over the ongoing trade negotiations with the United States,



alleging that the Prime Minister will "meekly bow" to the pressure from US President Donald Trump's tariff deadline.

"Piyush Goyal can beat his chest all he wants, mark my words, Modi will meekly bow to the Trump tariff deadline," Gandhi wrote on X, targeting the Union Commerce and Industry Minister.

Notably, Goyal had reiterated India's steadfast approach to international trade, stressing that the country negotiates on its own terms and in alignment with national priorities.

"India engages in trade discussions based on its own principles. Talks are ongoing with countries such as the EU, New Zealand, Oman, the USA, and Chile. A free trade agreement is only possible when it brings mutual benefit—such agreements must be win-win," Goyal had told reporters yesterday.

High-intensity blast kills one, injures another in West Bengal

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Kolkata, July 5

A high-intensity explosion killed one person and wounded another while some miscreants were manufacturing crude bombs in an abandoned house in West Bengal's East Bardhaman, police said today. The body of the deceased was beyond recognition in the impact of the blast, which occurred around 8:30 pm yesterday at Rajoa village in Katwa subdivision, police and eye witnesses said. They said the blast flattened the roof-top of asbestos killing the man on the spot. The injured, who was identified as Toofan Chowdhury, was caught by the villagers and handed over to the police. He was taken to the Katwa Mohokuma hospital with multiple wounds.

Bihar: INDIA bloc to hit the streets July 9 against EC's voter revision

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Patna, July 5

The INDIA bloc will take its fight against the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision of the voter list in Bihar to the streets on July 9 by actively participating in the Bharat Bandh called by the Left parties, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav announced today.

The nationwide strike was called by the Left parties to highlight the law and order situation in Bihar and to highlight the problem of workers. Tejashwi, also the Leader of Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, made the announcement after meeting the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of the state here. Tejashwi, who led a delegation of the INDI Alliance



leaders, questioned the EC's decision to ask every resident of Bihar to prove his citizenship. He said: "The demand that only people of Bihar need to provide proof of citizenship is suspicious and suggests a larger conspiracy. Urge everyone to come out on the street on July 9 and support our fight against this injustice." He also challenged the Election Commission of India's decision to

approve only 11 documents to ascertain a voter's eligibility and asked the EC to prove its constitutional and legal basis.

The RJD leader said: "If the list of documents has been prepared by administrative order or internal guideline, is it appropriate to grant it such sweeping authority over democratic processes and civil rights? The Election Commission must explicitly clarify the

legal basis — the specific law or clause — used to select these 11 documents."

He said the rejection of government-issued IDs like Aadhaar, ration cards, and MNREGA job cards during voter list revisions is puzzling.

Tejashwi said two-three months ago his wife got registered as a voter here on the basis of an Aadhaar card. Now, the same document is declared invalid by the same institution.

He said: "The Aadhaar card application process itself demands rigorous proof of identity and residence, including biometric data. This inconsistency raises the question: why would the government reject the very IDs it meticulously verifies?"

Life imprisonment to rape accused in post-poll violence case in Bengal

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Malda (West Bengal), July 5

A special court in Malda district has handed life sentence with a penalty of Rs 50,000 to the accused retired teacher Rafikul Islam alias Bhelu for raping a nine-year-old girl, the first conviction in the 2021 post-poll violence in West Bengal, official sources said. Additional district & sessions judge, 2nd (POCSO court), Malda, Rajib Saha, who had convicted Rafikul Islam on Wednesday, pronounced the quantum of punishment on Saturday. The accused, a retired school teacher of a government school in Malda, was found guilty of raping the minor girl in the evening of June

4, 2021 while she was playing in the mango orchard of the accused. The accused lured her with money, said the CBI, which probed the crime after the Calcutta High Court ordered the agency to investigate the post-poll violence including rape, murders and looting. The incident of rape was witnessed by the cousin of the victim who is also a minor girl aged around 10 years.

"Both the victim and the eyewitness deposed strongly about the incident of rape before the trial court," a CBI statement said.

The court has further directed that the state of West Bengal will provide Rs 3 lakh to the victim from the Victim Compensation Fund.

Tripura launches SQAAC to bring uniformity in education standard

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Agartala, July 5

The Tripura School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework (SQAAC) has been launched in Tripura to enable children on a contemporary level with the children of other parts of the country.

Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha, who also holds the education portfolio, said on Saturday that through SQAAC, the standards of education of each school can be assessed, and recognition given accordingly. "The teachers in schools will no longer be limited to the traditional way

of teaching. They will have to teach various important subjects beyond the specific syllabus," he said.

"As our PM said, it is not enough to just read textbooks. Values, development, and the idea of nation-building must be infused among children. The SQAAC children will be enabled to upgrade their knowledge and compete with other parts of the country," Dr Saha said.

He stated that education plays a special role in improving the quality of socio-economic life besides enhancing one's knowledge, and underlined, "Many children are good at studies but

fail to succeed in life. Therefore, it is necessary to be involved in sports, social work, and other activities and it is the responsibility of teachers to develop students into good human beings."

The National Education Policy 2020 has been launched to give momentum to the education system. If there is a uniform curriculum everywhere, students do not face any problems. If there is a uniform question paper, children from any region can also compete centrally and SQAAC is to facilitate the process, Dr Saha added.

BJP will form next govt in Telangana, says new state party chief Rao

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Hyderabad, July 5

Newly appointed Telangana BJP president Ramchander Rao on Saturday asserted that the BJP is rapidly emerging as the people's preferred alternative in the state and vowed that the party will contest all seats in the upcoming local body elections — from ward members to ZPTCs — with the goal of forming the next government.

Addressing a press meet, Ramchander Rao reflected on his political journey. "I began as a grassroots worker in the BJP — pasting posters,



riding a bicycle, and working tirelessly at the booth level. Today, being appointed as state president by the

party leadership is recognition of the dedication of not just mine, but of the lakhs of workers like me who have built this party brick by brick," he said.

Rao said the BJP, which is in power in 13 states with its own majority and part of the ruling alliance in others, is the world's largest political party with over 14 crore members. "In Telangana alone, 40 lakh BJP workers are actively working at the grassroots. This is not just a political party, it's a movement," he added. Taking aim at both the BRS and Congress, Rao called them "two failed

experiments" that have let the people of Telangana down. "Congress won on the back of tall promises and now says there's no money to fulfill them. From failing farmers with half-baked loan waivers to cheating the unemployed by not filling existing vacancies, the government is running on excuses and propaganda," he said.

He pointed to the Congress' promise of 2 lakh jobs, which remains unfulfilled, and accused it of misleading farmers with the incomplete implementation of the Rythu Bharosa scheme.

Monsoon fury leaves 72 dead; 37 missing in Himachal

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Shimla, July 5

Relentless rains, landslides, and flash floods have left 72 people dead with 37 still missing in Himachal Pradesh, according to the latest figures from the State Emergency Operation Centre. Another 113 persons have been injured, while 27 deaths have occurred in road accidents since the beginning of the monsoon season. The maximum fatalities were reported from Mandi district (20), followed by Kangra (13), Chamba (9), Shimla (5), and Una (5). Other districts affected include Kullu, Kinnaur, Hamirpur, Bilaspur, Solan, and Sirmaur, where casualties were attributed to landslides, flash

floods, electrocution, drowning, and gas explosions. The cumulative economic loss to both public and private infrastructure has surged past 541 crore, with destruction of 288 houses, 507 cowsheds, 69 shops, and loss of 251 cattle and 10,000 poultry birds. The state's infrastructure continues to suffer. As of Saturday morning, 261 roads remain blocked, with Mandi alone accounting for 176 road closures. Landslides and slope failures triggered by incessant rain have cut off access to several villages. Additionally, 300 Distribution Transformers (DTRs) are non-functional, and 281 drinking water supply schemes have been disrupted across the state. The worst-hit utility zones include Sundernagar.

Precision Without Pain, How Robotic Surgery is Changing Urology



BY DR DEVENDRA KUMAR BABBAR

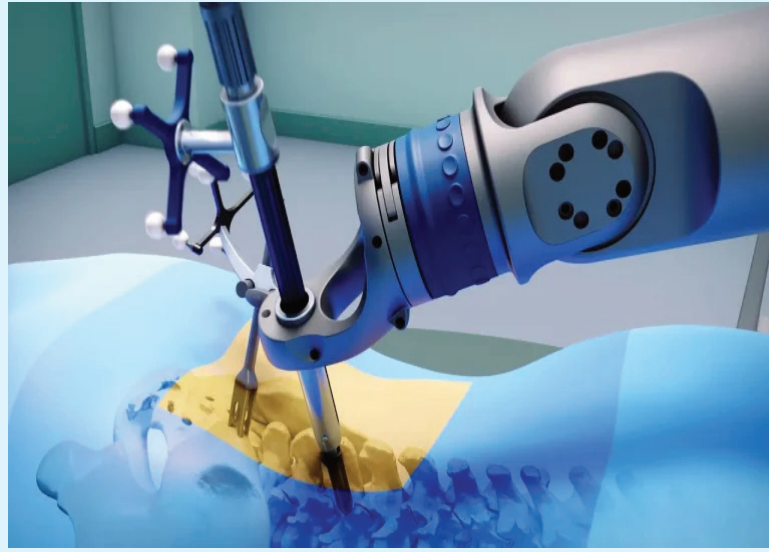
For many patients, the word "surgery" still brings to mind long hospital stays, painful stitches, and weeks of slow recovery. This fear often leads people to delay treatment, especially for urological problems like kidney tumors or prostate issues. In India, prostate enlargement affects nearly 60 percent of men over the age of 60, and kidney cancer cases have been steadily rising, with many detected at advanced stages. But in recent years, robotic-assisted surgery has quietly changed the face of urology. By using small instru-

ments controlled through a robotic system, doctors can now perform complex procedures with greater safety, less pain, and much faster healing. This shift is giving patients the confidence to seek timely treatment, without the fear of traditional open surgery.

How Robotic Surgery Works

Robotic surgery is not performed by a machine on its own. Instead, it is fully controlled by a trained surgeon who operates from a console. The robot's arms translate the surgeon's hand movements with higher accuracy and stability. A 3D high-definition camera gives the doctor a magnified view inside the body, making it easier to work around delicate tissues. Through small keyhole-sized cuts, complex urology procedures can be performed without the need for large incisions.

Common Urological Conditions Treated



Robotic surgery is now used widely in several important urology cases. In prostate cancer, especially among older men, robotic surgery helps remove the prostate gland while protecting surrounding nerves, preserving urinary function. For kidney

cancer, robotic tools allow the tumor to be removed while saving healthy parts of the kidney. In young adults with pelviureteric junction obstruction, where urine flow is blocked, robotic repair offers long-term relief with faster recovery. It is also used

in selected cases of bladder cancer or difficult urinary tract surgeries.

Faster Recovery, Less Pain

One of the main advantages of robotic surgery is how much easier it makes recovery. Patients usually experience less pain after surgery, have lower chances of infection or blood loss, and are able to leave the hospital sooner. Many can walk the next day and return to light activities within a week or two, depending on the type of surgery. Scars are smaller, and post-operative discomfort is minimal. For cancer patients, timely and precise surgery also improves long-term health outcomes.

A Technology That Needs Wider Reach

Despite its clear benefits, robotic urological surgery is still mainly available in big cities or larger hospitals. Many patients in smaller towns are not aware that such an option exists or assume it is too

expensive. However, with more hospitals in India adopting robotic systems and trained specialists becoming available, access is improving. The cost of robotic surgery has also come down significantly in recent years.

A Better Future for Urology Patients

Robotic-assisted surgery is transforming the experience of urological care. It replaces fear with confidence, pain with comfort, and long recoveries with quicker returns to normal life. For patients, this technology represents not just a medical breakthrough, but a chance to face serious health problems with hope and dignity. As awareness grows and access expands, robotic urology surgery is set to become the standard of care across the country.

Senior Consultant, Urology and Robotic Surgery, Yatharth Hospital, Greater Noida. He can be mailed at krkaisamp@gmail.com

'Poor heart health may signal gestational diabetes risk in pregnancy'

IANAS
New Delhi, July 5

Women with poor cardiovascular health may be at a higher risk of developing gestational diabetes and coronary artery calcium (CAC) in midlife, according to a study. CAC refers to the buildup of calcium deposits in the walls of the coronary arteries, which supply blood to the heart. It is a significant indicator of heart disease risk. The findings, published in JAMA Cardiology, suggest that gestational diabetes is a marker of pre-pregnancy cardiovascular health. It also underscores the importance of healthcare providers in helping patients improve their cardiovascular health both prior and after pregnancy. "We need to optimise cardiovascular health early in the life course," said lead author Natalie Cameron, instructor in the Department of Medicine's Division of General Internal Medicine at Northwestern University, US. In the study, the investigators analysed patient data originally collected from 1985 to 2010. Of the more than 1,000 participants included in the cohort, the average age was 28.6 years. All participants had at least one singleton birth and did not have pre-pregnancy diabetes. Overall, the investigators found that participants with poor pre-pregnancy cardiovascular health



compared to those with better pre-pregnancy cardiovascular health were more likely to have a pregnancy complicated by gestational diabetes and were more likely to develop CAC. "Patients with gestational diabetes and other adverse pregnancy outcomes should follow up with a primary care provider so we can optimise heart health after pregnancy," Cameron said. "We need to take a good pregnancy history, ask about lifestyle behaviours such as diet and physical activity, and screen for cardiovascular disease risk factors. Then we can work with patients to help them optimise their heart health throughout their life course," she added. The researchers also urged revamping postpartum primary care for women with adverse pregnancy outcomes to seamlessly help patients get from obstetrics to a primary care provider. (IANAS)

BIG FM Hosts 'Doc You Rock' Awards in Jammu to Honour Medical Fraternity

HT NEWS DESK

Jammu, 5th July 2025, In a heartfelt tribute to the unwavering commitment of healthcare professionals, BIG FM, one of India's leading radio networks, hosted the prestigious 'Doc You Rock - Saviours of Life' Awards in Jammu. Cambridge Blanket was the Title Partner, while the event was presented by J&K Bank. Held at Taj Vivanta, the ceremony was graced by the Hon'ble Union Minister of State, Dr. Jitendra Singh, who felicitated 24 of the region's most distinguished doctors and event partners for their outstanding service to the community. The event brought together leading figures from the healthcare, media, and corporate sectors to celebrate the selfless spirit of the medical fraternity. The doctors honoured for their relentless dedication included Dr. Gaurav Vaid, Dr. Harleen Kour, Dr. Nadeem Niyaz Jan, Dr. Sashank Sharma, Dr. Akhil Gupta, Dr. Vikas Heer, Dr. Rachna Dhani Singh, Dr. Furqan Ahmed Nizami, Dr. Reubina Singh, Dr. Chander Mohan, Dr. Ravinder Singh Ghai, Dr. Ankur Goel, Dr. A.S. Bhatia, Dr. Neeraj Koul, Dr. Nigam Gupta, Dr.



Varinder Sharma, Dr. Chander Sheikher Sharma, Dr. Dushyant Choudhary, Dr. Ratnakar Sharma, Dr. Sanjeev Gupta, Dr. Satish Kumar Badyal, Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, Dr. Yashpal Sharma, and Dr. R.P. Khudiyar. Dr. R.P. Khudiyar was specially honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his exemplary contribution to the field of medicine. As part of the initiative, BIG FM ran a week-long special on-air campaign featuring a dedicated one-hour morning segment where listeners shared emotional thank-you messages, songs, and poetry for their doctors. The campaign also showcased engaging conversations between BIG FM RJs

and doctors, highlighting their passions beyond medicine, such as music, painting, gardening, and social work offering a rare and personal glimpse into the lives of those who dedicate themselves to the care of others. Speaking about the initiative, Mr. Sunil Kumaran, COO, BIG FM, said, "At BIG FM, we are driven by a purpose to celebrate real-life heroes who inspire change. 'Doc You Rock - Saviours of Life' is our tribute to the compassionate individuals who go beyond the call of duty every single day. This initiative was about acknowledging not just their medical excellence, but the human spirit they embody."

Nipah outbreak: 1 dead, 345 on contact list in Kerala

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Shimla, July 5

In view of one death due to Nipah and another person testing positive for the virus, the Kerala Health Department has prepared a Nipah contact list comprising 345 individuals in the state. The state's health department has activated emergency containment protocols across three districts: Malappuram, Palakkad, and Kozhikode. Health Minister Veena George stated yesterday that 211 people are from Malappuram, 91 from Palakkad and 43 from Kozhikode and all of them are healthcare workers. The current Nipah suspicion pertains to individuals in the Palakkad and Malappuram districts. The state's health department has sprang into action, tracing contacts and implementing emergency protocols to contain the spread of the virus. Following the detection of the virus in tests conducted at the medical colleges in Malappuram and Kozhikode, samples have been sent to the Pune Virology Institute for confirmation. One patient undergoing treatment in Palakkad has tested positive. The patient's route map has been published. Even before confirmation, preventive measures were intensified in accordance with protocol. Alert advisories have been issued in Kozhikode, Malappuram, and Palakkad districts in connection with the two confirmed Nipah cases. Experts have advised against using firecrackers or other methods to scare away bats. Kerala has experienced multiple Nipah outbreaks in the past - in 2018, 2021, 2023, and 2024 - all marked by high fatality rates. Hospitals and healthcare institutions have been directed to strengthen contact tracing and ensure no one is left unidentified in the contact list. The availability of protective equipment in hospitals must be ensured. Efforts to trace the source of the infection should also be intensified, and route maps should be released without delay.

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(MBBS, MD DGO)

SENIOR CONSULTANT GYNAECOLOGIST & OBSTETRICIAN

(Reg. No.: 23527)

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YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING ARE OUR PRIORITY.



Seven Injured in Fresh Dog Bite Attack in Bijbehara, Including Two CRPF Personnel

HT NEWS DESK



Anantnag, Jul 5, KNT: At least seven people, including two CRPF personnel and five civilians, were injured in yet another stray dog attack in South Kashmir's Bijbehara town on Saturday. The incident took place in the Jablipora area of Bijbehara, with additional bite cases reported from adjoining localities such as Arwani, Waghama, Sri Gufwara, and Marhama. Medical Superintendent of Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Bijbehara, Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad, confirmed the injuries, stating, "We received two CRPF jawans and five civilians with dog bites today. Unfortunately, such cases have become a daily routine here in Bijbehara." The repeated incidents have triggered anger and fear among locals, who have long demanded that authorities take urgent steps to curb the stray dog menace. Locals allege that poor waste management and lack of sterilization drives are key contributors to the problem, which continues to put lives at risk. [KNT]

Gill breaks records with 430 as India rack up a rare 1000

Stats highlights from the fourth day between England and India at Edgbaston



United News of India

430 Shubman Gill's runs in the Edgbaston Test against England - the second-highest aggregate in a Test behind Graham Gooch's 456 against India in 1990.

2 Gill is the second batter to make two 150-plus scores in a Test, after Allan Border who scored 150* and 153 against Pakistan in Lahore in 1980.

Gill is one of nine batters with a century and a double-century in a Test. Among Indians, only Gavaskar had done the double before Gill.

2 Indian captains with hundreds in both innings of a Test before Gill. Gavaskar scored 107 and 182 not out against West Indies at Eden Gardens in 1978, and Virat Kohli scored 115 and 141 against Australia in Adelaide in 2014.

Gill is also the second Indian with hundreds in both innings of a Test in England, after Rishabh Pant, who did it in the previous Test at Headingley.

1014 India's total runs at Edgbaston - their highest aggregate in a Test after the 916 against Australia at the SCG in 2004. It's the fourth-highest aggregate overall and the sixth time a team has scored more than 1000 in a Test.

1 Gill and Ravindra Jadeja are the first Indian pair with a hundred and double-hundred partnership in the same Test. They are also one of nine Indian pairs with two century partnerships in a men's Test match.

4 Number of century partnerships for India in the Edgbaston Test and all

of them involved Gill. He is the first Indian and only the fifth batter to be part of four century stands in a Test. The others are: Hanif Mohammad (vs West Indies in 1958), Graham Gooch (vs India in 1990), Mark Taylor (vs Pakistan in 1998) and Joe Root (vs Pakistan in 2016).

585 Gill's runs in the first two Tests of the tour of England - thesecond-

highest aggregate in the first two matches of a series, behind Graeme Smith's 621 in England in 2003. Gill also has the highest tally in the first two Tests as captain, bettering Kohli, who scored 449 runs.

24 Rishabh Pant's sixes in Tests in England - the most by a visiting batter in a country. He went past Ben Stokes, who has hit 21 sixes in South Africa.

Traffic Advisory

The yatri, travelling to seek blessings of Shri Amarnath Ji, in their own/rented cars/buses or any other mode, are requested to travel in the main Yatra convoy only, starting from Bhagwati Nagar Jammu daily; in the interest of smooth and secure conduct of Shri Amarnath ji Yatra 2025.

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TRAFFIC ADVISORY

Youm-i-Ashoora will be observed on 10th Muharram (06th July-2025).

The main Zuljinah procession shall be taken out from Bota Kadal up to Imambara Zadibal, which effects traffic movement in Zadibal and adjacent areas.

In order to have smooth movement of traffic and for convenience of general public/motorists, the following traffic advisory is issued:

- Traffic moving towards Zadibal will be diverted at Firdous Cinema, Mill Stop, Lal Bazar, Bota Kadal & Chattipadshahi.
- Motorists intending to go towards Soura from Lal Chowk or vice versa shall adopt Dr. Ali Jan Road.
- Motorists moving towards Lal Chowk from Zakoora or vice versa shall adopt Foreshore Road.
- Vehicles coming from Gojwara towards Zadibal will be diverted at Firdous Cinema towards Dr. Ali Jan road via Sazgaripora.
- Vehicles coming towards Badamwari from Lal Chowk via Rainawari will be diverted at Chatipadshahi towards Kathidarwaza.
- Motorists from Lal Bazar area will use the Kanitar-Hazratbal-Foreshore road.
- General Public is requested to kindly avoid unnecessary movement towards the areas where Youm-i-Ashoora processions are being taken out to avoid any inconvenience.

INCONVENIENCE IF ANY IS REGRETTED.

(Ajaz Ahmad Bhat) IPS
Sr. Superintendent of Police,
Traffic City Srinagar

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Dr. SYED FURQANA BUKHARI REG. NO.: A-3998
Dental Surgeon, MIDA Ex Resident Govt. Dental College Srinagar Fellowship in Medical Cosmetology

7 YEARS EXPERIENCE

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FREE CHECKUP

TIMING:
MONDAY TO SATURDAY
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Lunch off 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

ADDRESS: Opposite SDH Kreeri, 1st floor Generic Medical Store Building