

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !! West Asia Conflict...

to maintain adequate stocks of fertilizers will ensure timely availability and food security. Alternate sources of fertilizers were also discussed to ensure continued availability in the future.

It was also determined that adequate supply of coal stocks at all power plants will ensure no shortage of electricity in India.

Several measures were discussed to diversify sources of imports required by chemicals, pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals and other industrial sectors. Similarly new export destinations to promote Indian goods will be developed in the near future.

Several measures proposed by different ministries will be prepared and implemented in the coming days after consultation with all stakeholders.

The Prime Minister directed that a group of ministers and secretaries be created to work dedicatedly in a whole of government approach. PM also instructed for sectoral groups to work in consultation with all stakeholders.

Modi said that the conflict is an evolving situation and the entire world is affected in some form. In such a situation, all efforts must be made to safeguard the citizens from the impact of this conflict.

The Prime Minister instructed that all arms of government should work together to ensure least inconvenience to the citizens.

He also asked for proper coordination with state governments to ensure no black-marketing and hoarding of important commodities.

## US will 'obliterate'...

was noncommittal when asked about Trump's threats to strike Iran's power plants if the Strait of Hormuz isn't opened, and whether Israel would join.

"I think President Trump knows exactly what he's doing. And whatever we do we do together and as far as possible in confidence," Netanyahu Israeli prime minister said Sunday.

A warning from US President Donald Trump that the United States will "obliterate" Iran's power plants if Tehran fails to fully open the Strait of Hormuz in 48 hours underscores how the small strip of water is a vital artery of the world economy.

On a typical day, ships carrying about a fifth of the world's oil sail out of the Persian Gulf through the narrow passageway between Iran and Oman toward the Indian Ocean.

The war with Iran means it's effectively closed, hemming in more than 90 per cent of that crude and refined products, according to the International Energy Agency.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said missile attacks on Israeli cities, near Jerusalem's holy sites, and toward a UK military base in the Indian Ocean, along with the near-closure of the Strait of Hormuz, are all evidence that Iran is a threat to the world.

"Israel and the United States are working together for the entire world," Netanyahu said in the southern town of Arad, which was hit by an Iranian missile, wounding dozens of people.

"It's time to see the leaders of the rest of the countries join us," he told to foreign journalists.

Netanyahu claimed that some are "beginning to move in that direction" but more are needed.

Qatar's Interior Ministry says rescuers found the body of a seventh person who initially had been missing.

The Defence Ministry said four Qatari forces and three Turkish nationals - including a military officer and two civilians - were on board the helicopter that crashed Saturday in Qatari territorial waters.

All seven people on board have now been accounted for.

Defence Minister Boris Pistorius says joint efforts to secure trade routes through the Strait of Hormuz can come only after a ceasefire is achieved.

Pistorius urged Iran to ensure freedom and safe passage in the strait.

He made the comments Sunday during a trip to Japan for talks with his Japanese counterpart, Shinjiro Koizumi.

Dozens of people were wounded and several buildings were heavily damaged in the strike in the southern town of Arad.

Netanyahu says it was a "miracle" that no one was killed by the blast. He said that if all residents had rushed to shelters, no one would have been hurt.

Netanyahu urged all Israelis to heed warnings and rush into shelters as soon as they hear a siren.

Abbas Araghchi called on "independent nations" to pressure both the US and Israel to stop their war against Iran.

The top Iranian diplomat says any efforts to end the war should include "guarantees" that the US and Israel won't once again attack the Islamic Republic, according to the state-run news agency IRNA.

Iran needs guarantees that its "sovereignty and national security won't be violated again," according to IRNA.

Araghchi's comments came in a phone call Saturday with Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, the news agency said.

Dr. Roy Kessous, deputy director of the Soroka Medical Centre in the southern city of Beersheba, has said injuries from the two strikes late Saturday included shrapnel wounds as well as trauma.

Kessous says the hospital is trained for such events, but the scale - including entire families wounded together and in some cases left homeless - added to the pressure.

He said the hospital already is prepared for a similar emergency, telling The Associated Press: "We are ready to receive wounded from the area again right now."

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz expanded the military's list of targets in Lebanon to include all bridges over the country's Litani River, a focal point of the renewed Israel-Hezbollah conflict.

Katz on Sunday accused Lebanon's Iran-backed militant group of using the crossings over the waterway, about 30 kilometres (18.5 miles) north of Israel's border, to move fighters and weapons into southern Lebanon.

Katz also ordered the military to accelerate its destruction of Lebanese homes near Israel's northern border "to eliminate threats to Israeli communities."

After Hezbollah fired rockets into Israel earlier this month, the Israeli military launched an offensive that Lebanese authorities say have killed over 1,000 people and displaced over 1 million. Hezbollah has fired hundreds of rockets and drones into Israel.

The British government is downplaying concerns that Iranian missiles could hit Europe, but won't say how close they came to striking a UK-US military base almost 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers) from Iran.

The attempt toward the Diego Garcia base overnight Thursday to Friday suggests that Tehran has missiles that can go farther than previously acknowledged - or that it had used its space program for an improvised launch.

Officials confirmed the attempt on Saturday.

The Israel Defence Forces said it shows that Iran has missiles that could reach European capitals.

British Cabinet minister Steve Reed said one missile was intercepted and the other "fell short," without specifying.

He told the BBC the government has "no specific assessment" that Iran is seeking to target Europe, "let alone that they could if they tried."

The Lebanese militant group said it was behind a rocket salvo that struck a car and killed one person in the town of Misgav Am.

The Israeli military said a civilian was killed in what "seemed to be" a rocket attack. Israeli medics said they found the man dead in his car and released a video showing two vehicles ablaze.

Hezbollah claimed it targeted a gathering of Israeli soldiers with rockets.

It marks the first death in Israel from a Hezbollah rocket strike since Iran-backed Shiite militant group fired at Israel earlier this month in support of Iran's war with Israel and the United States.

Two Israeli soldiers have been killed in ground fighting with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon this month.

Traffic at supermarkets in Tehran has surged on the second day of Iran's new year. It comes after US President Donald Trump threatened to target more sites in Iran.

A 53-year-old grocery store staffer told The Associated Press that "demand is very high" for water - as it was in the early days of the three-week-old war. Demand for bread has also increased.

A 22-year-old delivery driver said: "Since I started work this morning, about 90 per cent of my deliveries have been water."

They spoke on condition of anonymity out of fear for their safety.

The Persian Gulf country says its air defence systems were responding to missile and drone attacks from Iran.

The Defence Ministry said two missiles and two drones were launched at the kingdom island, which hosts the US 5th Fleet.

It said a total of 145 missiles and 146 drones have now been fired at Shiite-majority Bahrain since the start of the war.

## Mughal road reopens...

Liaqat Hussain, a resident of Poonch, thanked the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and the administration for restoring connectivity. "This decision will reduce our travel time to Srinagar to nearly six hours," he said.

Another resident, Shakeel Ahmed, said that the closure had disrupted essential travel, including medical visits.

"I wanted to take my sibling to Srinagar for a medical examination, but we could not go due to the road closure. Now we will travel to Kashmir to visit the hospital," he said.

## SC directs states...

March 17. It said the data shall include jail-wise capacity of each prison, total number of prisoners, percentage of overcrowding in each jail, steps proposed to address overcrowding, details of women's jails, facilities provided to women prisoners and children accompanying them (including educational and medical facilities), sanctioned strength of prison staff, existing vacancies, steps taken to fill them, along with all ancillary aspects relating to prison administration.

The bench directed the states and UTs to furnish complete particulars indicating the sanctioned capacity of each prison and the total number of prisoners lodged as on March 1, 2026, along with jail-wise details reflecting the extent of occupancy.

The apex court said the states and UTs would file comprehensive affidavits, duly sworn by the home secretary, providing the requisite details by May 18.

It said the top court registry would forward copies of the affidavits received from the states and UTs to the amicus, who would prepare a comprehensive note detailing the statistics and information provided by them.

It posted the matter for hearing on May 26.

## Jammu Rly Div...

division to prioritise passenger safety, comfort, and orderly travel during the ongoing festival season.

During the campaign, passengers were also informed about the utility and benefits of the RailOne mobile application for ticketing and travel services.

Singhal warned that strict penal action under relevant provisions of the Railways Act would be taken against anyone found travelling without a valid ticket and urged passengers to maintain decorum and travel only with proper authorisation.

The Jammu Division said that intensified checking will continue at major stations and aboard trains throughout the festival period.

## Pilgrimage to Mata...

On Saturday, more than 39,000 pilgrims visited the holy town of Katra and paid obeisance at the Mata Vaishno Devi temple, officials said.

Officials said that more than 5,000 more pilgrims were on their way to the cave shrine after registration. There was a huge rush of pilgrims at the registration centre.

Hundreds of devotees chanting 'Jai Mata Di' were trekking along the serpentine pathway to the Mata Vaishno Devi temple atop Trikuta hills on the third day of Navratri to pay obeisance and seek the deity's blessings.

Decorated with a variety of fresh flowers filling the air with fragrance and illuminated with multi-coloured lights to provide a spectacular view to devotees, the cave shrine is witnessing a huge rush of pilgrims.

Authorities have put in place multi-tier security arrangements at the Katra base camp and en route to the shrine to ensure a safe and secure yatra.

The sacred Shat Chandni Maha Yagya commenced at the revered Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine on Thursday, heralding the auspicious beginning of Chaitra Navratri 2026.

## Himachal Police arrests...

A police spokesperson said that during the investigation of the case, Shubhkanar of Jawali in Kangra was identified as the contraband supplier, and was subsequently arrested from Chandigarh on November 1, 2025.

"Further investigation revealed that the recovered consignment of narcotics was to be received by VK, who was nabbed by the Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) Nurpur from his residence today," the spokesperson said.

With this operation, the state's police have dealt a major blow to an interstate drug trafficking network linked to Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir, the official added.

## Amit Shah lauds...

and its people without taking a holiday for more than 24 years is the manifestation of his sheer commitment. This explains the unprecedented affection he received from people, three times as the Gujarat CM and three times as India's PM. People's trust, affection and support for him have only grown with every passing day," Shah said.

Terming the achievement a "milestone rooted in service, hard work and unwavering commitment", Shah said in the post. "A rare legacy built on unprecedented trust and unparalleled Seva. #PradhanSevakModi."

Modi took the oath as the Gujarat chief minister on October 7, 2001.

He continued in the post till May 26, 2014, when he took oath as the prime minister after leading the BJP to a spectacular victory with 282 seats in the general elections, making it the first non-Congress party to secure a clear majority, decimating the grand old party to a mere 44 seats.

## Film about displaced...

Speaking to reporters, Labroo appreciated the efforts of the young filmmakers and welcomed the film's screening in the city.

"We feel very fortunate that two young directors from Kashmir, Siddharth and Ankit, have made a film based in Srinagar. The movie is called Batt Koch. The story is set in Srinagar and tells the emotional tale of a family," he said.

"It is a very happy moment for all of us that the film was made in Srinagar, is based in Srinagar, and that we are able to screen it here in Srinagar with a large audience," he added.

Film director Koul said the story is about the longing of the Kashmiri Pandit family and their deep emotional bond with their motherland.

"They yearn to return to Kashmir. The narrative revolves around whether or not they are able to return, and if they do, what experiences await them upon their arrival," he said.

He said it is the earnest hope and collective desire of the entire Kashmiri Pandit community to return to their motherland.

Koul said the film also carries a message of brotherhood.

"We want people to stay connected with their motherland. We would like to promote more Kashmiri cinema and Kashmiri talent globally," he said.

Film director Wali said that when a person is compelled to leave their home, the memories associated with it remain with them forever.

"Although we were born in Jammu, we retain an intrinsic connection with Kashmir. We may have only heard stories about it, but that emotional bond remains deeply ingrained within us," he said.

The directors said most of the actors are Kashmiri Pandits, including Bollywood actor M K Raina of "Taare Zameen Par" fame.

## Jammu University panel...

(NEP)-2020 framework, the handout reads.

Meanwhile, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Jammu Kashmir welcomed the decision of the Department of Political Science, University of Jammu, recommending the removal of topics related to Muhammad Ali Jinnah from the postgraduate syllabus.

ABVP has consistently raised concerns over the inclusion of such content, emphasizing that curriculum design must reflect national values, historical clarity, and the sentiments of students.

This decision is a positive and responsible step towards aligning academic content with these principles.

ABVP Jammu Kashmir State Secretary Sannak Shrivats stated, "We welcome this decision as a victory for the student voice and national consciousness. The concerns raised by students have been rightfully acknowledged. Education should promote a balanced and nation-centric perspective, and such corrective steps are essential to maintain academic integrity. ABVP will continue to work actively to ensure that the education system reflects the ideals and aspirations of our nation."

ABVP expressed hope that the forthcoming Board of Studies meeting will formally approve this recommendation and ensure its complete implementation. The organization reiterates its commitment to safeguarding student interests and promoting an education system rooted in national values.

## 'Viksit Bharat' vision...

citizens to adopt balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, mental well-being and a lifestyle aligned with nature.

Speaking at the 81st Foundation Day celebrations of the Nisargopachar Ashram, conceptualised by Mahatma Gandhi, at Uruli Kanchan here, Radhakrishnan asserted health is not merely the absence of disease, but a state of complete physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

"The vision of Viksit Bharat must also encompass Swasth Bharat, with institutions like Nisargopachar Ashram playing a vital role in this endeavour. People must adopt balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, mental well-being, and a lifestyle aligned with nature," the VP said.

Both Mahatma Gandhi, who conceptualised the Ashram, and the farmer who

donated land for this noble cause deserve the nation's gratitude, he added.

The Nisargopachar Ashram is not merely an institution, but a movement, a philosophy, and a way of life inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's vision of simple, disciplined living in harmony with nature, Radhakrishnan said.

"Gandhiji believed nature to be the greatest healer and emphasised that true health lies in simplicity, discipline, and living in harmony with nature," the VP told the gathering.

On the occasion, the Vice President also released the book 'Secrets of Our Happiness' authored by Dr Narayan Hegde, managing trustee of the Ashram.

Maharashtra Governor Jishnu Dev Varma and Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar were present at the event.

## CS reviews developmental needs in border villages of Nyoma Sub-Division

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: On the second day of his tour to Nyoma Sub-Division, the Chief Secretary of UT Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, accompanied by Administrative Secretary, School Education, Bhanu Prabha, commenced his visit from Tsaga village, where he interacted with nomad families and Pashmina growers.

During the visit, he witnessed a demonstration of Pashmina combing and listened to the issues and concerns raised by the public, which included the development of agricultural and pasture land, improvement of Loma-Tsaga road connectivity, upgradation of the Primary Health Centre (PHC), and construction of a residential hostel.

He later visited Demchok, the last village of India along the Indo-China border, where he held discussions with Army officials regarding strengthening infrastructure, employment opportunities, education, healthcare, and overall development to make the area more vibrant.

The Chief Secretary also addressed a public gathering at the Community Hall, Demchok, where villagers raised various developmental issues, including the need for an ambulance service, the availability of a medical doctor, and other essential facilities. He gave a patient hearing to all the concerns and assured that the genuine demands would be taken up on priority.

He also visited the Kailash Observatory Post (OP) at Demchok to review the situation. En route, Kundra interacted with members of the Tibetan refugee community at Dungi and Koyul villages and reviewed their developmental concerns. On the way back, residents of Hanle village submitted a memorandum highlighting their issues.

The two-day tour concluded with a comprehensive assessment of developmental needs across the Nyoma Sub-Division, with assurance from the administration that necessary action would be taken at the earliest.

## Delegation meets LG for construction of Double-Lane Udhampur-Panchari-Sawalakote Road; urges inclusion under PM Gati Shakti

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: A high-level delegation from Tehsil Panchari, led by former DDC



Member Jasvir Singh, called on the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha, at Lok Bhavan on Saturday. The primary objective of the meeting was to advocate for the urgent construction and widening of the Udhampur-Panchari-Lander-Galiote-Sawalakote road into a doublelane road.

The delegation emphasized that this 65-70 km stretch is the shortest and most strategically vital route connecting National Highway-44 to the 1856 MW Sawalakote Hydropower Project site. Highlighting a key geographic fact, Jasvir Singh stated that a major portion of this megaproject on the Chenab River falls within the Udhampur district, making this road corridor the natural lifeline for its development.

While interacting with media, He informed the Lieutenant Governor that this demand aligns perfectly with the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, which focuses on integrated infrastructure for projects of national importance. Addressing technical details, Singh noted that while a 2017-18 DPR was prepared for Rs 521.22 crore (including a Rs 237.38 crore tunnel), revisiting the plan through modern value engineering could make the double-lane project faster and more cost-effective-potentially even without the tunnel-while meeting the logistical needs of the ₹31,380 crore project. In addition to the road, the delegation sought the LG's intervention to start classes at Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) Panchari this academic session, noting that certain formalities remain pending at the Civil Secretariat. As a gesture of cultural heritage, they presented the LG with a sacred portrait of Baba Samtal Dev Sthan, Galiote Badhota. The delegation included former Sarpanch Surjeet Singh, Prabhat Singh, Rajesh Kumar (President, Vyapar Mandal Panchari), Rajinder Kumar, Arjun Singh, Balbir Singh, Ganesh Dutt, and Shambhu Nath.

The Lieutenant Governor assured the delegation that necessary steps would be taken to address these critical concerns.

## 'Employees National Federation' representatives meet Dr Jitendra, laud DoPT for ordering mass promotions

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Emphasising the need for continuous engagement and timely resolution of service-related matters, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today said that structured dialogue with employee representatives is essential to ensure administrative efficiency and career progression across departments. Dr. Jitendra Singh was chairing a meeting with delegations from employee bodies, including the "Government Employees National Confederation" and "Central Secretariat Group-C Employees' Association", including representatives from Survey of India, ISRO, India Post and other associated organisations, where various issues related to cadre restructuring, promotions and service conditions were discussed. Representatives of employee organisations expressed appreciation for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, under whose leadership recent initiatives in cadre management and promotion processes.

They noted that with the proactive approach of DoPT (Department of Personnel & Training), over 10,000 mass promotions have been granted in recent years, significantly benefiting employees and helping address stagnation in several services. They conveyed their thanks to Minister Dr Jitendra Singh for the guidance and support provided in advancing these reforms and acknowledged that the measures have had a positive impact on career progression across departments.

The delegations also placed before the Minister certain pending issues related to cadre restructuring, pay parity, allowances and promotional avenues, particularly in organisations such as Survey of India and ISRO. The representatives expressed confidence that, under the continued guidance of the Government, these issues would be addressed through a structured and consultative approach.

The delegation also appreciated the DoPT for the speed of promotions and noted that a large number of employees had benefited in a relatively short period. They observed that the recent initiatives had helped address long-standing stagnation issues and proved to be highly motivating, though some concerns related to implementation timelines and uniformity across departments were also raised.

Responding to the issues raised, Dr. Jitendra Singh assured the delegations that their concerns would be examined in consultation with the concerned departments. He emphasised the need for structured follow-up, coordination with administrative authorities and timely resolution of service-related matters.

The meeting concluded with a constructive exchange of views and a shared understanding to continue dialogue for addressing employee concerns and strengthening administrative efficiency across departments.