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Infiltration biggest challenge, refugees need not worry: Modi

STATE TIMES NEWS
MALDA: Ahead of the West Bengal Assembly polls, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday made infiltration the central theme of his attack on the TMC government, alleging that large-scale illegal migration had altered the state's demographic balance and fuelled riots, while reassuring refugee communities such as the Matuas that they had nothing to fear.

Addressing a mega rally here in the Muslim-majority district of north Bengal, Modi said infiltration posed "a very big challenge" before the state, alleging that illegal migration had flourished under the TMC's "patronage and syndicate raj" and its alliance with infiltrators.

"There are developed and prosperous countries in the world which have no shortage of money, yet they are removing infiltrators. It is equally necessary to remove infiltrators from West Bengal," he



said, adding that a BJP government would take "big action" to stop illegal migration and weed out infiltrators once voted to power.

Claiming that the impact of infiltration was visible on the ground, the Prime Minister said the demographic balance had changed in many parts of the state.

"People tell me that in several places, even the spoken

language is beginning to change. Differences are emerging in language and dialect. Due to the increasing population of infiltrators, riots have started occurring in many areas of West Bengal, including Malda and Murshidabad," he said.

Modi alleged that the TMC's "syndicate" system was working to ensure infiltrators were settled in the

state, claiming there was an "alliance between infiltrators and the ruling party", a charge the BJP has increasingly foregrounded as it sharpens its campaign against the Mamata Banerjee-led government.

"You will have to break this alliance. I assure you that as soon as a BJP government is formed, strict action will be taken against infiltration and infiltrators," he said.

Modi sought to ringfence refugee communities, particularly the politically significant Matua community, which has figured prominently in the citizenship debate, emerging as a key BJP support base since 2019.

"I want to assure refugees like the Matuas who took shelter in India due to religious persecution: you need not worry," he said.

The twin emphasis, a hard line on infiltration and a protective assurance to

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Over 4 kg of illicit substance seized in 2 operations in Budgam; 3 held

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Three alleged drug peddlers were arrested in two separate operations in Budgam district and over 4 kg contraband was recovered from the accused, police said on Saturday.

The police in Budgam conducted operations in Magam and Hardpanzoo areas, leading to the recovery of significant quantities of illicit substances, a police spokesman said.

He said in Magam, a police team apprehended an individual during routine patrolling at Batpora Crossing.

The accused was carrying a nylon bag and allegedly attempted to flee upon noticing the police, making them suspicious, the spokesman said.

The person was apprehended, and upon search, approximately 2.1 kg of charas-like substance in ground form was recovered from his possession.

The accused was identified as Rouf Ahmed Hajam,

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Tourist arrivals picking up as conditions improve after Pahalgam attack: CS

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Saturday said that the tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir, which suffered a major setback following the Pahalgam terror attack and subsequent adverse weather conditions, is gradually showing signs of recovery, with tourist arrivals picking up as conditions improve.

Dulloo said that a major project has been conceptualised to promote sustainable tourism in emerging destinations with the objective of reducing pressure on traditional hotspots across J&K, and its implementation is being carefully planned.

"If we look at tourism, the impact after the Pahalgam attack and subsequently the rise in incidents of heavy rains and floods caused significant losses in 2025. However, we are now gradually seeing a recovery. As weather conditions improve, tourist arrivals have started



increasing again," Dulloo told PTI in a video interview here.

He said that while revival is underway, the government is reassessing its tourism strategy to prepare for rising visitor numbers and sustainable growth. "As tourism grows, we must also focus on how prepared we are to manage the increasing footfall. This calls for a reassessment of our tourism strategy and capacity," he added.

The chief secretary stressed the need to develop new tourist destinations to reduce pressure on traditional hotspots that often exceed their carrying capacity during peak seasons. "By developing new destinations, tourist footfall will be distributed more evenly. This will generate employment for local communities, lead to infrastructure development, attract investment

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Northern Army Commander reviews 'operational environment' in Kashmir



STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Northern Army commander Lt Gen Pratik Sharma on Saturday comprehensively reviewed the "operational environment" in the Kashmir valley.

"Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, #ArmyCdrNC visited formations and units across North and South Kashmir and carried out a comprehensive review of the operational environment," the Army's Northern Command said on X. It said the Army commander interacted

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War memorial set up in Rajouri to honour fallen heroes of Op Sindoor

STATE TIMES NEWS
RAJOURI/JAMMU: In a tribute to fallen heroes, including a senior government official, who lost their lives during Operation Sindoor in May last year, the army in coordination with Jammu and Kashmir government has established a war memorial in the border district of Jammu, officials said on Saturday.

The memorial has been erected at Gujjar Mandi Chowk, the same location that witnessed intense Pakistani shelling on civilian areas in retaliation to Operation Sindoor, which was launched by the Indian Armed Forces across the border on May 7 to hit terror infrastructure in Pakistan to



avenge killing of 26 people by terrorists in Pahalgam attack.

Among those who lost their lives in Pakistani shelling was Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Rajouri, Raj Kumar Thappa. The officer was killed when an artillery shell struck his official residence in the area on May 10.

The memorial features murals of Thappa, Subedar Major Pawan Kumar of the Krishna Ghati Brigade, and three other Army personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty, the officials said.

They said a separate statue

depicting an Army soldier alongside a local nomad with his child and a goat has also been installed at the site, symbolising the strong bond between the armed forces and the civilian population in the border region.

The officials said the memorial serves not only as a site of remembrance but also as a reminder of the shared sacrifices of soldiers and civilians during times of conflict.

It reflects the resilience of the people of Rajouri and their unwavering support for the nation's security forces, they said. Local residents have hailed the decision to establish the memorial, describing it as a fitting tribute to those who lost their lives during the shelling.

Technology must be used for welfare of society: Bhagwat

STATE TIMES NEWS
CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday said technology should be used for the welfare of society but people should not become slaves to it.

Interacting with young entrepreneurs here, Bhagwat also emphasised the use of swadeshi does not mean rejecting technology. The interaction was organised as part of the RSS centenary year celebrations.

"Technology is unavoidable and it is not bad in itself, but we must ensure we do not become dependent on it to

the extent that it controls us," he said.

The RSS chief said business and industry should not be driven only by profit motives.



"We work not just for our own benefit but for the good of society. Earning a livelihood should go hand in hand with social responsibility," Bhagwat said. Citing agriculture, the RSS chief

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Woman booked for violating VPN ban

STATE TIMES NEWS
UDHAMPUR: A woman has been booked for allegedly not complying with orders prohibiting the use of Virtual Private Network (VPN) services on mobile phones for security reasons in Udhampur district.

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 20.1°C Min: 4.6°C

Humidity
Max: 88 Min: 62

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 11.2°C Min: -3.2°C

Humidity
Max: 96 Min: 53

Sunset : 17:48 Hours
Sunrise : 07:32 Hours

Suspected Pakistani drone seen hovering over forward village in Samba

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A suspected Pakistani drone was briefly sighted over a forward area along the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district on Saturday, officials said.

The drone-like object came from the direction of Pakistan around 7 pm and was seen hovering over Kandral village in the Ramgarh area for a couple of minutes, they said.

According to officials, after the drone movement was spotted, security forces launched a search operation in the area to ensure there were no air-drops of illicit payload like narcotics or weapons.

However, nothing objectionable was found during

the operation, they said.

Earlier on January 9, security forces recovered an arms consignment, dropped by a drone that originated in Pakistan, in Paloora village of Ghagwal in Samba. The recovery included two pistols, three magazines, 16 rounds and a grenade.

Drone movement was also noticed in several forward areas along the Line of Control in Rajouri and Poonch districts over the past week amid heightened security ahead of Republic Day celebrations. The Army fired at similar unmanned ariel vehicles at three places in the twin border districts, and also lodged a protest with their Pakistan counterpart.

Op Sindoor testament to India's military might, PM's political will: Amit Shah

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said Operation Sindoor was a testament to India's invincible military might, powered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolute political will and the armed forces' decisive striking power. The home minister made the comments during his visit to the World Book Fair at Bharat Mandapam on Saturday.

Shah visited the Vande Mataram Pavilion and Operation Sindoor Pavilion, and a special exhibition on the country's first home minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

He said the song Vande Mataram, carried in Anand Math, the literary classic



authored by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, inspired millions of Indians to wage the freedom struggle and end British rule. He also urged the general public to visit the fair and distributed copies of Anand Math to children. "Joined book lovers like me at the New Delhi World

Book Fair. Books are the best medium to gain knowledge, and one should continue to read regardless of their age. The habit of reading is fast waning, and I believe that books, whether in digital or print, are still the best way to acquire knowledge," Shah said on X.

The home minister also paid his tribute to the national song, published for the first time in the literary journal Bangadarshan on November 7, 1875.

"Today visited the National Book Trust's Vande Mataram Pavilion in the World Book Fair. As the nation celebrates the 150 years of Vande Mataram, the pavilion showcases the glorious saga of our national song, which stirred freedom fighters with the patriotic fervor to overthrow the colonial rule," he said.

Shah also hailed the prime minister and the armed forces for Operation Sindoor. "Operation Sindoor was a testament to India's invincible military might powered by

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JK BJP holds meeting ahead of National President election

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir unit of BJP on Saturday held a meeting here to deliberate on the upcoming voting process for the election of party's national president, a party spokesperson said.

The meeting, attended by national council members and state council members, took place at Trikuta Nagar party headquarters here and was part of the ongoing organisational elections being conducted across the country under the banner of "Sangathan Parv", the spokesperson said.

The BJP on Friday released the schedule for the election of the party's national president, saying nominations for the post will be

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