Air surcharge 50 paisa for Leh

In 2012 Centre decided to list long pending Jammu-Poonch Rail Link as National Project entitled for priority with special financial provisions

Regd. No. L-29/JK-346/2025-27

## Dr Jitendra hails India-Chile Antarctic agreement, its 'polar' impact

Website: www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

## Four arrested for IPL betting; Rs 2 lakh cash, gadgets seized

# **NAVRATRA**

## Maa Skandmata

Fifth incarnation of Goddess Durga is called 'Maa Skandmata', Mother of Lord Skand (also known as Kartikeva who headed 'Devtas' in fight agains 'Danavas'. On this Navratra heart comes in 'Vishudh Chakra'.

Maa Skandmata has four arms with Bhagwan Skand in her lap, holding him with one hand and othe in the blessing mode. Skandmata fulfills all the desires and guides door of heaven to worshipper. Mantra to be recited nine times on

"Om Aing Hareeng Kleeng Chaang Bhagwati Skand Matai Lakshmi Roopini Dhan Vridhim Kuru Kuru Swaha'

ॐ ऐं ह्वीं क्लीं चां भगवती स्कंदमातायै लक्ष्मी रूपिणी धन वृद्धिं कुरु कुरु स्वाहा

# LS set to take up Waqf bill for consideration today

#### STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Lok Sabha will take up the contentious Waqf (Amendment) Bill for discussion and passage on Wednesday, setting the stage for a showdown between a government determined to push it through and an opposition united in condemning the proposed law as unconstitutional.

Minorities Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju told reporters that the Lok Sabha's business advisory committee (BAC), which includes leaders from all major parties, chaired by Speaker Om Birla agreed on an eight-hour debate, which could be extended after taking the sense of the House.

The early signs of a likely raucous debate between the treasury and opposition benches over the bill were visible during the meeting as the Congress and several other opposition INDIA bloc meeting, accusing the government of stifling their

However, the political heat and length of the debate are unlikely to have any bearing on the final outcome as the numbers heavily favour the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the Lok Sabha.

Congress' deputy leader in the Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi alleged that their voices were being ignored and said the opposition parties wanted more time to debate and the House to take up more issues, including the situation in Manipur and the row over electors' photo identity

Rijiju said several parties wanted four to six hours of debate, while those from the opposition demanded 12 hours. He noted that the allotted period of eight hours can be extended if the House feels so on Wednesday.

Asaduddin Owaisi, a sharp critic of the bill, told reporters that he will put forth his view during the debate to show how "unconstitutional" it is. This bill is aimed at curbing the religious freedom of Muslims, he alleged, adding that people will teach BJP's allies like TDP and JD(U) a lesson.

The NDA has 293 MPs in the House with a current strength of 542, and the BJP has often been successful in pulling the support of independent members and

Some major BJP allies like the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Janata Dal (United) and Chirag Paswan-led LJP (Ramvilas) had initially expressed reservations over some aspects of the bill but have come around to offering their support after the joint committee of parliament adopted a few of their

#### Amit Shah's J&K visit not linked to anti-terror ops in Kathua: Omar ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said Union Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Jammu and Kashmir was not linked to the anti-militancy operation in Kathua.

programme was finalised before the operation, he added.

"Do not link the Union minister's visit to the Kathua (operation). His programme was finalised before the Kathua encounter. It is a coincidence that his visit comes around the time of the Kathua operation," the chief minister told reporters after launching a free bus service for women at SKICC.

Shah may visit Jammu and Kashmir on April 7-8 to review the security situation and counter-insurgency operations in the Union Territory, sources had said on Monday.

The home minister's visit does not have a security agenda only, Abdullah said. "While the security

# GoC meets LG, discusses security situation in J&K

Vol. 30 Issue 90 • Jammu • Wednesday • April 2, 2025 • Pages 12 • ₹ 5.00

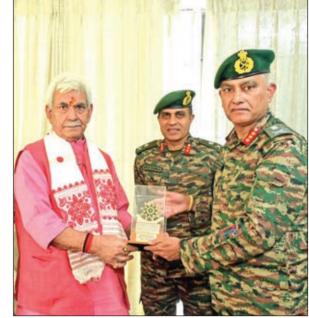
JAMMU: General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the  $\operatorname{Star}$ Rising Lieutenant General Rajan Sharawat, called on Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday and discussed the prevailing security scenario.

The Rising Star Corps oversees the operational areas of Kathua, Samba and parts of Jammu districts, including the International Border belts in J-K.

During the meeting, the Lieutenant General also discussed various important aspects of security with the Lieutenant Governor, the officials said.

Lt Gen Sharawat was accompanied by the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Tiger Division, Major General Mukesh Bhanwala.

The meeting holds significant importance in light of the ongoing 10-day opera-



GOC Rising Star Corps, Lieutenant General Rajan Sharawar calling on LG Manoj Sinha in Jammu on Tuesday.

tion in Kathua district, during which two terrorists were killed, four police per-

three others, including a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), sustained

#### **Court frames corruption charges** Reshuffle in J&K administration; NGT constitutes 4-member panel to probe unscientific against former VC, XEn JDA, others dredging in Jammu, Kathua and Samba

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Special Judge Anticorruption Jammu Haq Vinod charges against Sharma, the then Vice-Chairman (VC) Jammu Development (JDA),Ashok Kumar Gandotra Executive Engineer JDA and Syed Sajad Ahmed Qalander Prop M/s Ess Que Furniture

Brief facts of the case as per the Challan are that a verification was conducted into the allegation that Vinod Sharma, the then VC, JDA. Jammu without floating any

#### Srinagar-Leh NH reopens after shortest-ever winter time closure of 33 days STATE TIMES NEWS

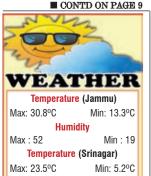
SRINAGAR: The strategic Srinagar-Leh National Highway was reopened for traffic on Tuesday after remaining closed for just over a month -- a record minimum duration -- due to heavy snow accumulation on the Zojila Pass stretch, officials said.

This was the shortest winter closure of the Zojila Pass. The pass was thrown open by Director General Border Roads Lt Gen Raghu Srinivasan.

"Eid was celebrated vesterday (Monday) but today is an Eid for us as this road, which is vital for the people and important strategically for the defence forces, was officially reopened," Lt Gen Srinivasan told reporters near the Zojila Pass.

He complimented the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) personnel who braved adverse weather conditions in extremely difficult and risky terrain to work on the road's reopening. "The BRO personnel worked day

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Sunset: 18:50 Hours

Sunrise: 06:19 Hours

Max: 49

or works of JDA office Complex (Ground floor) Vikas Bhawan Jammu authorized his blue eyed agency namely M/S Ess Que furniture works for execution of the work worth crores etc. Verification revealed that

Vinod Sharma during his posting as Vice chairman JDA, granted, approval for installation of 10 Nos. 2 ton ACs and some allied Certified electric works at ground floor of allotment section Vikas Bhawan, Rail Head Complex Jammu for which tenders were floated by Engineer JDA-I, on receipt of communication

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#### **STATE TIMES NEWS** NEW DELHI: The National

Green Tribunal (NGT) has constituted a four member joint panel to ascertain allegations regarding unregulated and unscientific dredging in the riverbeds of Jammu, Kathua, and Samba districts in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in vioof environmental norms.

The tribunal was hearing Original Application No. 114/2025, filed by Sushil Kumar, who raised concerns about the environmental impact of large-scale dredg-

The case was presided over Justice Prakash Shrivastava and Dr. A. Senthil Vel at the NGT Principal Bench in New Delhi.

Taking into account the serious environmental concerns, the NGT has ordered the formation of a Joint Committee to investigate the matter. The committee comprises Member Secretaries of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), State Pollution Control Board (SPCB), Regional Office, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Chandigarh,

and District Magistrate, Jammu (who will act as the nodal agency) The committee has been

instructed to conduct a site inspection to verify the allegations and assess the environmental impact of the dredging activities. It has been given eight weeks to submit an Action Taken Report (ATR) to the tribu-

The NGT has scheduled the next hearing for July 11, 2025, by which time all respondents must submit their replies through affi-

The tribunal has also

directed that any submissions must be accompanied by the virtual presence of the concerned respondents before the court.

This case has highlighted significant environmental and regulatory concerns, particularly regarding the exploitation of natural resources without proper clearances.

The findings of the Joint Committee will be crucial in determining the extent of violations and the potential legal consequences for those responsible. The applicant was represented

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## 48 JKAS officers transferred been transferred and posted

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS JAMMU: The government

on Tuesday transferred 48 JKAS officers. According to the order issued by M. Raju, Commissioner/Secretary, General Administration Department Mohammad Ashraf Sheikh, JKAS, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, has been transferred and posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Awantipora, vice Nazir Ahmad Mir, who shall report to the GAD, for further posting; Riyaz Ahmad Shah, JKAS, Joint Director (Administration) in the Directorate of Rural

Development, Kashmir, has

as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, vice Mohammad Rouf Rehman, JKAS, who shall report to the GAD, for further posting; Anil Kumar Thakur, JKAS, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Basholi, has been transferred and posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Doda, vice Sudershan Kumar, JKAS, who shall report to the GAD, for further posting; Sundeep Singh Bali, JKAS, programme Offcer, ICDS Project, Anantnag, has been transferred and posted

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# CM flags off free bus service for women across J&K

## Dy CM launches service in Jammu

## "Punjab faces threat from foreign forces" Kejriwal accommodating tainted **AAP** leaders in Punjab: Chugh

## **STATE TIMES NEWS**

PATIALA: BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Tuesday strongly condemned foreign based anti-national forces for trying to disrupt social harmony and peace in Punjab and expressed his serious concern at the Bhagwant Mann's government's failure to contain such elements.

Addressing media persons after paying obeisance at the Mata Kali temple, Chugh said the culture and history of Punjab is of social harmony and mutual amicability.



BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh briefing media at Patiala on Tuesday.

sistent attempts by foreign forces to disturb the communal harmony and create a social divide", Chugh said,

asking the AAP government to keep a close watch on such

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SRINAGAR: In a landmark move towards gender-inclusive mobility, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday flagged off the Zero-Ticket Travel Initiative (free bus service) for women of Jammu and Kashmir from Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Center (SKICC).

**STATE TIMES NEWS** 

The initiative, fulfilling a key budget announcement, ensures free travel for women in all Smart City e-buses and J&K Road Transport Corporation (JKRTC) buses across the Union Territory. Before the official flag-off,



across J&K on Tuesday.

the Chief Minister also inaugurated Zero-Ticket Travel for schoolgirls, underscoring the government's commit-

transportation for young students

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Abdullah highlighted that

this initiative is more than just a welfare measure-it is a bold step towards women's empowerment and inclusive development.

"Starting today, women across Jammu and Kashmir will travel free of cost in all Smart City and SRTC buses. This isn't just about affordability; it's about accessibility, safety, and creating an environment where women feel empowered to travel freely. Our vision is to make J&K a model of inclusive growth where no woman is held back due to mobility constraints," he said.

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# DGP, IGP visit Kathua; review combing operation

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat and Inspector General of Police (IGP) Bhim Sen Tuti on Tuesday visited Kathua district and reviewed the ongoing combing operation to track down three terrorists who escaped after a brief encounter with security forces last night, officials said.

DGP Prabhat, along with IGP Tuti and Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Shiv Kumar Sharma, arrived at the Panjtirthi site in Kathua where the operation is underway, they said.

He took a walk through the riverine and mountainous belt to back his men engaged in one of longest drawn oper-

The operation, led by the



Special Operations Group (SOG), Army, and CRPF, has entered its tenth day. Last Thursday, two terrorists were killed, and four police personnel lost their lives in the encounter in the Saniyal area of the district.

Security forces are continuing their search to neutralize any remaining threats.

The officials said the three terrorists are believed to be

from a group that had its

first face-off with security

forces in the Nursery area near the International Border on March 23. All of the terrorists had managed Meanwhile, a seek and destroy operation to track

believed to be hiding in a

forested area in Panjthirthi-

Barota in Kathua following

three terrorists,

down

## Search ops underway in Poonch

MENDHAR/JAMMU: Security forces on Tuesday aunched search operations in five areas of Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said.

aimed at maintaining high vigilance in the border district, they said. The search operations were conducted by joint teams of the Special Operations Group (SoG) of the police and units of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The areas where these operations were conducted include

The operations are part of enhanced security measures

ninterland and border areas such as Behramgalla-Chatran Sailan, Kala Jhoola, and Nakka Nar forest in Gursai Mastandara Jabri and Chajala-Seagi areas of Mankote. Meanwhile, security forces resorted to brief firing following

mine blast along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch dis-The mine blast occurred under suspicious circumstances in forward area of the Krishna Gati sector early this morning, they said. This prompted the troops deployed along the LoC to open retaliatory fire briefly. There were no injuries or casu-

an encounter last night, "Search and destroy resumed this morning with multiple agencies engaged in

alties reported in the incident. However, locals claimed there

was firing from the Pakistani side also.

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## LG pays obeisance at Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

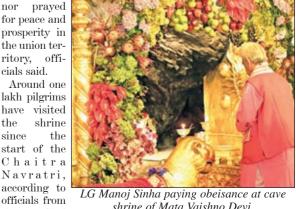
## **STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday paid obeisance at the cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi.

prosperity in the union territory, officials said. Around one shrine

nor praved

lakh pilgrims have visited the since start of the Chaitra Navratri according to officials from



shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi

Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. In view of the heavy rush of pilgrims, tight security arrangements, including AI-enabled CCTV cameras and drones, have been deployed at the base camp of the bhawan and along the route to avert any untoward incidents