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The Lieutenant Governor assured the PM Package employees that appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that all the benefits available to other employees of J&K Government are extended to them as well.

He appreciated the vital contribution of everyone associated with Kashmiri Pandit Sabha and other stakeholders in preserving and promoting the cultural and spiritual heritage of Jammu Kashmir.

"The kind of coordination and efforts that many Kashmiri Pandit organizations are making and the values that are being inculcated in the younger generation, I am confident that no one can harm this vibrant culture," the Lieutenant Governor further said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that the celebrations of Navratri and Navreh also reflect the unity in diversity and strengthen the emotional bond. "Let us take a pledge today that we will further strengthen this unity for the welfare of Jammu Kashmir," he further said.

Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Kuldeep Khoda, former DGP; K K Khosa President, Kashmiri Pandit Sabha; Deepak Dhar, senior Vice President and other office-bearers of Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, senior officials, and prominent citizens from all walks of life were present.

Chaitra Navratra begins...

The Inderprasth Bhojanalaya at Adhkuwari has been expanded to cater 200 devotees.

Furthermore, the Langar facility has been extended to Shubhra Bhawan at Banganga augmenting the existing Langar Seva currently operational at Tarakote Marg, Sanjehat, Adhkuwari and Bhairon Ji with availability of fast-related food options for devotees observing fasts during the pilgrimage.

Notably, about 200 Smart lockers have been strategically installed near the Skywalk area offering a convenient and secure storage solution for devotees at Bhawan. These smart lockers are linked with RFID Cards allowing devotees to store their belongings safely and securely.

To facilitate seamless communication for pilgrims, especially those carrying prepaid SIMs, free PCO facilities in collaboration with Bharti Airtel are available at various locations along the track to provide devotees with an added layer of comfort and reassurance, enabling them to stay connected with their families throughout their spiritual journey.

To mitigate fatigue and provide respite, resting cum holding areas have been established for devotees at Banganga and Adhkuwari. These structures with a capacity to accommodate 2,000 pilgrims at a time offer a comfortable and tranquil space to rejuvenate regardless of the weather conditions, thereby revitalizing them to continue their journey with renewed vigor and enthusiasm.

The Shrine Board has beautifully transformed the Bhawan, Atka and surrounding areas into a radiant spiritual oasis for warmly welcoming pilgrims visiting to pay obeisance at the sacred Shrine. The grand decorations feature an exquisite blend of indigenous and foreign fruits, flowers, majestic reception doors and elegantly designed track; besides, the Bhawan area has been illuminated with stunning colorful facade lights, creating a mesmerizing ambience for devotees.

To ensure a seamless and comfortable pilgrimage experience, the Shrine Board has also made comprehensive arrangements including round-the-clock water and power supply along the tracks, sanitation facilities and medical care. Additionally, pilgrims can avail of facilities like battery-operated vehicles, passenger ropeway and helicopter services for hassle free journey.

As part of the Navratras celebrations, Shrine Board has also lined up captivating Bhajan and Bhaint performances by acclaimed artists during morning and evening Atka arti.

These spiritual events will further enrich the pilgrims' experience, fostering an atmosphere of devotion and spirituality.

Dr Jitendra announces...

be provided accordingly. "As a Member of Parliament, I announce the construction of memorials for both martyrs. Additionally, as has been done before, some schools will be named in their honour, we will propose it," he said.

50 Naxalites surrender...

of Rs 8 lakh each, he said. "Three surrendered ultras have bounties of Rs 5 lakh each, while five have rewards of Rs 1 lakh each on their heads. The District Reserve Guard (DRG), Bastar Fighters, Special Task Force (STF), CRPF and its elite unit CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action) played a key role in their surrender," Yadav said.

All the surrendered Naxalites were provided assistance of Rs 25,000 each, said the SP, who urged Naxalites to take advantage of the government's rehabilitation policy and join the mainstream of society.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah hailed the surrender of the 50 Naxalites and said those who lay down weapons and adopt the path of development will be rehabilitated.

"It is a matter of great joy that 50 Naxalites in Bijapur (Chhattisgarh) surrendered, abandoning the path of violence. I welcome those who leave violence and weapons and join the mainstream of development," he wrote on 'X' in Hindi.

Shah said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policy is clear that any Naxalite who leaves weapons and adopts the path of development will be rehabilitated and connected to the mainstream.

"After March 31, 2026, Naxalism will become history in the country. This is our resolution," the Union home minister asserted.

Congratulating security forces, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said positive results of the new surrender and rehabilitation policy of the state are clearly visible on the ground.

"People trapped in the vicious circle of Naxalism are now laying down arms and returning to the mainstream of society. Our government is ready for the revival of every person who shuns the violence and chooses the path of peace," Sai said in a statement.

This success is the result of the resolve of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to eliminate Left Wing Extremism (LWE) by 2026, the CM added.

"The construction of roads in remote areas, establishment of schools and hospitals under Niyad Nellanar scheme have ignited the flame of trust and hope towards the government in Bastar region. This is not just surrender, it is the return of trust. Those who were a symbol of fear yesterday are becoming the hope of the future today," Sai said.

"Chhattisgarh is now moving forward on the path of peace, development and new consciousness. More than 2200 Naxalites have been arrested or have surrendered in the state so far under the double engine government (since December 2023). More than 350 Naxalites have been killed," Sai said.

The surrender came hours ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the state.

Moon sighted, Eid...

different days and it is determined by the sighting of the crescent moon which is supposed to denote the start of the Shawwal month in the lunar Islamic calendar. It marks the end of the fasting month of Ramzan.

National Museum to host 40-day Photo Exhibition on Ambaran Excavations

NEW DELHI: The National Museum in New Delhi is set to host a 40-day-long photo exhibition showcasing the historic Buddhist excavation site of Ambaran in Akhnoor, beginning April 2.

The exhibition, titled "Ambaran: The Historic Buddhist Citadel of Jammu & Kashmir," aims to highlight the cultural and archaeological significance of this ancient site and bring it into the national spotlight. Jammu & Kashmir Minister, Satish Sharma has played a key role in organizing this exhibition by encouraging renowned photojournalist Vijay Kranti to document and present Ambaran's historical importance.

Following its display in New Delhi, the exhibition

will be taken to Srinagar and Jammu, ensuring broader awareness of Jammu & Kashmir's Buddhist heritage.

The exhibition, jointly organized by the National Museum and the Centre for Himalayan Asia Studies and Engagement (CHASE), provides a detailed visual and historical account of Ambaran. The site functioned as an active Buddhist monastery for nearly 900 years, dating back to the 2nd century B.C. and remaining significant until the 7th century A.D.

Ambaran was first excavated in 1999-2000 by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Mani, a renowned Indian archaeologist. The site has yielded artifacts from four significant historical periods Pre-Kushan Period (2nd to 1st century B.C.); Kushan Period (1st to 3rd century A.D.); Post-Kushan (Gupta) Period (4th to 5th century A.D.); and Post-Gupta Period (6th to 7th century A.D.).

Renowned photojournalist Vijay Kranti, known for his photographic documentation of Himalayan Buddhism, Ladakh, and Jammu & Kashmir, was introduced to Ambaran by late Lok Sabha member Madan Lal Sharma.

His photographic work on the site gained international attention, leading to a significant visit by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2011. During his visit, the Dalai Lama engaged in discussions with Dr. Mani about the archaeological discoveries and historical importance of Ambaran.

He suggested that further research and excavations at the site could potentially lead to a re-evaluation of certain aspects of Buddhist history. His endorsement brought much-needed attention to Ambaran's global significance.

Minister Satish Sharma highlighted that Akhnoor is home to five major cultural, historical, and natural landmarks, making it an area with tremendous tourism potential which include the Buddhist Monastic Site of Ambaran, Akhnoor Fort, Jia Pota Mandir, Akhnoor Railway Bridge and Chenab River.

By highlighting Ambaran's rich Buddhist history alongside Akhnoor's cultural treasures, the exhibition aims to promote these sites as important heritage and tourism destinations.

Nitish's 81, Hasaranga's four-wicket set up RR's six-run win over CSK

GUWAHATI: Nitish Rana smashed a blistering 36-ball 81, while leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga starred with a four-wicket haul as Rajasthan Royals (RR) opened their account with a hard-fought six-run victory over Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in the IPL here on Sunday.

Promoted to number 3, left-handed Rana dominated the CSK bowlers, hitting 10 boundaries and 5 sixes en route his scintillating knock but Royals struggled towards back-end just about manage a par-score of 182 for 9.

CSK, who had never successfully chased a target over 180 since 2019, faltered again, managing 176 for six in the allotted overs. The chase was built around skipper Rituraj Gaikwad's 63, but it wasn't enough as CSK succumbed to their second consecutive loss.

The legend of Mahendra Singh Dhoni's last over finishes in IPL is fast becoming a story of yesterday as he failed to muscle Maheesh Theekshana and Sandeep Sharma.

Chasing 183, CSK found themselves at 5/1 in the first three overs, with Jofra Archer starting with a maiden wicket over, dismissing Rachin Ravindra (0).

A few lusty blows from Rahul Tripathi (23) and Gaikwad (63) helped CSK reach 42/1 in the powerplay.

Hasaranga made an immediate impact, removing Tripathi, who was caught by Shimron Hetmyer, while Shivam Dube (18) looked dangerous, hammering two sixes off the Sri Lankan spinner. However, a moment of brilliance from stand-in captain Riyan Parag proved to be a game-changer.

Parag, playing in front of his home crowd, dived to his right from cover to take a stunning catch to dismiss Dube.

Despite Gaikwad's resistance, CSK continued to lose wickets, with Hasaranga dismissing Vijay Shankar (9) after a big six. Gaikwad reached his



fifty off 37 balls, but soon fell to Hasaranga, becoming his fourth victim, as CSK slumped to 129 for 5.

With CSK needing 39 off 12 balls, MS Dhoni (16), cheered by the crowd, hit a boundary over short third and a towering six over long-on off a profligate Tushar Deshpande. Ravindra Jadeja (32) also joined in, sweeping the bowler for a huge six over deep backward square leg.

Sandeep Sharma was tasked with the final over, and he struck the crucial blow by removing Dhoni, with Shimron Hetmyer taking a stunning catch to eventually defend 20 runs in the last six balls.

Earlier, Royals suffered an early setback when opener Yashvi Jaiswal, after hitting a boundary on the first ball, was dismissed by Khaleel but it was Nitish's show from thereon, as he added 82 runs off 42 balls with Sanju Samson (20) to lay a solid foundation for Rajasthan.

Nitish read the length of the ball perfectly, playing exquisite strokes to provide early momentum. He flicked, pulled, and even ramped the pacers for sixes, while using the slog sweep behind

square to get two sixes off Ravichandran Ashwin.

The southpaw reached his fifty in just 21 balls as RR raced to 79/1 in the powerplay, their third-highest total in IPL history.

Noor broke the 82-run second wicket stand with Samson holing out to Rachin Ravindra at long-off.

At 99/2 in the 10th over, Nitish continued his assault, flicking Matheesha Pathirana for a six, while also slog sweeping Ashwin for a six and a four, respectively. However, Ashwin had the last laugh, as he deliberately bowled a wide delivery out of Nitish's hitting arc and Mahendra Singh Dhoni did the needful behind the stumps.

Noor then claimed the wicket of Jurel with a wrong 'un, while Ravindra Jadeja dismissed Wanindu Hasaranga (4) as CSK made a comeback, reducing RR to 140/5 in the 15th over.

In the 17th over, Riyan Parag (37) launched Noor for a four and a six before being cleaned up by Pathirana. Shimron Hetmyer (19) hit a four and a six as RR managed to cross the 180-mark.

LG, CM greet people on Eid-ul-Fitr

JAMMU/SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and senior ministers have greeted the people on auspicious Eid-ul-Fitr.

In his message the Lieutenant Governor said, "On the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, I extend my warm greetings and good wishes to all.

Eid-ul-Fitr marks the end of the period of fasting, prayer and charity during the pious month of Ramzan and an important occasion for festivities, all-round joy and togetherness. It strengthens our faith in oneness, compassion and brotherhood.

May Eid-ul-Fitr this year usher in peace, prosperity and happiness for all". Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and beyond on the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In his message on the auspicious occasion, the Chief Minister highlighted the significance of Eid as a divine blessing following a month of fasting and devotion.

He emphasized that Eid is an occasion to express gratitude to the Almighty and to cherish the spirit of togetherness and compassion fostered during Ramadan.

"Eid is a time when people come together to celebrate the blessings of Ramadan, strengthening the bonds of community and reinforcing the values of mutual respect and brotherhood. It is a time to share happiness, extend kindness and support those in need," Omar Abdullah said.

The Chief Minister further remarked that the festival is a true reflection of Jammu and Kashmir's rich tradition of communal harmony, shared heritage and cultural inclusivity, strengthening

the fabric of unity and peace.

On this occasion, he prayed for peace, progress and prosperity for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and for all those celebrating Eid across the world.

In his message, highlighting the significance of the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the festival is being celebrated as a time of unity, compassion and gratitude, reflecting the values upheld during the month-long period of fasting and reflection.

"I wish all our citizens, especially our Muslim brothers and sisters, a very happy Eid Ul Fitr," the Deputy Chief Minister said. "This festival is a beautiful reminder of the strength found in discipline, the joy of community and the importance of extending kindness to one another. May it bring peace, prosperity, and happiness to every household," he added.

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, in her greetings underlined the essence of Eid-ul-Fitr as a festival of compassion, unity and gratitude. She urged the people to embrace the spirit of generosity and togetherness, especially by helping the underprivileged and needy.

"Eid-ul-Fitr marks the culmination of fasting during the holy month of Ramzan, month of blessings and forgiveness. The festival reminds us of our duties towards poor and downtrodden as well as the need for charity and generosity towards all", Sakeena said.

The Minister prayed that the joy of this festival should reach every household. She also prayed for peace, progress and prosperity of entire Jammu and Kashmir.

Minister for Agriculture Production and Rural Development Departments,

Javed Ahmad Dar in his message emphasized that Eid-ul-Fitr not only signifies completion of the holy month of Ramadan but also serves as a reminder of the religious duties, values of compassion, generosity and social responsibility. He underscored the importance of caring for the underprivileged, urging people to fulfill their moral and religious duty by contributing Fitr for the welfare of those in need.

The Minister further highlighted that this festival is a symbol of unity, harmony and coexistence, reinforcing the bonds of brotherhood among different communities. He prayed for lasting peace, progress and communal harmony in the region. Encouraging the people to celebrate Eid with austerity, Javed Dar reminded everyone of the essence of the festival spreading love, kindness, and supporting those who are less fortunate and maintain the spirit of togetherness and compassion.

Minister for Jal Shakti and Forests, Javed Rana greeted people on the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr, saying this festival motivates all to lead a peaceful life and work for the prosperity of our society.

This festival marks culmination of the period of fasting and prayer during the holy month of Ramzan and gives us the message of love and brotherhood, he said. "This festival promotes unity, forgiveness and charity. Eid is the occasion to help the poor and deprived people and share our happiness with them," maintained the Minister.

He said, on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, "let us spread the feelings of love, kindness and compassion while working for the betterment of our society."

Police busts timber smuggling racket in Pattan, accused arrested, Vehicle seized

STATE TIMES NEWS

BARAMULLA: In a significant operation against organised crime, Police in Baramulla have successfully busted a timber smuggling racket operating across the Kashmir Valley. This marks the first FIR registered under organised crime for timber smuggling in the region.

Acting on credible intelligence, police received information that a group of smugglers was illegally felling willow trees from government land (Rakh) in Rakh Duslipora, Nowgam Circle (Gund Ibrahim). The stolen timber was being transported in a Tata Mobile vehicle (JK18D/2556) for illegal sale in Pattan and nearby areas.

Responding swiftly, police teams intercepted and seized the vehicle along with 25 stolen timber logs. Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 50/2025 has been registered at Police Station Pattan under Sections 324(3), 112(2), and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and an investigation is underway.

The prime accused, John Mohd Bhat, a resident of Naina Batpora, Pulwama, fled from the scene but was later tracked and arrested from Pulwama. Further arrests and recoveries are expected as investigations continue.

Police remains committed to taking strict action against organised crime and environmental offenses to safeguard public resources and uphold the law.

Unidentified Male body found

STATE TIMES NEWS

AKHNOOR: An unidentified male, approximately 58 years old, 5'7" in height, with a wheatish complexion, was found dead this evening near Pandav Guffa, on the banks of the Chenab River in Akhnoor. Preliminary findings suggest that the man may have drowned, as the body appears to have been carried downstream by the river's current. However, the circumstances surrounding his death remain unclear.



The deceased was wearing off-grey thermal and grey trousers at the time he was recovered.

The body has been shifted to GMC Jammu and placed in the mortuary. In light of the suspicious circumstances, authorities have initiated inquest proceedings under Section 194 BNSS at Police Station Akhnoor, with the case recorded under DDR No. 16 dated March 30, 2025.

Police are seeking assistance from the public in identifying the deceased. Anyone with relevant information is urged to contact SHO Akhnoor on 9419700100.

Unauthorized Pithu operators on SMVD track booked for violating SDM order

STATE TIMES NEWS

REASI: In a proactive effort to maintain order and enforce regulations on the Shri Mata Vaishni Devi track, District Police Reasi has registered two separate cases against unauthorized Pithu operators found working without valid service cards, in violation of SDM order.

During patrolling near Ban Ganga Bridge within the jurisdiction of Police Post Banganga, police personnel intercepted a person coming from the PP Ban Ganga side towards Darshni Gate with a Pithu buggy. Upon questioning, the individual identified himself as Mudassar Ali S/O Ashaq Ali R/O Sildhar, Tehsil Mahore District Reasi. When asked to produce his authorized and registered Pithu service card, Mudassar Ali admitted that he did not possess any such card.

By operating without authorization, he had violated the directives issued by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM). Consequently, a case FIR No. 89/2025 U/S 223 BNS was registered at P/S Katra and further investigation is underway. In another incident on the same day, police patrolling near Geeta Mata Mandir on the SMVD track intercepted a person traveling from Sameer Point toward Ban Ganga with a Pithu buggy. Upon questioning, he revealed his identity as Shararat Ali S/O Bashir Ahmed R/O Meer Jagir, Mandrain, District Jammu. He too failed to produce any authorized Pithu service card and confessed to operating without proper registration.

As this action also constituted a breach of SDM order, a case FIR No. 88/2025 U/S 223 BNS was registered at P/S Katra and further investigation is in progress.

District Police Reasi remains vigilant in ensuring compliance with established regulations on the SMVD track and urges all service operators to adhere strictly to the guidelines to avoid legal action.

Police attaches property worth lakhs under NDPS Act

STATE TIMES NEWS

HANDWARA: In its ongoing drive against drug trafficking and in strict compliance with the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, Police in Handwara attached a vehicle worth Rs 12 lakh representing Norco- proceeds.

"The vehicle, Maruti Swift Dzire bearing registration number JK09D-5264, owned by accused Tahir Habib Dar, son of Habib Ullah Dar, resident of Jaggerpora, Kupwara. The accused is involved in FIR No. 38/2025 under sections 8/21-29 of the NDPS Act at Police Station Handwara," police official said.

Acting under Section 68-F(1) of the NDPS Act, the vehicle has been attached by Police Post Chogul, Police Station Handwara, as part of legal action against assets acquired through drug-related offenses.

Police remains committed to taking stringent action against drug peddlers and dismantling financial networks supporting the narcotics trade.

The public is urged to support law enforcement in the fight against drugs and report any such activities to the authorities.

Bukhari extends greetings to people on Eid-ul-Fitr

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Apmi Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari has extended greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In his message, Bukhari said, "I extend my greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. Besides festivity and joyful celebrations, this auspicious occasion symbolizes our gratitude to the Almighty for His gift of Ramadan, which has given us an opportunity for repentance, self-purification, and the pursuit of piety. May this auspicious day and its celebrations bring peace, harmony, communal brotherhood, and prosperity to our region and its people."

He urged the people to pray for the well-being of Jammu and Kashmir and its people.

He said, "I request everyone to pray for peace, harmony, and prosperity in our region on this auspicious occasion. I also humbly urge everyone to share their happiness with the poor and needy and extend support to the underprivileged members of our society as we celebrate this joyous occasion."