



Amarnath Yatra set to begin July 3 under unprecedented security blanket

Mock drills held; traffic, rail curbs in place; CRPF deploys mountain rescue teams; only top officials to brief media

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jun 30: The annual Amarnath Yatra is all set to commence on July 3 amidst unprecedented multi-layer security arrangements.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) authorities are conducting mock drills, deploying specialised rescue teams, regulating traffic and railway operations, and centralising official communication to ensure the smooth conduct of the 57-day pilgrimage.

The first batch of pilgrims will leave the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu on July 2 for the twin routes of Baltal in Ganderbal district and Pahalgam in Anantnag district. The pilgrimage will conclude on August 28 on the occasion



of Raksha Bandhan.

Ahead of the Yatra, Srinagar Police on Tuesday conducted a multi-agency mock drill at the Transit Yatri Camp in Pantha Chowk to test preparedness for emergencies, including a five-day attack, road accidents, medical emergencies, evacuation and rescue operations.

The exercise involved personnel from the police, CAPFs, Traffic Police, State Disaster Response Force, Fire and Emergency Services, Health Department, Civil Administration and ambulance services. Officials said the drill focused on response time, communication, coordination and adherence to standard operating procedures before a detailed debriefing to identify operational gaps.

Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir,

All agencies working in close coordination: IGP Kashmir

Says mock drills, surveillance, vulnerable area mapping strengthened

Multi-agency exercise validates response mechanism: SSP Srinagar

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 30: Stating that all security agencies are working in close coordination to ensure the safety and smooth conduct of the annual Amarnath Yatra, slated to commence on July 3, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vidhi Kumar Birdi, on Tuesday said a comprehensive multi-layered security grid has been put in place for the annual pilgrimage.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a security preparedness exercise here, IGP Birdi, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "Extensive



mock drills involving all stakeholders have been conducted to clearly define their respective roles and responsibilities in the event of any emergency or contingency."

"The objective of these mock drills is to ensure that every stakeholder understands their responsibility and responds in a coordinated manner during any unforeseen situation. These exercises also help security forces refine their operational capabilities and improve response time," he said.

The IGP said the security architecture | More on P6

LG Sinha to attend Tawi Arti today

Yogesh

On the eve of Amarnath Yatra, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will attend Tawi Arti at Tawi River Front Jammu on Wednesday morning and flag off the first batch of pilgrims from the city of temples on Thursday. An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the Lieutenant Governor will be attending Tawi Arti at Tawi River Front Jammu. The event is expected to be attended by Ministers, local MLAs of Jammu, senior civil, police and security | More on P6

HMV movement suspended on Jmu-Sgr highway

150 vehicles from Pahalgam, Baltal routes participate in dry run on NH-44

Umair Gul Ganaie

Ahead of the departure of the first batch of Amarnath Yatra pilgrims from Jammu towards Kashmir on Thursday, the Jammu and Kashmir Traffic Police has announced traffic restrictions on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway for Wednesday.

According to a traffic advisory, available with news agency—Kashmir News | More on P6

Srinagar logs season's second hottest day at 35.2°C

Rains to bring relief; MeT warns of flash floods, landslides from July 2 to 4

**Sajid Raina**

Srinagar, Jun 30: Kashmir sweltered under continuing heatwave conditions on Tuesday with Srinagar recording the season's second-highest

maximum temperature at 35.2 degrees Celsius, even as the Meteorological Department forecast relief from Wednesday with the arrival of monsoon winds and the influence of a western | More on P6

14-day summer break for Kashmir schools from Jul 6

Riyaz Bhat

Directorate of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) on Tuesday announced summer break for all government and private schools of Kashmir division from July-06. According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the | More on P6

IFFJK-2026 to revive J&K's cinematic legacy, create economic opportunities: CM

Calls for local talent integration, special recognition for cinema legends

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Jun 30: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday chaired a review meeting to assess preparations for the 1st International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir (IFFJK)-2026, envisaged as a landmark initiative to revive the region's cinematic legacy.

The meeting held extensive deliberations on the festival's vision, its screening & programming strategy, branding, digital outreach, industry partnerships and international participation.

Director Information & Public Relations Shreya Singhal gave a comprehensive presentation outlining the proposed framework for the inaugural edition of the festival.

Reviewing the proposals, the Chief Minister said the International Film Festival should evolve into a globally recognized cinematic event celebrating storytelling while showcasing Jammu & Kashmir's breathtaking landscapes, rich cultural heritage, artistic traditions and emerging creative talent. He stressed the need to deliver a professionally curated festival of international



standards capable of attracting renowned filmmakers, producers, artists and cinema enthusiasts from across the world.

CM Omar Abdullah underlined that the festival must not be viewed merely as a film event but as a defining cultural and economic platform for Jammu & Kashmir. He said it should generate opportunities in tourism, investment, employment and the creative economy while reaffirming J&K's historic place as India's preferred destination for film production, creative pursuits and cinematic tourism.

Emphasizing the importance of nurturing the local creative ecosystem, the Chief Minister directed that local filmmakers, writers, directors, actors,

cinematographers, technicians, photographers, designers, artisans, craftsmen and other creative professionals be meaningfully integrated with the film festival through exhibitions, facilitating networking opportunities and business engagements.

He further instructed the organizers to facilitate structured interactions between local talent and eminent national and international filmmakers, producers, directors, actors and industry experts through master-class & in-conversation sessions, workshops, panel discussions, mentoring sessions and knowledge-sharing programmes.

Such engagements, he said, would | More on P6

Delhi-Ladakh dialogue

GoI team to meet LAB, KDA leaders in Leh tomorrow

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Jun 30: The Union Government's representatives are set to meet leaders of the Ladakh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) on July 2 in Leh to sort out differences that have arisen after the May 22 meeting between the two sides, sources disclosed.

Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a team of representatives from the Centre is likely to meet both bodies spearheading the agitation for constitutional safeguards in Ladakh. "The team is likely to be headed by a senior official in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)," they said, adding that these will be informal talks, given that formal discussions are held only at the level of the sub-committee and the high-powered committee constituted for Ladakh.

Differences have emerged between the two sides over the minutes of the last sub-committee meeting held in New Delhi on May 22, in which both sides appeared to have built consensus over key issues. After draft minutes of the

meeting were shared with LAB and KDA, both bodies alleged that crucial points relating to the primacy of elected representatives over the bureaucracy—agreed upon in the May 22 meeting—were omitted.

Ladakh Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra, however, clarified that the draft record was only intended to facilitate discussion. He said that if anything had been left out, the groups could raise it with him and it would be conveyed to the government.

After the May 22 meeting, LAB and KDA leaders claimed that they had reached an in-principle understanding with the Government of India on restoring democracy in Ladakh and providing constitutional safeguards on the lines of Article 371 A, F, and G.

They had claimed that legislative, executive, and financial powers would rest with elected representatives through a Union Territory-level legislative body. "All bureaucrats of the UT, including the Chief Secretary, will come under the executive head of the UT-level elected body (proposed to be the Chief Minister)," read the joint statement. (KNO)

Heatwave: 'Avoid carbonated drinks, tea, coffee; drink water, buttermilk'

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jun 30: With temperatures rising sharply across Jammu and Kashmir, health experts have urged people to remain cautious and adopt preventive measures to protect themselves from heat-related illnesses, warning that prolonged exposure to extreme heat can lead to serious health complications.

Health officials have advised residents to stay well hydrated, avoid unnecessary outdoor activities during peak daytime hours, wear light clothing, and seek immediate medical attention if symptoms of

heat exhaustion or heatstroke develop.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Dr Mushtaq from the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) said the prevailing heatwave demands extra vigilance, particularly among children, elderly persons, outdoor workers, and individuals suffering from chronic illnesses.

"The public should increase their intake of fluids such as plain water, Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), buttermilk (lasi), lemon water, fresh homemade juices and other natural drinks to prevent dehydration.



During hot weather, the body's requirement for fluids increases significantly, and people should not wait until they feel thirsty before drinking water,"

Dr Mushtaq said. He advised people to avoid carbonated soft drinks, packaged sugary beverages, and excessive consumption of tea and

coffee, as these can contribute to dehydration rather than replenish lost fluids.

Dr Mushtaq urged people to avoid stepping outdoors during the hottest part of the day unless absolutely necessary. "If you have to go outside, wear light-coloured, loose-fitting cotton clothes, cover your head with a cap or scarf, carry an umbrella whenever possible, and use sunscreen to protect against harmful ultraviolet rays," he said.

He said individuals sleeping under ceiling fans or spending long hours in hot environments should increase their fluid intake because excessive

sweating and evaporation result in significant water loss from the body.

The DHSK Director further advised people to maintain proper food hygiene during the summer season, as cases of foodborne and diarrhoeal illnesses tend to rise during periods of intense heat.

"People should avoid consuming stale or uncovered food, particularly from roadside outlets. Fruits and vegetables must be washed thoroughly before consumption, and special care should be taken while preparing food for children and elderly family members," he said.

Dr Mushtaq also highlighted the warning signs of heat-related illnesses and urged people not to ignore symptoms such as excessive tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, vomiting, confusion, mental disorientation or fainting.

"If anyone develops these symptoms, they should immediately move to a cool place, drink fluids if conscious, and seek medical attention without delay. Early intervention can prevent serious complications," he added.

Dr Murtaza Khan, the general physician at DHSK, said increasing | More on P6

Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026

Div Com Kashmir reviews facilities for Yatris at Srinagar Airport

Number of pilgrim facilitation counters increased from 54 in 2025 to 131 in 2026

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 30: In preparation for the annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive review of the arrangements put in place at Srinagar International Airport to ensure a safe, seamless, and hassle-free travel experience for pilgrims.



During the inspection, the Divisional Commissioner, as per an official statement, assessed the facilities established for Yatris, including dedicated eKYC counters, Yatra Facilitation Centre, passenger reception areas, and other essential facilities available at the airport.

On the occasion, senior officials from the Civil Administration, Airport Authority, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) briefed the Divisional Commissioner on the preparedness and coordination

measures undertaken by their respective departments to facilitate the smooth movement of pilgrims at the airport.

Speaking on the occasion, the Div Com stressed the need for coordination and robust communication mechanisms to ensure the timely resolution of issues and uninterrupted services for the pilgrims.

Pertinently, in a major step towards

facilitating the seamless and pilgrim-friendly Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026, the local Administration have substantially augmented the registration infrastructure across Kashmir.

The total number of pilgrim facilitation counters has been increased from 54 in 2025 to 131 in 2026, which includes a significant increase in E-KYC counters from 21 to 59, RFID counters from 20 to 32, and on-spot

registration counters from 13 to 40. The additional registration facilities have been established at key locations, including Pantha Chowk, Srinagar International Airport and Railway Station Nowgam.

During the visit, the Div Com was accompanied by DC Budgam Athar Aamir, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Budgam, and other officers from the concerned departments.

ADDC Budgam reviews progress of Jal Jeevan Mission, SBM(G)

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, JUNE 30: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Budgam, Vivek Agarwal, Tuesday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) in the district. During the meeting, as per an official statement, a review of the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission was conducted. Detailed deliberations were held on the status of ongoing water supply schemes, Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs), physical and financial progress, water quality monitoring, and other key components of the mission.

The progress achieved under the Comprehensive Implementation Reform Plan (CIRP) was also reviewed, with emphasis on accelerating the pace of execution and ensuring timely completion of all pending works. The meeting also reviewed the implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), with focus on sanitation coverage, solid and liquid waste management, and other programme components. Stress was laid on strengthening implementation at the grassroots level to achieve the objectives of the mission in a time-bound manner.

The ADDC directed the concerned officers to ensure close monitoring of all ongoing works, maintain quality standards, address bottlenecks on priority, and enhance inter-departmental coordination for effective implementation of both flagship programmes.

Vibrant Villages Programme

DC Baramulla visits Uri border villages, reviews progress

Senior district officers to undertake night stays for on-ground monitoring and improved public service delivery

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, JUNE 30: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, S.F. Hamid, on Tuesday undertook a field visit to several Vibrant Villages, including Tulawari, in the border Sub-Division Uri to assess the progress of developmental works and review implementation of the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP).

During the visit, the DC, as per an official statement, inspected various development works and assessed the availability of essential public services across the Vibrant Villages. He interacted with local residents, heard their grievances, and directed the concerned officers to redress their concerns on priority.

S.F. Hamid directed all officers to maintain close coordination with local communities, regularly monitor the progress of works, and ensure that all developmental interventions are executed in a transparent, efficient, and time-bound manner.

Earlier, the DC chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Officers Club, Uri, attended by



SDM Uri, CPO Baramulla, and nodal officers for the Vibrant Villages Programme.

The meeting focused on the saturation of VVP indicators across all identified Vibrant Villages of Uri Sub-Division to ensure holistic development of border villages through improved infrastructure, enhanced public services, livelihood generation, and better connectivity.

In a significant decision taken during the meeting, it was resolved that senior district-level officers shall undertake night stays in the Vibrant Villages for

on-ground assessment and close monitoring of developmental works and public service delivery. The nominated officers will interact with local residents and Panchayat representatives, review the status of infrastructure, connectivity, health, education, drinking water and electrification, and submit detailed visit reports for time-bound follow-up. The DC reviewed the status of ongoing and proposed projects under VVP and directed the concerned departments to ensure their timely completion while upholding quality standards.

JKRLM Women SHGs gain global spotlight at JKTPO Buyer-Seller Meet

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 30: Women-led Self Help Groups (SHGs) supported by the

Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) showcased their products at the J&K International Buyer-Seller Meet organised by the Jam-

mu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), Srinagar.

Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir.

Office of the Child Development Project Officer, Mission POSHAN Sopore.

Advertisement Notice

Subject: Advertisement for recruitment of Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers) and Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in Anganwadi Centres of POSHAN Project Sopore.

Ref:- 1. Government Order No 222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022.
2. Government Order No.103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated: 28.04.2023.
3. Government Directions vide No. SWD-ICDS/43/2022, Dated 14.08.2023.

Approval has been accorded, by MD Poshan J&K vide letter No: -MD/Poshan/22188-99 Dated: -18.06.2026 for filling up of vacancies of Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers) and Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in Anganwadi Centres of POSHAN Project Sopore as per the details given below:

Sr. No.	Name of Project	Name of Post	No. of Post
1	Sopore	AWW	03
		AWH	09
Total			12

Applications are invited in the Prescribed Performa in Annexure "A" from the eligible candidates for engagement as Anganwadi Worker and Anganwadi Helper on honorarium basis for aforementioned posts of Anganwadi Centres. The important dates/details with regard to the posts are as under:

- Date of commencement for submission of application 01.07.2026.
- Last date for submission of applications is 15-07-2026 up to 04.00 PM.
- Annexure B- Name of the Post, Location/Ward, Qualification and Criteria for selection
- Annexure C- Affidavit

ANNEXURE 'A'

- Format of Application
- Name of POSHAN Project _____
 - Name of Anganwadi Centre _____
 - Post applied for _____
 - Name of the Candidate _____
 - Father's Name _____
 - Husband's Name (If married) _____
 - Residence _____
 - Ward No. _____ Panchayat Halqa/MC _____
 - Address for correspondence _____
 - Contact No. _____
 - Date of Birth _____
 - Age as on 01.01.2026 _____
 - Economic Status: NPHH/PHH/AA/AY.....
 - Widow/Destitute (If any):
 - Academic Qualification:

Passport Size Photograph signed by Gazetted Officer

S.No.	Examination passed	Board/University	Year of Passing	Marks Obtained	Total Marks	Percentage

Do the applicant belong within the family of retiring AWW/AWH (YES/NO)

16. Document Attached:

Signature of the candidate _____

Date: _____

ANNEXURE 'B'

Detail of Vacant Posts (AWW/AWH) along with name and location of AWC.

Sr.No.	NAME OF ANGANWADI CENTRE	WARD NO.	Panchayat Halqa/MC-Ward	NAME OF POST	NO. OF POSTS
	Tawheedbagh B	06	Tawheedbagh	Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers)	01
2.	New Colony B	11	New Colony	Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers)	01
3.	Khan Mohalla Muqam	01	Putkha Muqam	Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers)	01
					03
	Tang Mohalla/Ganaie Mohalla	08	Nowpora A	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Tawheed Colony	09	Nowpora B	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Krankshivan C	03	Krankshivan	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Bunpora Ranji A	02	Ranji	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Chopan Mohalla Ranji B	06	Ranji	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Daraie A	06	Pethseer	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Maharajpora A	17	Maharajpora	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Khawajagilgit A	07	Khawajagilgit	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
	Khan Mohalla Muqam	01	Putkha Muqam	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01
				Total	09

Eligibility:

- For Anganwadi Workers
- The candidate must be domicile of the UT of J&K.
- Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be eligible.
- The candidate should be a resident of the electoral Ward where Anganwadi Centre is situated. Name in the voter list for the ward shall be considered as the proof of residence of the candidate. In case the name of the candidate appears in the voter list along with her parents, then she must provide certificate of being un-married issued by the concerned Tehsildar. Wherever, there is any dispute as to residence for any reason, then a residence proof certifying the ward of residence from the concerned SDM/ACR shall be considered.
- Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Worker shall be 10+2 and maximum graduation. In case no 10+2 pass candidate is available in the ward, 10+2 pass candidate from the adjoining ward shall be considered which would require prior approval of Mission Director, Mission POSHAN J&K.
- In case suitable candidate is not available for adjoining ward, candidate from the nearest ward within the Panchayat/MC can be considered subject to the approval of the MD, Mission POSHAN, J&K.
- Weightage shall be given on the basis of marks obtained in 10+2 and selection shall be done purely on merit basis and no other criteria to be considered.
- In case of tie in merit of the eligible candidate, candidate with higher age will be preferred.

- Candidate with qualification higher than graduation shall not be considered.
- In case eligible candidate is available within the family of retiring AWW/AWH, the said candidate shall qualify for additional two percent points.

A. Anganwadi Helpers

- The selection of Helper shall be restricted to the electoral ward where Anganwadi Centre is located.
- Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be eligible.
- The candidate must be domicile of the UT of J&K.
- Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Helper shall be matriculation.
- In case no matriculate candidate available in the ward, candidates with qualification not less than 8th standard shall be considered.
- The committee shall select the (Anganwadi Helper) amongst eligible applicants, a married women on the basis of marks obtained in the class 10th. However, in rarest of rare cases where selection committee finds a widow headed household with no income source or a completely destitute lady with zero source of income, in such cases preference may be given, if other things are equal. In case no married candidate is available, unmarried candidate may be considered.

Document Verification

1) The candidate who is shortlisted for document verification will be required to appear for Document Verification along-with the original documents as well as self-attested Photostat copy of each document as per the Advertisement Notification. The candidate must be in possession of the prescribed academic qualification and other document like Domicile Certificate, on or before the last date of submission of application form.

- Panch Ward/MC-Ward certificate issued by BDO/EO concerned
- Marks sheet(s)/Diploma/Degree of the qualification prescribed for the post as per Advertisement Notification.
- Date of Birth
- Matriculate Certificate.
- Domicile Certificate.
- Un-married Certificate from the Tehsildar Concerned (where required).
- Candidates have to bring two passport size recent colour photographs and one original Photo ID proof. Photo ID Proof can be:
 - Aadhar Card
 - Voter ID card.

ANNEXURE C

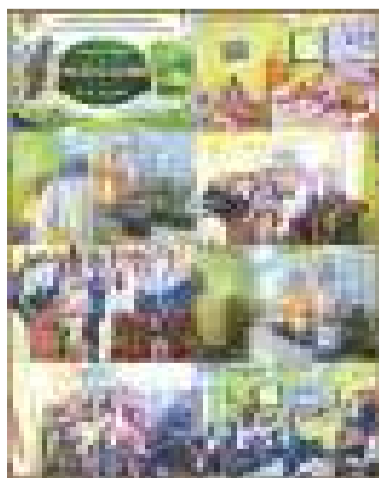
- All applicants to submit affidavit stating following facts:
- All Documents submitted are correct, without any mismatch, scanning, duplicate or fallacious in nature. If found incorrect or in any of the above stated situation the candidature of deponent may be cancelled and liable to action under law.
 - Maximum qualification is Graduation for vacancy of Anganwadi worker and this is as per facts and onus of proving it to be true lies with the deponent.
 - The deponent has read the HR policy no. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated: 30.11.2022 and is well versed with all salient features of the policy and shall be applicable to the deponent in case of selection as Anganwadi worker/ Anganwadi Helper.
 - If the deponent has been engaged as an AWH, she may not compel or demand that the said AWC be made functional in her house or accommodation.

KVK Bandipora-1 organises awareness Programme on Apple Leaf Blotch Miner

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, JUNE 30: Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bandipora-1, Sher e Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir, in collaboration with the Division of Entomology, SKUAST-Kashmir, Shalimar, Tuesday organized a one day awareness programme on "Apple Leaf Blotch Miner and its Management."

The programme, as per an official statement, aimed to create awareness among apple growers regarding the identification, surveillance, damage symptoms, and scientific management of the emerging invasive pest. A large number of apple growers from different villages of Bandipora district participated in the programme along with scientists from SKUAST-Kashmir, officials of the Department of Horticulture, Bandipora, and KVK Bandipora 1. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Tariq Sultan, Head, KVK Bandipora-1, emphasized the importance of timely awareness programmes for protecting



apple orchards from emerging insect pests. He urged growers to remain vigilant, monitor their orchards regularly, and adopt scientific recommendations for effective pest management.

Dr. Barkat Hussain, Professor, Division of Entomology, SKUAST-Kashmir,

highlighted the importance of early detection, regular surveillance, and coordinated efforts among scientists, extension agencies, and farmers to contain the spread of Apple Leaf Blotch Miner. Dr. Zewar Hussain, Associate Professor, Division of Entomology, explained the methods of field surveillance, pest identification, and monitoring techniques. He advised farmers to inspect their orchards regularly and seek timely technical guidance whenever infestations are observed. Dr. Sajad Ahmad, Assistant Professor, Division of Entomology, SKUAST-Kashmir, delivered the keynote technical lecture on the biology, life cycle, damage symptoms, and integrated management of Apple Leaf Blotch Miner. He emphasized orchard sanitation, destruction of fallen leaves and infested debris, scraping of loose bark, installation of pheromone and sticky traps, conservation of natural enemies, and timely application of recommended insecticides for effective management of the pest.

DIPK-2677/26

DATED: 30-06-2026

Child Development Project Officer
POSHAN Project Sopore
Date: 29.06.2026

No: -CDPO/SOP/Estt/2026/301-14

Div Com inspects functioning of ICCC Srinagar

Emphasizes round-the-clock monitoring, data compilation, dissemination of information



KT News Desk

Srinagar, June 30: With just couple of days remaining for the commencement of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2026,

the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Tuesday visited Integrated Command Centre (ICCC), Srinagar to assess the functioning of the surveillance & mon-

itoring centre for ensuring smooth conduct of annual religious pilgrimage.

During the visit, the Div Com watched glitch-free streaming of visuals of Yatra camps and routes. On the occasion, he also interacted with the deployed staff and assessed data compilation during the day besides availability of department-wise information regarding on ground services, logistics and essential commodities.

Speaking on the occasion, the Div Com highlighted the importance of the ICCC for inter-departmental coordination and synchronization of collective efforts of agencies for successful conduct of yatra.

He said that the camera network helps administration in prompt dissemination of messages and undertake appropriate actions during vagaries of weather.

While terming ICCC as a nerve centre of Yatra monitoring, the Div Com said that teams of various departments are deployed at the centre to monitor cameras round-the-clock for foolproof arrangements and ensuring best facilities to the pilgrims.

He informed that weather related updates will also be shared by IMD through display screens installed enroute and camps for real-time information.

The Div Com informed that Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor has already taken comprehensive review of arrangements during his visit to Baltal and Nunwan base camps.

Leveraging on the previous record influx of Yatrists, the Div Com asked devotees to come with much fervor for the pilgrimage and requested them to share their feedback with the administration on 01942740003 for improvement in facilities. He said ICCC is a one point solution for yatrists to get any yatra related information or assistance instantly.

Pvt hospitals to continue Ayushman Bharat services after govt assurances

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jun 30: In a significant relief for thousands of patients dependent on private healthcare institutions across Union Territory, the Jammu and Kashmir Private Hospitals and Dialysis Centres Association (JKPHDA) announced that it has deferred its proposed strike for two weeks following assurances from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPMJAY)/SEHAT Scheme regarding the release of long-pending payments.

The decision was taken after a meeting convened by the CEO of the ABPMJAY/SEHAT Scheme at his office chambers, which was also attended by the Chief Accounts Officer. The meeting came amid growing concerns that suspension of services by private hospitals would severely affect patients requiring dialysis, chemotherapy, emergency surgeries and intensive care.

The JKPHDA delegation, led by its General Secretary, Dr



Masood-ul-Hassan, attended the meeting under the directions of Faizan Mir, President (Kashmir Region), and Sandeep Mengi, President (Jammu Region). The delegation also included Executive Members Dr Ibrahim Guru,

Sajad Lone, Dr Mushtaq Purzgar, Dr Nazira, and Dr Bilal.

During the meeting, the Association highlighted the severe financial strain faced by empanelled

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

DIPR bids farewell to Ashok Kumar after 40-year career

KT News Desk

Srinagar, June 30: Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR), Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday accorded a warm and heartfelt farewell to Information Officer Ashok Kumar Sharma, who superannuated from government service after rendering more than 40 years of dedicated and exemplary service to the department.

A farewell function was organised to honour Sharma's remarkable



professional journey and acknowledge his invaluable contributions to the growth and functioning of

the Department over more than four decades. Speaking on the occasion, Director Information,

Shreya Singhal, lauded Ashok Sharma's unwavering
Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Odd even traffic plan rolled out for Gulmarg on pilot basis

Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, Jun 30: The Gulmarg Development Authority has ordered the implementation of an odd even traffic regulation system for four wheeler private and commercial vehicles entering Gulmarg on a pilot basis from July 5 to August 5, 2026, in a bid to reduce congestion and improve environmental conditions in the hill resort.

As per the GDA, entry of all four wheeled motor vehicles into Gulmarg will be regulated on the basis of the last digit of their registration number.

Vehicles with registration numbers ending in odd digits, 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9, will be allowed to enter Gulmarg only on odd calendar dates. Vehicles with registration numbers ending in even digits, 0, 2, 4, 6 and 8, will be permitted entry only on even calendar dates.

It states that the decision has been taken in view of the unprecedented increase in vehicular traffic, which has led to traffic congestion, deterioration in ambient air quality, excessive noise, pressure on road infrastructure, obstruction to emergency services and adverse impacts on the fragile



alpine ecosystem.

The restrictions will remain in force daily from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. However, freight and goods carrying vehicles have been exempted from the regulation.

The pilot project will remain in effect from July 5 to August 5, during which authorities will assess its impact on traffic management, environmental quality and visitor convenience in coordination with the Police, Traffic Police and other concerned departments.

It further said the Traffic Police, Civil Police, Motor Vehicles Department and other enforcement agencies have been directed to ensure strict

implementation of the order.

The authority said the measures may be reviewed, modified, extended or withdrawn after evaluating the findings of the pilot project and recommendations of the concerned departments.

The order noted that Gulmarg is an ecologically fragile, high altitude hill resort of immense environmental, ecological and tourism significance, and said the restrictions are intended to promote environmental conservation, sustainable tourism, public safety and efficient traffic management while helping formulate a long-term sustainable mobility framework for the destination—(KNO)

SANJY

Vistadome to Run on Banihal-Budgam Route for 2 Months

Umair Gull Ganie

Srinagar, Jun 30: The Northern Railway has curtailed the operation of the Vistadome Special train for two months in view of security arrangements for the annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY).

An official said that Vistadome train which normally operates between Katra to Budgam Railway stations, will run only between Banihal to Budgam from July 1 to August 31, 2026 or till further orders.

The official said the decision has been taken following security inputs and recommendations from the Jammu and Kashmir Police to facilitate smooth conduct of the pilgrimage and effective crowd management during the Yatra.

He said the Vistadome service will continue to operate on the Banihal-Budgam section, while train operations on the Katra-Banihal stretch will remain suspended during the two-month period.

Known for its panoramic glass coaches offering scenic views of the Kashmir Valley, the Vistadome Special is a popular attraction among tourists. The arrangement will be reviewed after the conclusion of the Yatra, the official added—(KNO)

Dy CM betrayed CM Omar's trust: Javid Choudhary

KNO

Srinagar, Jun 30: Ruling National Conference MLA Javid Iqbal Choudhary on Tuesday said that the Deputy Chief Minister has broken the trust of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah as well as the public and has ganged up against them by joining hands with their rivals after the CM had directed him to undo wrongs in the allocation of funds.

MLA Budhal Javid Choudhary slammed the Deputy Chief Minister over what he called a dictatorial and authoritarian attitude. "He has broken the trust of the CM as well as the public," he said.

Javid added that the Deputy CM was directed by the CM during a meeting at Dachigam on June 03 to undo the wrongs in the allocation of funds as well as other matters. "What the Deputy CM did is shocking! He didn't rectify the mistakes but instead joined hands with our rivals to teach us a lesson



for speaking against him," he said.

He said that the Deputy CM is threatening MLAs with expulsion from the NC if they raise their voice against him.

He further alleged that the Deputy CM has allocated almost all funds of Rajouri district to his own constituency, Nowshera. "Out of Rs 33.71 crore expenditure under SASCI in 2025-26, Rs 21.47 crore has been utilized in the Nowshera segment," he said, adding that Rs 9.22 crore allocated to district Rajouri under the scheme

has also been diverted to his segment.

Javid claimed that out of Rs1.28 crore utilized under the Non-Functional Buildings scheme in 2025-26, Rs 1.03 crore has gone solely to the Deputy CM's segment.

He also claimed that works worth Rs 200 crore under the UT Capex Budget have been accorded administrative approval for 2025-26. "Bridges worth Rs 137 crore have been sanctioned in his constituency, but not a single bridge has been sanctioned in other segments," he said—(KNO)

2 killed, several injured in Ramban road accident

KNO

Banihal, Jun 30: Two persons were killed while several others sustained injuries after a truck collided with a tractor on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway near Peerah area of Ramban district late Monday night.

An official said that the accident occurred at around 10:35 pm near New Khajuria Dhaba at Peerah when a truck bearing (No. RJ37GA-7418), on its way from Jammu to Srinagar, collided with a tractor.

He said an unidentified man died on the spot, while two to three others were injured in the mishap. All the injured were shifted to District Hospital Ramban.

At the hospital, another injured person, identified as Subash, son of Norang Lal and a resident of Rajasthan, succumbed to his injuries, the official added.

Meanwhile, police have registered an FIR at Police Station Chanderkote and initiated investigation into the incident—(KNO)

Heatwave RTO Kashmir urges public to avoid office visits, launches WhatsApp help

KNO

Srinagar, Jun 30: With temperatures soaring and the prevailing heatwave across Kashmir, the Regional Transport Officer (RTO), Kashmir, on Tuesday issued an advisory urging the general public to avoid unnecessary visits to the RTO office in Srinagar unless absolutely essential.

A public notice issued by the Office of the Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir reads the people facing any issue, grievance or requiring assistance related to RTO services have

been advised to use a dedicated WhatsApp facility instead of visiting the office.

The notice said members of the public can send complete details of their grievance or service request through WhatsApp on: 9622002432. "The office will make every effort to resolve the issue within 48 hours. If any additional information or documents are required, the applicant will be informed through a reply on WhatsApp," it said.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 30 : Despite the installation of smart meters and upgraded cabling aimed at ensuring uninterrupted electricity, traders and adjacent residents of Maisuma continue to reel under prolonged and unscheduled power outages, prompting the Traders Association Maisuma Bazaar to seek the immediate intervention of the Power Development Department (PDD).

The association said the area is witnessing nearly two hours of

Maisuma traders, residents slam erratic power cuts



power curtailment during the day and another

two hours in the evening on an almost daily basis,

severely affecting commercial activity and normal life in one of Srinagar's busiest business hubs.

It said the recurring outages have left traders struggling with mounting losses, while residents complain of disrupted household routines and students facing difficulties in pursuing their studies.

Locals said the prevailing summer heat has further aggravated their hardships.

General Secretary of Traders Association Maisuma Bazaar, Syed Sajid Qadri,

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

EDITORIAL

A Toll On Trust

For decades, Punjab has served as a vital transit corridor for livestock transporters carrying essential supplies to Kashmir. Yet, the alleged unauthorised fee collection by contractor groups operating in connection with cattle fairs threatens to turn this passage into a nightmare of harassment and financial exploitation. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has rightly flagged this issue, calling the action “unjustified” and warning of escalation if

Punjab fails to act. It is a necessary defence of the economic interests of Jammu and Kashmir and the well-being of its consumers. Livestock movement is exempt from GST, and yet transporters are reportedly being compelled to make substantial payments per vehicle without any legal sanction. An internal committee constituted by the J&K Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs has confirmed these findings. If true, this is not just a violation

of trade norms but a direct assault on the livelihoods of transporters and traders who are simply passing through Punjab with valid permits and statutory documentation. The impact of this levy is not confined to the transporters. It trickles down to the common consumer. Any additional cost imposed on the movement of livestock inevitably pushes up meat prices, hitting the poorest households the hardest. In times of economic strain, such unauthorised charges

are an unnecessary burden that the government cannot afford to ignore. What makes this matter particularly concerning is the timing. With the tendering process for cattle fairs in Punjab set to commence, traders fear the practice will continue under new contracts unless safeguards are put in place. The Chief Minister has also been pragmatic in setting out a clear escalation path – from writing to Mann, to approaching the North Zone State Council, and finally seeking the

Centre's intervention. This calibrated approach signals seriousness and leaves no room for Punjab to dismiss the matter as a minor dispute. If two neighbouring states cannot ensure the smooth movement of essential supplies without harassment, the spirit of cooperative federalism is reduced to a hollow phrase. CM Omar has drawn a line in the sand. Now it is for Punjab to respond – not with defensive denials, but with decisive action.

Steady And Stable As She Goes: India And The Economic Fallout Of The Gulf Conflict

When strikes closed the Strait of Hormuz at the end of February – the channel through which close to a fifth of the world's oil and the bulk of India's crude oil and cooking gas pass – the script for India seemed already written. Nearly four months on, with the Strait reopening and crude back near its pre-crisis level, none of that came to pass. Not a single retail outlet ran dry. Macroeconomic stability held.



V. Anantha Nageswaran

When strikes closed the Strait of Hormuz at the end of February – the channel through which close to a fifth of the world's oil and the bulk of India's crude oil and cooking gas pass – the script for India seemed already written. A country that imports nine-tenths of its crude and more than half its cooking gas through the Gulf was, by the textbook, headed for queues at the pump, empty kitchens, a run on the rupee and a scramble for dollars. Nearly four months on, with the Strait reopening and crude back near its pre-crisis level, none of that came to pass. Not a single retail outlet ran dry. Every household that wanted a cylinder got one. India faced neither a 1991 moment nor a 2013 one. Macroeconomic stability held.

This was not an accident, and it was not luck alone. It was the work of a government that chose to act as it had during the pandemic – deliberately and gradually,

building one measure upon another rather than reaching for a single dramatic lever. The first priority was the household. Throughout, not a single retail outlet ran out of stock, and every kitchen had its cylinder. The import-linked cost of a 14.2 kg cylinder rose above 1,600 rupees, yet the household price was held near 900 rupees, and lower still for the poorest. The memory of the early pandemic months, when panic among migrant workers set off a wave of reverse migration to the villages, was instructive. Commercial and bulk users were asked to give way to protect the home.

On the fuels that power the wider economy, the government chose to absorb the shock rather than pass it on. It cut excise duty on petrol and diesel by ten rupees a litre, forgoing about 1.7 lakh crore in revenue, and eased the burden on aviation fuel. The marketing companies then held pump prices steady for more than two months before a single restrained revision. The logic is worth stating plainly: in such uncertainty, only the government has the balance sheet and the time horizon to bear the risk, and it chose to absorb the impact on the fiscal account rather than on households and firms. Special support for the airlines and a credit-guarantee scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises followed the Covid-era template of targeted and effective interventions.

Behind the price cushion lay a real defence of supply. Domestic refiners lifted

cooking-gas output by half within a week, largely replacing the lost imports. India quickly widened its sources, deepening purchases from the United States and Russia and adding new suppliers, so that less energy arrived through the Strait, and it secured the waivers it needed to keep buying Russian crude. The government also pressed measures for the longer run: converting homes from cylinders to piped gas, a coal gasification programme, a further push on ethanol blending, and strategic crude storage agreed on the Prime Minister's visit to the United Arab Emirates. India was among the few nations that kept its cargoes moving even as Hormuz traffic fell to a trickle.

The external accounts were managed with the same patience. The government removed withholding and capital gains taxes on foreign institutional purchases of government debt and widened the securities open under the Fully Accessible Route, drawing money into the bond market. A new non-resident dollar deposit scheme is expected to bring in a sizeable sum of dollars. The free trade agreements signed over the years did their quiet work: exports of non-oil, non-gems-and-jewellery merchandise and services in April and May 2026 grew by more than 12 per cent over the same period a year earlier.

The headline numbers reassure. Gross foreign direct investment in the last financial year reached ninety-five billion dollars,

breaking out of the seventy-to-eighty-billion-dollar band of the post-pandemic years. The current account deficit was barely 0.6 per cent of GDP in FY26 and is now expected to be only marginally higher in FY27.

Honesty also requires acknowledging that fortune lent a hand. The crude basket climbed past a hundred and twenty dollars within weeks of the closure, but from May, a fall in China's oil purchases and steady releases from the United States reserve eased it back below a hundred, and China's resumption of fertiliser exports spared the budget a heavy blow. Had the conflict dragged on, or oil settled near \$120, the picture would feel less comfortable; sound policy and good fortune both played their part. Indeed, fortune eventually favours sound policymakers.

In a sign of the revisions to come, Goldman Sachs recently upgraded its growth forecast for India to 6.8% for CY26 and 6.5% for FY27, both up by 30 bp from previous forecasts.

The medium term, though, allows no complacency. In a world of fragmented alliances, weaponised supply chains and capital that can be turned on and off, the pressure on the balance of payments may outlast the conflict that threatened it. India must place a very high premium on attracting foreign direct investment. A balanced bilateral investment treaty framework, certainty in tax policy, state governments respecting

the integrity of contracts, dependable logistics and single-window clearances that actually clear will draw the global supply chains now seeking to spread their bets. The deeper issue is import dependence, and not in energy alone. The merchandise trade deficit runs at about eight per cent of national income; strip out oil, and it is five per cent; strip out oil and gold, and it is still three and a half. Comparable large economies do better. India must indigenise what it can produce competitively and what it must. Its firms and trade bodies must work harder on their agreements – particularly the new pacts with the United Kingdom and the European Union, which take effect this year and should boost labour-intensive exports. None of this is possible without skilled hands, which is why the training of young Indians in trade skills must now proceed on a war footing.

These tasks will demand persistence and speed. Even as it turns to them, the government must also attend to a south-west monsoon that has so far disappointed, and to the arrival of artificial intelligence and what it will mean for Indian work and Indian life. The Gulf conflict tested one kind of resilience; the years ahead will test others. India met the first test in good order. That is a reason for quiet confidence – and for getting on with the next.

The author is Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India

The International Language Of Love

What 'football' can teach us about human connection

Suzie Pileggi Pawelski and James Pawelski

Too often, we focus on what divides us rather than what connects us. Yet amid the noise of today's headlines, we recently witnessed something profoundly hopeful: Croatian and Ghanaian fans singing, cheering, and celebrating together as if they had known one another for years.

Attending the World Cup match in Philadelphia reminded us that sports can be a powerful catalyst for connection, belonging, and joy.

We were struck by the kindness of the fans. This spirit continued throughout the entire game. Everyone was respectful, regardless of which team they were supporting.

After the game, we captured a spontaneous moment on our iPhone that touched our hearts. Croatian fans were beating a drum when a woman in a Ghana jersey walked over and joined in. Soon, everyone was dancing. A few Croatian fans lifted her into the air as the crowd cheered. It was pure joy.

We shared the video on Instagram with the caption “There's nothing like soccer that brings people together. International language of love.” Less than 24 hours later, the 10-second clip had received nearly 200,000 views.

We think the reason is simple: human beings are social creatures who long for moments of connection.

While close relationships are integral to our well-being, what we may not realize is that even momentary interactions with others can benefit us physically and psychologically.

Research in positive psychology helps explain why that moment resonated so deeply. The Power of Momentary Connection

Co-experienced Positive Emotions. Positive emotions are one of the five



Fans of Croatia celebrate at the end of the World Cup Group I soccer match between Panama and Croatia in Toronto, Tuesday, June 23, 2026. (AP Photo/Stephanie Scarbrough)

pillars of a thriving life, according to Martin Seligman, the founder of positive psychology. Psychologist Barbara Fredrickson's groundbreaking research has shown that positive emotions don't just feel good—they're also good for us. They can boost our health, broaden our minds, and help us connect with others.

More recently, Fredrickson has found that co-experienced positive emotions—those we share with others—can amplify these benefits and strengthen our social bonds. Even brief moments of shared joy can have a meaningful impact.

Positivity is Contagious. Positive emotions, like negative ones, are contagious.

At the game, positivity spread rapidly. We couldn't help but smile, sing, cheer, and talk to strangers. And it wasn't just the extroverts. Even people who typically keep to themselves seemed swept up by the electric energy of the crowd and felt compelled to connect.

Research supports this phenomenon, showing that our emotions can spread easily to others and even impact their future moods and performance.

Collective Effervescence. Sociologist Émile Durkheim coined the term collective effervescence to describe the energy and unity experienced by people when they gather for a shared purpose. We lose ourselves—in a

good way—and feel part of something larger than ourselves.

When we move together and sing in unison, our emotions and actions synchronize, strengthening our bonds with one another. A recent 2026 study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* exploring stadium experiences and sports fandom found that the sights, sounds, rhythms and shared movement of a crowd—can help fans become more attuned to one another. In other words, the stadium itself can help fans tune in to one another and get into the zone together.

Psychologist Dacher Keltner, founding director of the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley, suggests that collective effervescence is more than a pleasurable experience; it may be a survival mechanism. Crowds that experience it become more cooperative, trusting, and more willing to work together for the greater good.

Research also suggests that participating in shared activities—from group exercise classes to rituals and sporting events—can improve our health, even lowering inflammatory markers.

Perhaps most encouraging about the 2026 study is that the benefits weren't limited to who won the match. Whether our team wins or loses, gathering with others for the love of the game can still cultivate belonging, connection, and joy.

No wonder we all felt so good during and after the match.

More than 65,000 fans packed into the stadium to cheer on Croatia and Ghana. They waved flags and sang in unison. It didn't matter what country you were from or which team you supported. No longer strangers, we all bonded—in the parking lot before the match, in the stadium, and long after the final whistle.

The celebration continued on the subway and in the streets on the way home.

Regardless of the jerseys we were wearing, we all felt part of something meaningful.

For one night, at least, problems and polarization seemed to fade away.

In the end, our social connections matter. Flourishing friendships are essential. But even brief moments of authentic connection can boost our mood, improve our health, and remind us of our shared humanity.

While there is no single antidote to loneliness, perhaps we should all spend a little more time getting out of our heads and homes—and into our hearts and stadiums—to connect with others through a shared love of the game.

And even if we can't attend in person, we can still share in the joy by gathering in public places, such as our local parks, to watch a match with others.

Even if our team doesn't win, it's still a win for all of us. We will have the opportunity to connect over a shared interest, learn about one another's cultures, and experience collective joy.

Different flags. Different cultures. One beautiful game.

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Courtesy: Psychology Today

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SANJY-2026

Adhere to cut off timings, guidelines issued for pilgrims: Div Com, IGP Jammu

Interacts with civil society members, briefs media fraternity about comprehensive arrangements

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JUNE 30: In order to ensure a safe, smooth and hassle-free pilgrimage of the Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, and Inspector General of Police Jammu, Bhim Sen Tuti, Tuesday interacted with the Civil Society members, heads of religious, social and other prominent organisations.

The Div Com, as per an official statement, said that the administration has made comprehensive arrangements for the pilgrims in all five districts of the Jammu Division where the Yatra route falls with regard to on-spot registration, RFID card, KYC centres, accommodation, langer facility, medical room, sanitation, power and water supply and security arrangements.

Highlighting the significance of the annual pilgrimage of Shri Amarnathji, the Div Com emphasised the role of civil society members, social & religious organisation and the people of Jammu as the host to the national event in which people from all over the country and world participate with immense devotion and spirituality.

During the meeting, members of the Civil Society shared their views and suggestions for providing the best and memorable experience to the pilgrims. The Div Com said that their valuable suggestions shall be incorporated and expressed gratitude for the support and assistance from their end for welfare of the Pilgrims.

IGPTraffic, Managing Director



JPDCL, DIG Jammu-Samba-Kathua, Deputy Commissioner Jammu, SSP Jammu, senior officials from Civil and Police administration and representatives of religious, social organisations, transporters, Taxi Union, Traders, Bazaar associations, hoteliers, and other prominent citizens attended the meeting.

Later, the Divisional Commissioner and the IGP Jammu also addressed a press conference outlining the comprehensive security, logistical and administrative arrangements put in place for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026.

He urged the pilgrims for strictly following the cut-off timings and guidelines issued by Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board and the District Administrations to ensure a spiritually enriching and convenient experience of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026.

The Div Com said that proper arrangements have been made

for the reception of pilgrims at Lakhapur entry point, where the Kathua district administration and police have implemented full security and welcome protocols. The pilgrims are required to enter Lakhapur from 6 AM to 8 PM for proceeding towards Jammu in mini convoys. After 8 PM they can spend for the night at Lakhapur in the Government accommodations especially set up for the pilgrims.

People who have registered online can receive their RFID cards at Lakhapur, Chichi Mata Temple, Samba, Jammu Railway Station, Tawi Riverfront or Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas. Pilgrims must complete their e-KYC and collect their RFID tags from these centres before entering the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas by 10 PM a day before departing for Pahalgam or Baltal Base camps in the Yatra convoy under proper security protocol, he said.

The Divisional Commissioner further said that pilgrims who

are travelling in personnel vehicles towards Srinagar must strictly adhere to cut-off timings set by the traffic department, with vehicles required to cross the Nagrota TCP between 6 AM to 12:00 PM, Jakhani by 1:00 PM, Chanderkote by 2:00 PM and Banihal by 3:00 PM in order to enter Kashmir in day light. Pilgrims who are reaching by train, can also receive RFID card at Udhampur railway station. Pilgrims can also receive the RFID cards at Chanderkote and Banihal in Ramban.

The Tourism Department has introduced dedicated AC buses operating on four routes with guides and refreshments to facilitate visits to regional destinations including the Suchetgarh Border, Gharana Wetland, Akhnoor Fort, Raghunath Bazaar, Bahu Fort, and Mahamaya Temple.

Further, it was informed that Transport Department has issued fixed rate lists for autos, e-rickshaws, and taxis to prevent overcharging. Inspector General of Police, Bhim Sen Tuti said that Yatra shall be conducted in regulated manner for which meticulous planning, resources and arrangements have been put in place. He stressed on adherence to the cut off timings publicised by Traffic department for smooth movement of yatra vehicles. The IGP informed that proper security arrangements have been made across the entire 260-kilometre route, transit camps and langar sites. Pilgrims must travel strictly via National Highway 44 (NH-44). Alternative routes such as Dhar Road or Mughal Road are strictly out of bounds for Yatra vehicles. Drivers must ensure full fuel tanks before joining convoys and strictly avoid driving under the influence, he said. He further cautioned the pilgrims to beware of fraudulent websites and unauthorised WhatsApp groups offering fake registrations. He urged the pilgrims to rely solely on the official Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board platform for all registration-related matters.

IGP Traffic chairs review meeting to finalise Traffic Management Arrangements



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 30: Inspector General of Police (IGP), Traffic J&K, M. Suleman Choudhary, on Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess and finalize traffic management arrangements for the smooth, safe and seamless movement of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026 pilgrims along the Kashmir axis.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by DIG South Kashmir Range, Javed Iqbal Matoo, DIG CRPF Anantnag, SSP Kulgam, SSP Traffic Rural Kashmir, SSP Traffic National Highway Ramban, SP Headquarters Anantnag, SP NHW Qazigund, besides other senior officers of the Civil Police, CRPF, Traffic Police and district administration of Anantnag and Kulgam.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the traffic management plan was undertaken with emphasis on ensuring close coordination and effective synergy among all stakeholder agencies for the safe and uninterrupted movement of Yatra convoys. The implementation and strict adherence to the notified convoy cut-off timings were discussed at length and all officers were directed to ensure their meticulous enforcement without exception.

The IGP stressed the importance of seamless inter-agency coordination, real-time information sharing, prompt clearance of traffic bottlenecks and effective regulation of civilian traffic to facilitate hassle-free movement of Yatra convoys. He also emphasized the need for continuous monitoring of road conditions, swift response to emergencies and efficient deployment of police personnel at all vulnerable and congestion prone locations.

The officers were instructed to maintain close liaison with the district administration, CRPF, road maintenance agencies and other concerned departments to ensure immediate response to any unforeseen situation. Special emphasis was laid on effective dissemination of traffic advisories, regulation of stranded vehicles whenever required, and ensuring minimum inconvenience to the general public while maintaining the highest priority for Yatra convoy movement.

The IGP Traffic reiterated that the safety and convenience of the pilgrims remain the foremost priority and directed all officers to work in close coordination, maintain high standards of professionalism and ensure flawless execution of the traffic management plan throughout the Yatra period.

Javid Dar meets HoDs, public delegations at Civil Secretariat Jammu



KT News Desk

JAMMU, JUNE 30: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Tuesday met senior officers of the Rural Development, Animal Husbandry and Horticulture departments besides interacting with several public delegations at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu.

During the meetings, the Minister, as per an official statement, reviewed a wide range of public issues and developmental projects

pertaining to the concerned departments. He took stock of the progress of ongoing initiatives and emphasized the need for timely implementation of development works to ensure effective delivery of public services.

The public delegations apprised the Minister of various issues and demands concerning their respective areas.

Giving a patient hearing to all the representations, Javid Dar assured the delegations that every genuine grievance would be addressed in a phased and time-bound manner.

CEO Office bids farewell to Dr Nirupa Rai on her superannuation

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JUNE 30: The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu & Kashmir, Tuesday bid farewell to Dr. Nirupa Rai, Special Secretary Election Department on attaining superannuation.

During her tenure in the Election Department, Dr. Nirupa Rai made significant contributions towards strengthening the institutional functioning of the Department and ensuring smooth and efficient conduct of election-related activities, including the Lok Sabha Elections and General Assembly Elections-2024. Her role in election management, coordination with stakeholders, enforcement agencies, media engagement, and implementation of various electoral processes was highly appreciated.

The farewell function, as per an official statement, was held at the Office of

the Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu, and was attended by the officers and officials of the Department, including Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, Sanjeev Verma; Joint Chief Electoral Officer, Anil Salgotra; Additional Secretary, Muzaffar Malik; Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu, Gurbinder Singh; Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Mohammad Altaf Zullah; Nodal Officer SVEEP, Salam Din and Under Secretary, Abdul Rehman Bhat.

Speaking on the occasion, Joint Chief Electoral Officer, Anil Salgotra expressed gratitude to Dr. Rai for her valuable guidance and mentorship. He acknowledged her important role in strengthening the Department's functioning and appreciated her ability to effectively handle critical election assignments, including enforcement of Model Code of Conduct, coordination with enforcement agencies, media management, and other election-related responsibilities.

Additional Secretary, Muzaffar Malik also lauded Dr. Rai's professionalism, dedication, and valuable contribution to the Department.

On the occasion, Dr. Nirupa Rai expressed her gratitude to the officers and officials of the Department for their affection and support. She said that working in the Election Department had been a challenging yet enriching experience, and that the warmth and cooperation extended by colleagues would always remain special to her. She added that the farewell occasion brought back memories of her journey in public service and expressed gratitude to her parents and family for their constant support and encouragement.

The Election Department placed on record its sincere appreciation for Dr. Rai's years of dedicated service and wished her good health, happiness, and a fulfilling post-retirement life.

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

GDC Bandipora organises series of awareness activities

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, JUNE 30: HKM Govt Degree College Bandipora on Tuesday organised a series of awareness activities under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) to reinforce the message of a drug-free society and promote awareness among students about the ill effects of substance abuse.

The NSS Units of the college, as per an official statement, organised an Anti-Drug Pledge Ceremony under the leadership of Principal, Prof. Suresh Kumar Dogra, coordinated by Dr. Mehrajuddin Talie, Convenor, Red Ribbon Youth Club of the college organised a signature campaign under the leadership of Principal Prof. Suresh Kumar Dogra, coordinated by Dr. Mehrajuddin Talie, Convenor, Red Ribbon Youth Club. Students and faculty members actively participated by signing a pledge to fight the menace of drugs and promote a healthy, addiction-free society. The programmes concluded with a renewed commitment by students and faculty to continue spreading awareness and supporting the objectives of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

Committee on Estimates reviews progress of development works

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 30: The Committee on Estimates of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, chaired by its Chairman and MLA Gurez, Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurez), Tuesday convened a meeting to review the status of developmental works being executed by the Roads & Buildings (R&B) Department across the Union Territory.

Legislators Ali Mohammad Dar, Javid Hassan Baig, Mushtaq Guroo, Irshad Rasool Kar, Sajad Shaheen, Sunil Bhardwaj besides Secretary JKLA Manoj Kumar Pandit, Secretary Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs Achal Sethi along with senior officers from Finance, PWD (R&B) and PMGSY were present in the meeting.

The Committee, as per an official statement, held detailed deliberations on the execution of development works sanctioned during the previous financial year. It also reviewed the status of various ongoing and pending projects across different districts and divisions, particularly those which have not



been initiated despite the accord of Administrative Approval.

The Committee expressed serious concern over the lack of urgency and lackadaisical approach of the R&B Department in execution of several development projects sanctioned under the UT Capex Budget during the last two financial years.

Stressing the need for expeditious implementation, the Committee urged the departmental officers to accelerate the pace of work and ensure the completion of all ongoing projects within the shortest possible time so that the public is relieved of the inconvenience caused due to prolonged delays.

The Committee also took serious note of the practice of awarding contracts at abnormally low rates, observing that such

tenders often result in delays and non-completion of projects, thereby defeating the purpose of developmental initiatives.

Emphasizing accountability and timely execution, the Committee directed the department to adopt appropriate measures to discourage non-serious contractors and ensure strict adherence to the prescribed timelines.

It further called upon the department to strengthen the monitoring and enforcement mechanisms so that all sanctioned works are completed efficiently, maintaining the desired standards of quality and within the stipulated timeframe. The Committee reiterated its commitment to ensure transparency, accountability and the timely completion of public infrastructure projects in the larger interest of the people.

Jammu's young aces clinch Bronze at North Zone Soft Tennis Championship

Credit J&K Sports Council, Y&SS, JKASTA support

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JUNE 30: Four young players from the Khelo India Soft Tennis Centre at MA Stadium, Jammu, have brought fresh pride to Jammu and Kashmir by clinching the bronze medal at the 3rd North Zone National Soft Tennis Championship held at Gindun Stadium, Srinagar, from June 26 to June 28, 2026.

Madhavendra Singh Sambyal, Harikesh Dutt Sharma, Aditya Dutt Sharma and Vihan Parihar, as per an official statement, competed with the discipline and tactical sharpness of seasoned professionals, earning their place on the podium against some of the strongest teams from across North India.

The quartet trains under Khelo India mentor and international soft tennis player Indu Bhushan Padha, whose coaching has been widely credited for Jammu's decade-long



dominance in the sport at the Union Territory level.

On the Srinagar courts, that training was evident in every rally, as the team combined composed doubles coordination with aggressive net play and smart point construction that belied their age. Their performance was not just a win for J&K but a clear signal that the structured, grassroots system being built through Khelo India Centres is producing athletes ready for the national stage.

At the heart of this team is

17-year-old Madhavendra Singh Sambyal, already one of the most decorated young names in Indian soft tennis. His record reads like a blueprint for the aspiring athletes. Madhavendra, at just 17, stormed to the Under-17 final at the National School Games in Dewas, MP, settling for silver after an "intense title clash". His composure against the country's best put J&K "on the national soft tennis map". That silver came "close on the heels of his silver at the Senior National

Championships in Srinagar", a rare feat for a school-level player competing with the adults. He's the reigning state gold medalist and top seed for J&K and previously won gold in Senior Category men's singles at the 9th UT Level Championship.

Alongside his sister Sidhani Singh, Madhavendra has earned selection to represent India at the 2nd Asian Junior Soft Tennis Championship, Feb 3-8, 2026, in Punjab. His athleticism isn't limited to soft tennis. In September 2025, the DPS Jammu student won gold in the Under-16 Boys Singles Pickleball Championship and qualified for Nationals in Bengaluru.

Madhavendra credits his growth to his "Coaches, the Soft Tennis Association, the J&K Sports Council and the Department of Youth Services and Sports". Tuesday, he's become "an inspiration for new generation of young athletes in Jammu and Kashmir to dream big and compete fearlessly".

Sakeena Itoo says 'Durr-e-Naayaab' her most meaningful contribution to society KU hosts book release ceremony; minister urges youth to revive reading culture

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 30: Department of Urdu, University of Kashmir (KU) organised the release of Durr-e-Naayaab (The Rare Pearl), a biography authored by Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, at Main Campus here today.

The event brought together eminent academicians, literary personalities, students, scholars and writers to celebrate a work that chronicles the life, public service and enduring legacy of veteran political leader late Shaheed Wali Mohammad Itoo.

The book release function was presided over by Vice-Chancellor KU Prof. Nilofer Khan, while Sakeena Itoo attended the programme as the Chief Guest and author of the book.

Addressing the gathering, Sakeena Itoo expressed her gratitude to the Department of Urdu and the University of Kashmir for organising the release of Durr-e-Naayaab at the UT's premier institution.

Describing the occasion as deeply meaningful, the Minister

said that she considered it a tribute to the enduring legacy of her late father and appreciated the University's initiative in bringing the work before the academic community. "I thank the Department of Urdu and the University of Kashmir for honouring the rich legacy of my late father by releasing this book at this premier institution and highest seat of learning," she said.

Calling Durr-e-Naayaab perhaps the most meaningful contribution she could make to society, the Minister said the biography represented years of painstaking research, reflection and emotional commitment. She remarked that if she was ever asked to identify her greatest contribution beyond public life, she would point to this book, which documents the values, struggles and unwavering commitment of a leader whose life was devoted to public service.

She added that the work was compiled after years of sustained effort and drew extensively upon family archives, personal memories and historical records.

Reflecting on the emotional journey behind the book,

Sakeena Itoo said that writing the biography of a person with whom one shares a deep emotional bond was one of the most difficult literary exercises. She recalled that many forgotten anecdotes were revived through her mother's recollections, which helped reconstruct significant episodes of her father's life.

The Minister also shared that several personal letters written by her father while he was away from home for studies became invaluable source material, offering intimate insights into his ideals, thoughts and unwavering commitment to the people.

She observed that he worked tirelessly to expand educational opportunities, improve healthcare facilities and promote inclusive development across the region.

Expressing concern over the declining culture of reading, the Minister urged the younger generation to rediscover the habit of reading books, particularly biographies that preserve the lives and contributions of selfless leaders. She said young readers would discover valuable lessons in courage, sacrifice, public service and ethical leadership through such works.

Gen Dhiraj Seth takes charge as new Army Chief

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 30: General Dhiraj Seth, an accomplished military officer with the rare distinction of heading two operational Army commands along the western front, took charge as the new Chief of the Army Staff on Tuesday, officials said.

Gen Seth assumed the reins of the 1.3 million-strong force at a time when it is forging a path to become a self-reliant and future-ready Army while meeting challenges on the borders.

The general officer succeeded General Upendra Dwivedi, who retired on Tuesday after an illustrious career spanning over 40 years in the armed forces.

Gen Seth is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla. He was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986.

Prior to becoming the 31st Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), he served as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff.

Gen Seth took over as the COAS at a time when the global geo-strategic environment remains dynamic, with challenges in the security domain becoming more pronounced due to technological advancements and the ever-changing character of modern warfare.



On his elevation to the rank of an Army Commander, he served as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the South Western Command (based in Jaipur) and the Southern Command, earning the rare distinction of commanding two operational commands along the western front, the defence ministry earlier said.

During his military career spanning nearly four decades, he has had extensive experience across operational, strategic, capability development and institutional domains, contributing significantly to the Indian Army's combat effectiveness and long-term transformation.

Tenanting pivotal appointments earlier in strategic planning and capability development verticals of the Army Headquarters, he shaped its

modernisation trajectory, capability roadmap and long-term force structuring initiatives.

Prior to his appointment as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff on April 1, he headed the Pune-based Southern Command, and under his leadership, the elite command maintained a high degree of operational readiness during the Operation Sindoor last year.

In nearly four decades, he built an exceptional operational profile across diverse terrains and conflict environments, including counter-insurgency experience.

The general officer has commanded at every level in diverse operational environments.

His command assignments included an Armoured Regiment in the Desert Sector, an Armoured Brigade in the Western Theatre, and a

Counter-Insurgency Force in Jammu and Kashmir.

As a lieutenant general, he commanded the Sudarshan Chakra Corps, one of the Army's premier strike formations. He subsequently served as General Officer Commanding, Delhi Area, overseeing key national and international military engagements and ceremonial responsibilities.

He has held several key staff and strategic appointments that have "significantly influenced operational planning, force management and capability development".

Gen Seth's contributions have been instrumental in aligning operational requirements with emerging technologies and future battlefield imperatives, according to the defence ministry.

An accomplished military professional, Gen Seth consistently excelled in professional military education, securing top positions in courses of instruction it said.

A graduate of the Higher Command Course and the National Defence College, Gen Seth also attended the prestigious Command and Staff Course in Paris, reflecting his broad strategic outlook and understanding of contemporary military affairs, the defence ministry said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Amarnath Yatra set

V K Birdi also reviewed security deployment in Ganderbal district and said extensive mock drills had been conducted while all security agencies were working in close coordination to ensure a safe pilgrimage.

SECURITY AGENCIES INTENSIFY SURVEILLANCE

Security agencies have intensified surveillance across Jammu and Kashmir, with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Jammu and Kashmir Police and other Central Armed Police Forces maintaining round-the-clock vigil on highways, transit camps, pilgrimage routes and key installations.

The CRPF has deployed a 30-member specialised Mountain Rescue Team along the Baltal route to respond to emergencies in the high-altitude terrain. Equipped with oxygen cylinders, portable stretchers, ropes, medicines and rescue equipment, the team will assist pilgrims in medical emergencies and coordinate with other agencies during natural disasters such as landslides or flash floods.

24X7 COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTRE SET UP IN SRINAGAR

Authorities have also operationalised a 24x7 Command and Control Centre in Srinagar to monitor the movement of pilgrims through real-time surveillance and inter-agency coordination.

In a move aimed at preventing misinformation, the Jammu and Kashmir government has authorised only the Divisional Commissioners and Inspectors General of Police of Kashmir and Jammu divisions to brief the media on Yatra-related matters.

According to a circular issued by the Tourism Department, the designated officers will coordinate with the Information Department and the Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board to ensure dissemination of verified information.

TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON JAMMU-SRINAGAR NATIONAL HIGHWAY

Traffic restrictions have also been imposed on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. Heavy motor vehicles will not be allowed to move from Qazigund towards Jammu and from Jakheni in Udhampur towards Srinagar after 7 pm from July 1, while light motor vehicles will be permitted till 11 pm. During the pilgrimage, heavy vehicles will operate on alternate days depending on traffic conditions, with commuters advised to follow daily advisories.

Railway authorities have temporarily curtailed the Vistadome Special train service, which will operate only between Banihal and Budgam from July 1 to August 31 instead of its extended route to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, citing security requirements during the pilgrimage season.

DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER KASHMIR REVIEWS ARRANGEMENTS

Meanwhile, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg reviewed arrangements at Srinagar International Airport, including e-KYC counters, Yatra Facilitation Centres and passenger reception facilities. Officials said registration infrastructure has been significantly expanded this year, with the number of facilitation counters increased from 54 last year to 131, including additional e-KYC, RFID and on-the-spot registration counters at Srinagar airport, Pantha Chowk and Nowgam railway station.

Officials said the coordinated security, transport and facilitation measures are aimed at ensuring the safe and smooth conduct of this year's pilgrimage. (KNO)

All agencies working

has been designed on a multi-layered model by integrating robust ground deployment with advanced surveillance and continuous monitoring.

He said monitoring and supervision are also being carried out from elevated locations to maintain a comprehensive watch over the Yatra route and adjoining areas.

Highlighting the challenges posed by

difficult terrain and changing weather conditions, the IGP said several stretches along the pilgrimage route remain vulnerable to natural calamities, including landslides, avalanches and glacial movement.

"The vulnerable locations have been scientifically identified and mapped in advance to facilitate timely preventive measures and emergency response," he said.

He added that Medical Response Teams (MRTs) and other emergency rescue units have been strategically deployed at sensitive locations to provide immediate assistance in case of weather-related emergencies or any other incident.

IGP Birdi reiterated that Jammu and Kashmir Police, along with other security forces and the civil administration, remains fully prepared to ensure a peaceful, secure and hassle-free pilgrimage for the thousands of devotees expected to undertake the annual yatra.

SSP Srinagar, Dr GV Sundeeep Chakarvarti said the comprehensive mock drill tested emergency preparedness, inter-agency coordination and response mechanisms. "We are confident our multi-layer security plan, technology and public cooperation will ensure a safe and peaceful Amarnath Yatra," he said.

SRINAGAR POLICE CONDUCT MULTI-AGENCY MOCK DRILL AT PANTHACHOWK

Meanwhile, in a statement, Srinagar Police said it conducted a comprehensive multi-agency mock drill at the Transit Yatri Camp, Panthachowk, as part of the preparations for SANJY-2026 to assess emergency preparedness and strengthen response mechanisms.

The statement said the exercise was aimed at evaluating operational readiness, inter-agency coordination, communication systems and the effectiveness of emergency response during critical situations.

It said the mock drill witnessed participation from J&K Police, CAPFs, Traffic Police, Security Wing, Fire and Emergency Services, Health Department, SDRF, Civil Administration, Ambulance Services and other stakeholder agencies.

The statement reads, all participating agencies were briefed on their respective roles and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) before the exercise, with particular emphasis on response time, communication flow, coordinated action and adherence to established emergency protocols.

The statement said the drill simulated multiple emergency scenarios, including road traffic accidents, fidayeen attacks, law and order contingencies, accidental injuries, evacuation, rescue operations and medical emergencies, enabling participating agencies to validate their preparedness and coordinated response under realistic conditions.

It said arrangements relating to food, shelter and medical assistance for pilgrims have also been streamlined through the coordinated efforts of the Civil Administration, CAPD, Revenue and Health departments under the unified command of the Joint Police Control Room (Joint-PCR).

The statement added that a detailed debriefing session was held after the exercise to identify operational gaps, evaluate response mechanisms and further refine the Emergency Response Plan and SOPs ahead of the Yatra.

Notably, Srinagar Police reiterated its commitment to ensuring a safe, secure and incident-free Amarnath Yatra-2026 through coordinated planning, seamless inter-agency cooperation and proactive policing, the statement added. (KNO)

HMV movement

Observer (KNO), no movement of heavy motor vehicles (HMVs) will be allowed from Qazigund towards Jammu and from Jakheni (Udhampur) towards Srinagar after 7:00 PM on July 1.

However, light motor vehicles (LMVs) will be permitted to ply up to 11:00 PM from Nagrota (Jammu) towards Srinagar and from Qazigund

towards Jammu. Commuters have been advised to plan their journeys accordingly.

Traffic officials also advised passengers and LMV operators to undertake travel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway during daytime and avoid night travel due to the possibility of shooting stones, landslides and ongoing construction work between Ramban and Banihal, which may cause inconvenience to commuters.

J&K POLICE CONDUCT DRY RUN OF THE AMARNATH YATRA CONVOY

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday conducted a dry run of the Amarnath Yatra convoy on NH-44 to assess security arrangements and inter-agency coordination. Around 150 escorted vehicles participated in the exercise. One convoy moved from the Pahalgam base camp to Banihal before returning to Pahalgam, while another travelled from the Baltal base camp to Banihal, where it concluded its journey.

The exercise was aimed at testing convoy movement, coordination among security agencies and preparedness to ensure the smooth and safe passage of pilgrims during the annual Yatra. (KNO)

LG Sinha to attend

officials besides representatives of the Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board and other departments.

He said the first batch of pilgrims will be ceremonially flagged off from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp by LG Sinha on Thursday morning.

Meanwhile, Jammu has completed elaborate preparations for the annual Amarnath Yatra, with authorities putting in place comprehensive registration, accommodation, transportation and security arrangements to facilitate a smooth pilgrimage beginning this week.

The Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas, the principal base camp for the pilgrimage in Jammu, has been fully geared up to receive thousands of devotees arriving from across the country.

Registration counters, RFID and verification facilities, accommodation, medical aid, sanitation, drinking water, transport assistance and langar services have been streamlined to ensure a hassle-free experience for pilgrims at Tawi River front.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, said all departments are working in close coordination and the administration is fully prepared to manage the movement of pilgrims.

He informed that elaborate logistics have been put in place, including round-the-clock control rooms, emergency medical facilities, transport arrangements and deployment of sufficient manpower at key locations.

Officials said all logistical arrangements have been synchronized with security agencies to ensure the safe movement of pilgrims towards the twin routes of Pahalgam and Baltal.

Traffic management plans, convoy movement schedules, medical response teams and disaster management mechanisms have also been finalized.

The administration has appealed to pilgrims to adhere to the prescribed guidelines, carry valid registration documents and cooperate with officials for smooth conduct of the pilgrimage.

The 57-day Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra is scheduled to commence on July 3 and conclude on August 28, with authorities expressing confidence that the extensive preparations made in Jammu will ensure a safe, secure and comfortable pilgrimage for devotees. (KNO)

Srinagar logs season's

disturbance. Officials at the Meteorological Centre here told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Valley will witness a gradual change in weather over the next few days, with rain, thunderstorms and gusty winds expected across several parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The weather office said heatwave or heatwave-like conditions are likely to persist till

Tuesday before temperatures begin to ease from Wednesday.

According to the department, spells of rain and thundershowers are expected at many places in Poonch, Rajouri, Shopian, Budgam and Kulgam, while isolated rainfall is also likely along the Reasi-Banihal-Ramban axis and in Gulmarg, Uri and Sonamarg.

It said a few places in Poonch, Rajouri, Budgam, Shopian, Kulgam and adjoining areas could witness brief but intense showers accompanied by thunderstorms and gusty winds over the next couple of hours.

The Met office has forecast one or two spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places across Jammu and Kashmir from July 1 to July 5. It said isolated areas may experience heavy rainfall, intense showers, thunderstorms and strong winds between July 2 and July 4.

From July 6 to July 8, the weather is expected to remain generally hot and humid, although scattered to many places are likely to receive brief spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers, it said.

Officials said monsoon winds are expected to enter Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, increasing the likelihood of early morning and evening showers over the Jammu division and parts of the Kashmir Valley.

They said the combined influence of the western disturbance and advancing monsoon is expected to provide significant relief from the prevailing heatwave, particularly between Thursday and Saturday, when rainfall activity is likely to be at its peak.

The department said the impact of the weather system is expected to be more pronounced over the Jammu division and south Kashmir, while central and north Kashmir may receive comparatively lesser rainfall.

It warned that heavy rainfall during July 2-4 could trigger flash floods, landslides and mudslides at vulnerable places, particularly in parts of the Jammu division and adjoining areas of south Kashmir. Temporary waterlogging is also likely in low-lying areas on July 2 and 3, it said.

The weather office advised people to stay away from nallahs, streams and landslide-prone areas during periods of intense rainfall, avoid unnecessary outdoor activities during thunderstorms, and take precautions against lightning and strong winds.

It also said isolated hailstorm activity and intense showers cannot be ruled out during the most active phase of the weather system, though widespread continuous rainfall is not expected. (KNO)

14-day summer

Director of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) in an order said that the summer vacation has been announced with the approval conveyed by the competent authority.

"It is ordered that all the Government and recognized Private Schools up to Higher Secondary level functioning in the Kashmir Division shall observe summer vacation w.e.f From July-06 to July-19-2026."

Earlier, KNO reported that the directorate had proposed summer break for all government and private schools from Monday. (KNO)

IFFJK-2026 to revive

provide aspiring professionals from Jammu & Kashmir with global exposure, technical expertise and industry networks while encouraging innovation and excellence in filmmaking.

The Chief Minister also called for instituting a special segment to recognize distinguished actors, filmmakers, directors, producers, cinematographers, musicians and other cinema personalities who have played a significant role in keeping Jammu & Kashmir's cinematic legacy alive by creating memorable films in the region over the decades.

Recognizing their contribution, he said, would celebrate Kashmir's enduring association with Indian cinema while inspiring a renewed partnership between the film industry

and Jammu & Kashmir.

Highlighting the festival's wider developmental potential, the Chief Minister said it should also create meaningful opportunities for local artisans, craftspeople, entrepreneurs, tourism stakeholders, ensuring that the benefits of the event extend well beyond the film fraternity. He directed the concerned departments to make the festival a comprehensive celebration of Jammu & Kashmir's artistic, cultural and entrepreneurial excellence.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the festival's branding strategy, global outreach, programming, digital engagement, technical collaborations, venue management, audience experience, promotional campaigns and institutional partnerships. The proposed festival will feature international competition, Indian cinema, documentaries, short films, student films, animation, regional cinema, industry forums, workshops and cultural programmes.

The proposed four-day festival, scheduled to be held in September 2026, will host screenings across multiple venues, offering an immersive experience for filmmakers, delegates and audiences.

The meeting also reviewed proposals for developing a dedicated digital ecosystem, including a festival website and an AI-enabled mobile application to facilitate film submissions, registrations, accreditation, scheduling, audience engagement, media outreach and real-time festival management. Plans for an integrated social media campaign and global promotional strategy also came up for discussion.

Proposals relating to technical partnerships with premier film institutions for festival curation, jury support, capacity building and specialized training for local youth were also deliberated upon. The festival is expected to bring together eminent filmmakers, actors, producers, technicians, film critics and cultural personalities from India and abroad.

Reiterating his vision, the Chief Minister said the International Film Festival should firmly establish Jammu & Kashmir as a world-class destination for cinema while leveraging the opportunities created under the J&K Film Policy to attract greater investment, film productions and creative enterprises. He directed all concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure timely completion of all preparatory activities for the successful conduct of the inaugural festival.

The meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, Commissioner Secretary Information, R Alice Vaz, Commissioner Secretary, Floriculture, Parks and Gardens, Zubair Ahmad, Director Information Shreya Singhal, Joint Director Information, Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari, Joint Director Information, Jammu, Deepak Dubey, senior officers from the Tourism and General Administration Department, representatives of NFDC and other concerned officers. (KNO)

Heatwave: 'Avoid

temperatures, coupled with the growing impact of climate change, are making heat-related illnesses more common.

"Heatstroke occurs when the body's cooling system fails, and body temperature rises to dangerous levels. If not treated promptly, it can become life-threatening. Early recognition of symptoms such as fatigue, vomiting, dizziness, confusion or altered consciousness is essential, and patients should be taken to the nearest health facility immediately," he said.

Doctors appealed to people to minimise strenuous physical activity during peak heat hours, ensure adequate hydration throughout the day, regularly monitor vulnerable family members, particularly children and senior citizens, and remain alert to the signs of dehydration and heatstroke as the region continues to experience unusually high temperatures. (KNO)

Go beyond textbooks, learn from your ecosystem: Prez Murmu to students

PTI

Visakhapatnam, Jun 30: President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday called on students to keep pace with emerging skill-development trends to remain relevant in a fast-changing world.

Addressing the first convocation of the Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh, Murmu asked students to go beyond textbook learning and learn from their surrounding ecosystem to develop practical skills.

Students must strive to improve the future of society and the nation while remaining connected to their community, culture and traditions, she said.

In a rapidly developing India, the president said there was a need to stay connected to the country's heritage while simultaneously extending the benefits of modern science to every section of society.

With this objective, Murmu said the university was operating a 'Science and Technology Hub' to empower the tribal communities of north Andhra Pradesh.

She said the university had



focused its efforts on both academic and grassroots-level work in areas such as tribal welfare, public health, climate change, food and nutrition security, and energy conservation.

Murmu expressed confidence that these efforts would play an important role in building an equitable and developed India.

Citing the Viksit Bharat 2047 (developed India) vision, she expressed confidence that the

Central Tribal University in Andhra Pradesh would play a significant role in achieving the objective through its inclusive and practical teaching methodology focused on environmental conservation.

She expressed hope that integrating tribal people with the benefits of modern education would enable local youth to play a significant role in the country's equitable development.

The president said the Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh bore several special responsibilities and was expected to become a hub for fostering self-confidence, leadership and policy-making capabilities within tribal society.

Murmu said institutions established with the objective of social justice had a duty to work at the grassroots level for the education, health, skill development, livelihoods and forest rights of tribal communities in their region.

She expressed confidence that the university would make meaningful efforts in the coming years towards the holistic development of youth from marginalised and tribal communities, as well as the overall development of the region.

According to the president, all universities, particularly tribal universities, should have innovative systems in place to enhance the livelihoods of tribal people by facilitating productive work in areas such as forest produce, handicrafts, millets, medicinal plants, eco-tourism and local entrepreneurship.

Calling the convocation a 'significant milestone' in every student's

life, she described it as a day of celebration and a moment that inspires students to make resolutions for their future.

She said tribal youth in the country should mentally prepare to change and develop socio-economic and educational conditions with the help of government efforts.

Murmu said the graduating students had to contribute to the progress of a country where development was equal, and no one was left behind.

"Today, the government is trying to bring tribal and Adivasi people forward. But what is my responsibility? What will be the result of the government giving me so much support? That is why, from today, we have to be mentally prepared not for ourselves but for society—to change society, education, culture, tradition, economy, and to take society forward," she said.

"We have to make the government's efforts a reality," Murmu added.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Andhra Pradesh HRD Minister Nara Lokesh also spoke at the event.

Ram Temple Trust to meet on July 6 amid donation theft row

PTI

Ayodhya (UP), Jun 30: The Ram Temple Trust is likely to meet on July 6 in Ayodhya to discuss its next course of action following the resignation of its two senior members in the wake of the donation theft row.

VHP chief Alok Kumar had previously told PTI that the meeting of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust would take place on July 7, but sources said the meeting has been advanced by a day.

Trust general secretary Champat Rai and member Anil Mishra have already resigned. The Trust will discuss these resignations at its meeting, with sources saying the possibility of them being accepted was "high".

Rai, who is the VHP vice president, is a key

functionary of the Trust which was formed in 2020 for the construction and management of the Ram temple after the Supreme Court verdict in the Ayodhya dispute.

If the resignations of both trustees are accepted, three posts in the Trust will fall vacant. One post has been vacant for almost a year due to the demise of Bimlendra Mohan Pratap Mishra (a member).

Trust Chairman Mahant Nriyagopal Das, member K Parasaran, along with some other trustees, are not active due to health and old age. In such a situation, if the Trust is restructured, new names may also be considered in place of these trustees, added the sources.

They said that if the central government appoints a CEO in the Trust, the bylaws will first have to be changed.

Home Minister Amit Shah launches revamped FCRA portal, e-OCI card

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 30: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday launched a revamped online portal for regulating foreign contributions and the e-OCI Card, initiatives which would simplify compliance, improve public services and strengthen national security through greater use of technology.

In his address, the Home Minister said that prior to 2014, the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) system was entangled in files and procedures and was beyond proper oversight.

Shah said that after the government led by Prime Minister Modi was formed in 2014, the system was strengthened.

"The renewal of the FCRA portal today will greatly enhance ease of operations for organisations," he said.

The minister said that in the past years, there has been a significant increase in the number of applications and the flow of donations. Keeping this in view, reducing paperwork and ensuring effective, real-time monitoring of foreign contributions are very important for the country's security.

He said that due to the FCRA law, monitoring of foreign contributions coming with wrong intentions will increase.

The initiatives reflected the government's commitment to improving governance through technology while making services



more accessible to citizens and organisations, he said.

The FCRA 2.0 Portal digitises all major processes related to foreign contribution regulation, including registration, renewal, annual returns and other services under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act.

The key provisions of the new FCRA Amendment rules, 2026, have also been incorporated into it.

According to the Ministry, the platform has been developed to simplify compliance while strengthening the monitoring and enforcement of foreign funding received by organisations.

"At present, around 14,500 active FCRA organisations are working across the country. Every year, approximately 15,000 to 20,000 applications and about 17,000 annual returns are received," a government statement said.

Hosted on the government's MeghRaj cloud platform, the portal includes Aadhaar-based authentication, e-Sign

verification, Optical Character Recognition technology for document analysis and integration with NGO Darpan.

It is also linked with several government databases, including PAN, Aadhaar, OCI records and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India's Unique Document Identification Number system.

"For organisations, this portal reduces paperwork, saves time, and provides a simple and more convenient experience. It includes faster application processing and an integrated, login-based dashboard.

"For the government, API-based integration with major databases enables faster, more accurate verification, improved compliance monitoring, and effective oversight of the receipt and utilisation of foreign contributions, thereby strengthening both national security and good governance," the Ministry said in a statement.

The platform has also been designed to accommodate

future features such as an AI-powered chatbot and mobile-based access, it said.

Shah said organisations would no longer need to submit physical documents, making the application process faster and more convenient.

The Home Minister also launched the e-OCI Card, a fully digital version of the Overseas Citizen of India document issued to eligible foreign nationals of Indian origin.

The Home Minister said that the initiative would benefit more than 50 lakh OCI cardholders by reducing paperwork and eliminating the risk of losing or damaging physical documents.

He said the digital card would also enable real-time verification and help facilitate faster immigration processing.

The Ministry of Home Affairs said applicants will now be able to complete the entire OCI process online, from submitting applications and uploading supporting documents to downloading the approved digital card.

The system provides a convenient and fully digital experience and removes the risk of losing or damaging physical documents, he said.

The Home Minister said the new card removes the requirement for OCI cardholders older than 20 to obtain a new OCI booklet each time a new passport is issued.

Instead, cardholders will only need to update their passport details online, he said.

Taxpayers can file appeal before GSTAT till July 31: FinMin

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 30: The government on Tuesday extended the deadline for filing appeals before the GST appellate tribunal by one month till July 31.

The Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) was launched in September last year, and the government had then notified June 30, 2026, as the last date for filing of appeals before GSTAT. "The government has extended the due date for filing of appeals before the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) to July 31, 2026," the finance ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said it has decided to extend the due date after it received representation from various stakeholders highlighting technical difficulties in filing appeals due to rush on the GSTAT portal. In the last 15 days alone, 30,000 appeals were filed, with daily volumes peaking at 5,500.

Taxpayers are advised to plan their appeal filings well in advance and not wait until the deadline, the ministry said. The government has



already notified 31 state benches of GSTAT, and one Principal Bench located at Delhi.

Over 4.80 lakh cases are pending before the appellate authority and all these cases are expected to be filed before GSTAT.

The government had in May 2024 appointed Justice (Retired) Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as the President of the Principal Bench of GSTAT.

Since the rollout of GST on July 1, 2017, all disputes between a

taxpayer and GST department used to go to High Courts or Supreme Court, thus delaying dispute resolution. With the operationalisation of GSTAT in September 2025, the disputes resolution is expected to be faster.

AMRG Global Managing Partner Rajat Mohan said the government's decision is a pragmatic move that protects taxpayers' right to appeal while providing certainty during the transition to a fully operational GSTAT.

"While the additional time offers much-needed relief, taxpayers should avoid waiting until the last date and instead complete their filings well in advance to minimise the risk of portal congestion and technical disruptions," Mohan added.

Abhishek Jain, Indirect Tax Head & Partner, KPMG said: "The extension will provide taxpayers and professionals adequate time to adapt to the newly operational Tribunal, ensure that genuine appeals are not lost on limitation, and support a smooth transition to the GSTAT framework".

Indian Railways approves 3 projects worth Rs 1,131 crore

IANS

New Delhi, June 30: Indian Railways on Tuesday approved three projects with a total investment of Rs 1,131 crore which include laying an optic fibre cable across 1,700 route km across South Eastern Railway, doubling of the Mansi-Saharsa railway line in Bihar

and an electronic interlocking project in the Asansol division, according to an official statement issued on Tuesday.

Indian Railways has approved the provision of the balance 48-Fibre Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) across South Eastern Railway at a cost of Rs 200 crore.

Delhi-NCR hospital performs over 2,500 bone marrow transplants

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 30: A Delhi-NCR hospital has crossed the milestone of performing more than 2,500 bone marrow transplants across adult and paediatric patients, underscoring advances in the treatment of blood cancers and complex blood disorders, according to a statement.

According to Fortis Memorial Research Institute (FMRI), Gurugram, the bone marrow transplant (BMT) programme has helped treat patients with conditions such as leukaemia, lymphoma, thalassaemia, sickle cell disease, immunodeficiency disorders, and other rare haematological diseases.

Advances in genomics, donor matching, cellular therapies and personalised treatment protocols have significantly improved transplant outcomes and expanded access to the procedure over the past decade, the hospital said in a statement.

"Crossing 2,500 Bone Marrow Transplants is not merely a numerical milestone; it represents 2,500 lives touched and countless families given renewed hope," said Dr Rahul Bhargava, Principal Director and Chief of Haematology, Haemato-Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant at FMRI.

Dr Vikas Dua, Principal Director and Head of Paediatric Haematology, Haemato-Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant, said bone marrow transplantation can be life-saving for children diagnosed with blood cancers, thalassaemia, aplastic anaemia and immune deficiency disorders.

Rahul Gandhi spreading negativity, undermining India's achievements: BJP

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 30: The BJP on Tuesday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of spreading "negativity" and undermining India's achievements, claiming that his repeated predictions of an economic "doom" have been belied by India's economic performance.

The remarks came amid Prime Minister Narendra Modi holding a meeting with secretaries of all central ministries on Tuesday evening. The meeting is expected to cover reform initiatives to improve the ease of living and ease of doing business.

BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla described Gandhi as a "nawab of negativity, champion of cynicism and purveyor of propaganda".

"In his hatred for Modi and the BJP, he hates Bharat. He spills and spews venom against Bharat's democratic institutions, economic performance and military might. On every occasion, he says that an



economic tsunami is going to hit India," Poonawalla said in a video statement.

"Far from that, India has been able to withstand the headwinds caused by the Iran-Israel-America crisis. Despite three challenging circumstances -- Covid, the Russia-Ukraine war and the Iran-Israel-America war -- India has become the fastest-growing large economy in the world with a 7.7-7.8 per cent growth rate," he said.

Highlighting the Modi government's economic agenda, Poonawalla said the prime minister has championed and pushed the reform express ahead. Today, it is a

government of reform, performance and transform, he added.

"From GST reforms to direct tax reforms, all these reforms are centred on the citizen and businesses. It is a citizen-centric approach.

"Today, it is D for deregulation, D for decentralisation, D for diversification, D for democratisation and D for digitalisation. This reform express has ensured that India goes ahead with Gati towards Pragati. It has gone from red tape to red carpet," Poonawalla said. He alleged that Gandhi and former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan had projected India's growth at "not more than five per cent", but the economy has outperformed those estimates.

"Despite so many supply chain constraints, India maintained inflation at around 4.5-5 per cent on average. Today, we have the highest exports.

"We have the highest foreign exchange reserves, which were just USD 200 billion earlier and are now in excess of

USD 700 billion. We have the highest GST collections, the highest automobile sales and the highest industrial production," he said.

Alleging that Gandhi, the leader of opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, "takes contracts from Soros", the BJP leader said, "He undermines every achievement of Bharat and tries to create a situation of doom and gloom. But once again, his lies have come crashing down in front of the data that speaks louder than his fake words and his negative propaganda."

Backing BJP president Nitin Nabin's criticism of Gandhi's overseas visits, Poonawalla, in another video statement, alleged that the Congress leader spends more time abroad than with his party workers and the people of India.

"Nitin Nabin ji is absolutely right. Rahul Gandhi is a part-time politician and a full-time anti-India spokesperson. Even today, he is not with his party workers or the people of India. He is in paryatan mode.

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE
In the case of: Ab Majeed Kumar S/o: Mohd Sideeq Kumar R/o: Naseem Bagh.

Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death)

...Non Applicant
NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Daughter namely Zohra Majeed D/o: Ab Majeed Kumar as 15-8-2011 at Home.

Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large is informed that in case any one has any objection for issuance of direction with respect to the registration of aforementioned Birth event he /she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within 7 days from the date of the publication of this proclamation. If the date fixed is declared holiday, the matter will be taken on the next working day.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

US envoys in Qatar for meetings on Iran amid tensions following weekend attacks

AP

Dubai, Jun 30: Two US envoys arrived in Qatar on Tuesday for talks with mediators about the implementation of an initial deal to end the war in Iran, an official said.

The visit by Steve Witkoff, US President Donald Trump's special Mideast envoy, and Jared Kushner, his son-in-law, comes after a weekend of crossfire in the Persian Gulf over efforts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to shipping traffic.

The envoys won't be having direct negotiations with Iranian diplomats while in Qatar's capital, Doha, said Majed al-Ansari, a spokesman for Qatar's Foreign Ministry. Instead, mediators are working for the time being as go-betweeners for the talks, which won't include any high-level officials, he added.

Such indirect negotiations have happened in the past between Iran and the US. However, the two previous rounds of talks collapsed into the 12-day war Israel launched against Iran in 2025 and



the recent Iran war.

"We're not expecting any high-level Iranian officials at the moment, but as I said, the technical meetings are ongoing ... and they haven't stopped since then," al-Ansari told journalists at a weekly news conference.

Iran was also sending a delegation to Qatar this week. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said Tuesday that Iran has had no plans for a meeting with the American side at any level in the coming days. "What

will take place in Doha tomorrow is a discussion with the Qatari side about implementing parts of the memorandum of understanding, including the release of Iran's blocked assets," Baghaei told journalists at his own briefing.

However, that left open the possibility of messages being passed to the Qataris between the two sides.

The US and Iran agreed to an interim deal earlier this month that calls for Tehran to dilute its stockpile of enriched uranium. It

also waives US-backed oil sanctions on the country, calls for free traffic through the Strait of Hormuz and gives each side 60 days to hammer out broader agreements.

A fifth of the world's oil was shipped through the Strait of Hormuz before the war began February 28. Iran's attacks and threats stopped cargo ships and tankers from moving through the strait, creating a global energy crisis.

The strait has long been considered an international waterway despite being in Iran and Oman's territorial waters.

Both sides traded strikes amid efforts last week to open Oman's territorial waters in the strait to both inbound and outbound ship traffic from the Persian Gulf. That raised concerns that negotiations to formally end the war could be disrupted.

Iran twice attacked vessels in the strait — including a tanker filled with Qatari crude — and drew retaliatory American airstrikes. Iran also launched drone and missile attacks targeting Bahrain and Kuwait on Sunday.

Japan PM Takaichi to hold talks with Modi on economic security, investment



PTI

Tokyo, Jun 30: Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during her India visit this week will be aimed at advancing co-operation in areas including economic security, energy, investment and innovation.

Takaichi will visit India from July 1 to 3. Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Tuesday, adding that Takaichi will hold a Japan-India Summit Meeting with Modi during her three-day

trip. The ministry said the visit is aimed at strengthening relations with India, which is "of utmost importance for the realisation of a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific'."

It said the two leaders will discuss "the further strengthening of mutually complementary cooperation" under the "Japan-India Joint Vision for the Next Decade" announced during Modi's visit to Japan in August last year.

According to the ministry, the discussions will cover "the areas of economic security, including energy, as well

as economic growth through investment and innovation." Takaichi's visit follows Modi's trip to Tokyo in August 2025, during which the two countries unveiled the Japan-India Joint Vision for the Next Decade and Japan announced a target of investing 10 trillion yen in India over the coming decade.

India and Japan share a Special Strategic and Global Partnership, with cooperation spanning trade and investment, infrastructure, defence and security, clean energy and emerging technologies.

Bangladesh tribunal sentences Hasina's ally to 10 years for 'crimes against humanity'

PTI

Dhaka, Jun 30: A Bangladeshi tribunal on Tuesday sentenced an ally of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina to 10 years' imprisonment on charges of committing "crimes against humanity" during the 2024 street protests.

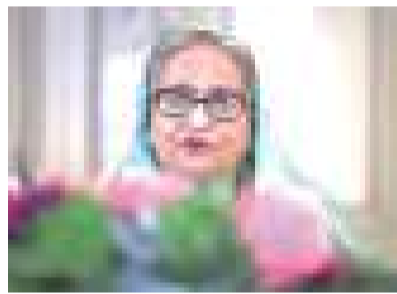
Hasanul Haque Inu, a left-leaning politician, served as a minister in Hasina's coalition government from 2012 to 2018 but had no links to the regime since then.

A 1971 Liberation War veteran and president of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Inu was accused of ordering police to kill six people in his home district, Kushtia, during the 2024 uprising, inciting attacks on protesters and maintaining telephonic links with Hasina, who fled to India in August 2024.

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD) handed down the punishment to Inu as he stood trial in person on eight separate charges.

Other charges included incitement of "use of deadly force" against protesters and direct involvement in decisions for military deployment, curfew imposition and "shoot on sight" orders.

The tribunal's three-judge panel pronounced the verdict as police brought Inu from jail under heavy security. "We are



totally dissatisfied with the verdict. We think he deserved capital punishment. Definitely we will appeal against the judgment (in the Supreme Court)," ICT-BD Chief Prosecutor Aminul Islam said.

Inu's lawyer Sifat Mahmud said his client was "dragged" into the case because of political rivalry.

He said the investigating officer admitted during cross-examination that he had no knowledge of the alleged six killings in Kushtia, which formed one of the charges.

The verdict came two days after the tribunal sentenced three police officers, including Dhaka's former police chief in absentia, to death on charges related to the 2024 protests. A UN rights office report estimates up to 1,400 deaths

during the student-led violent street protests -- spread over July and August 2024, and dubbed as "July Uprising" -- as Hasina's government ordered a security crackdown.

The Muhammad Yunus-led interim government's official count later pegged the death toll at 864.

Hasina's government was toppled on August 5, 2024, and the interim government took over on August 8, disbanding Hasina's Awami League party and exposing dozens of leaders and officials, including the former prime minister, to trial before the ICT-BD.

In November 2025, the ICT-BD sentenced Hasina and the home minister of her cabinet, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, to death after trial in absentia, for crackdown on the protesters.

The ICT-BD was originally set up in 2010 by the Hasina-led government to try hardened collaborators of Pakistani troops during Bangladesh's 1971 Liberation War.

The interim government - which was in charge till February this year - amended the ICT-BD law to enable it to try the leaders and officials of the Awami League government on charges of crimes against humanity.

I tried to talk him down but he had made his decision: McCullum on Stokes's retirement

PTI

London, Jun 30: England head coach Brendon McCullum revealed that he tried to persuade Ben Stokes to reconsider his decision to retire from international cricket, but said the captain had made up his mind by then.

England lost the third and final Test against New Zealand at Trent Bridge by 160 on Monday, conceding the series 1-2. But Stokes announced his adieu on the fourth day of the match itself, shocking everyone around.

But McCullum said he "tried to talk him down."

"When he confirmed to me that he was going to retire, first I tried to talk him down (laughs) and... (it) became pretty obvious that he had made his decision and he was at peace within," McCullum told Sky Sports.

"From that point of view, I guess your emotion then leads on to just a bit of sadness really because you have been on this journey together for four years and it's been a



real thrill. I feel very privileged that I've been able to work intimately with Stokesy throughout that and consider him a friend, a good friend."

McCullum lauded Stokes' contribution as captain and player, terming him "a leader of men."

"He is a leader of men, people follow him wherever he goes, whether that's on the field, whether that's in the dressing room, whether that's at the team hotel, people follow him because he's a vivacious character and he's a big presence and he has conviction in his thoughts and his methods."

Ebola outbreak could cost Africa up to \$3.6 bln, UN says

REUTERS

Geneva, Jun 30: The United Nations said on Tuesday that an Ebola outbreak could cost Africa up to \$3.6 billion and hundreds of thousands of jobs, potentially causing a development crisis.

The outbreak of the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, for which there is no tested vaccine or treatment, has infected 1,307 people and killed 377 in the Democratic Republic of Congo since being declared on May 15, the government says.

A much smaller number of cases have been reported in Uganda and experts warn of the possibility of it spreading to other neighbors, such as South Sudan.

"If we have the resources and we step up, we can contain this outbreak and prevent further losses," said Damien Mama, United Nations Development Programme resident representative in Congo.

"If we do not, this health emergency risks becoming a much deeper and prolonged development crisis across the region and potentially the continent."

1st T20I: Sooryavanshi's debut remains in focus as India seek strong start against England



PTI

Chester-Le-Street (UK), Jun 30: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's eagerly-awaited debut and the thoroughly exposed batting frailties on challenging wickets dominate the discourse on India as they take on England in a five-match T20 International series starting here on Wednesday.

India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate has said that Sooryavanshi will have to "go through the process and bide his time" like any other cricketer to get a place in the eleven. At the

same time, he had no hesitation in declaring that the 15-year-old swashbuckler seems ready for the grind.

But it remains to be seen whether the management will hold firm on its resolve that Sooryavanshi must follow the process amid the growing clamour to blood the explosive hitter.

Ten Doeschate was candid enough to admit that there is disbelief in the camp after being whitewashed 0-2 by Ireland last week and it could well become the trigger for drastic action.

The twin failure of Sanju Samson against Ireland offers them a perfect excuse to bench

the opener and pair Sooryavanshi with Abhishek Sharma, who could be saved by that 20-ball 49 in the first T20I at Belfast.

It could end up being the move that gives the visitors a strong start against England in the five-match series.

Ishan Kishan also did not cover himself in glory during the two-match series against Ireland and was dismissed for 1, 12.

So, the management can bench any of those two to accommodate Sooryavanshi but they will ponder the possible effect such a move can have on the morale of the omitted batter. If one takes the case of Samson, he had a wonderful run in the back-end of the T20 World Cup earlier this year and also scored two centuries for Chennai Super Kings in the IPL.

However, the think tank led by chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar and head coach Gautam Gambhir is not averse to taking some harsh calls, and those in doubt can re-read the Suryakumar Yadav story.

They also handed debuts to Suryansh Shedge and Prince Yadav against Ireland, leaving Sooryavanshi waiting for his national cap.

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COCKTAIL 2
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