

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Police officer martyred...

Police Pariwar pays rich tributes to the martyr and will stand by his family & provide all possible help and assistance to the bereaved family. Meanwhile, Security forces detected and defused a suspected Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in Kupwara district, officials said. They detected the suspected IED on the Handwara-Baramulla Road near Ganapora in Langate area of the north Kashmir district, the officials said. They said a bomb disposal squad was called in to the spot which destroyed the explosive device without causing any of loss or damage.

Farooq withdraws his...

of opposition parties in Mumbai to discuss their joint candidate for the presidential elections. In a statement, Abdullah, who heads the National Conference and is at present a Lok Sabha member; however, thanked the opposition leaders for proposing his name. He said he was honoured that his name was proposed by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to run for the office of the President of India. "Subsequent to Mamata didi proposing my name, I have received a number of calls from opposition leaders offering their support for my candidature," Abdullah said in the statement, adding he had discussions with senior colleagues of his party and family about this "unexpected" development. "I am deeply touched by the support that I've received and honoured to have been considered for the highest office in the country. I believe that Jammu and Kashmir is passing through a critical juncture and my efforts are required to help navigate these uncertain times," he said.

The former Union minister said he believed he has a "lot more active politics ahead of me and look forward to making a positive contribution in the service of JK and the country". "Therefore, I would like to respectfully withdraw my name from consideration and I look forward to supporting the joint opposition consensus candidate," the NC statement said, conveying his gratitude to Banerjee and all the senior leaders who offered their support. Abdullah's name was proposed by Banerjee during a meeting earlier this week of 17 opposition parties, including the Congress, DMK, NCP and the Samajwadi Party. Banerjee had suggested the names of Abdullah and former West Bengal governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi after Pawar had declined the offer. The process to elect a new president began on June 15. The last date of filing of nominations is June 29. The polls, if necessary, will be held on July 18.

All 890 central...

said that stories of many forgotten freedom fighters and incidents related to the struggle for India's independence are being brought forth during the ongoing 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'. Praising the book, the prime minister said it introduces readers to various aspects of the Constitution. He expressed confidence that it will present the Constitution in a broader way and give a new dimension to the mindset of the country's youth studying India's independence struggle. India's Constitution is not merely a book but is an idea and commitment, and also a tribute to the nation's confidence in its independence, he said. Modi noted duties and rights are related, and an emphasis on duties "strengthens our rights as well".

Observing that the book has been released on a day when the then President Rajendra Prasad had given his nod to the first amendment made to the Constitution, he said the development only showed the Constitution's dynamism. The Book was released in presence of Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Education Minister and Hariwansh, Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha. The Lt Governor congratulated Ram Bahadur Rai, who is also the President of Indra Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) Trust, for bringing to light many unknown and interesting facts about the making of our Constitution. "Our Constitution is the holiest of holy books and reflects the aspirations of the founding fathers", said the Lt Governor. This book will be a beacon of light for the current and young generation and inspire them to contribute towards building a strong and vibrant India, the Lt Governor added. Expressing his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for celebrating 26th November as Constitution Day, the Lt Governor observed that the observance of the day is inspiring today's generation to follow the ideas of national interests enshrined in the Constitution.

We are marching ahead as a strong and Aatm-Nirbhar nation and scripting a new growth story, which is inclusive. Providing equal opportunity to all is the fitting tribute to the framers of the constitution, said the Lt Governor. Eminent parliamentarians, authors, constitutional experts, Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor, J&K; Achyutamand Mishra, veteran Journalist, besides prominent personalities from all walks of life were present on the occasion at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi.

Modi meets his...

reached Hiraba's residence at Raysan on the outskirts of Gandhinagar around 6:30 in the morning, and spent around half an hour with her. Hiraba Modi lives with Pankaj Modi, the prime minister's younger brother. The PM offered her sweets, washed her feet and took her blessings. He also gifted her a shawl and chatted with her while sitting at her feet, video footage of the meeting, released by officials here, showed.

"Maa this isn't a mere word but it captures a range of emotions. Today, 18th June is the day my Mother Heeraba enters her 100th year. On this special day, I have penned a few thoughts expressing joy and gratitude," Modi tweeted. In the blogpost, Modi called her a "symbol of resilience," someone who finds happiness in others' joys. My mother is as simple as she is extraordinary. Just like all mothers, he said. He recalled how his father brought his friend's son Abbas to their house after Abbas's father died. He stayed with us and completed his studies. Mother was as affectionate and caring towards Abbas just like she did for all of us siblings. Every year on Eid, she used to prepare his favourite dishes," he said. Modi also noted that his mother has voted in every election, from Panchayat to Parliament, and remains abreast with current developments. She has always led "an extremely simple" lifestyle and has a sharp memory despite her age, he added.

Later in the day, Hiraba Modi visited the Lord Jagannath temple in the city in a wheelchair, accompanied by her family members. To mark the occasion, a 'bhandar' (community meal) was also organised at the Jagannath temple. Hatkeshwar Temple in Modi's hometown Vadrnagar has also organised various programmes on this occasion.

Army Commander reviews...

deployed for counter terrorism operations and obtained feedback on operations, training, weapons, equipment and administrative issues, the spokesman said. He said Lt Gen Dwivedi commended all ranks for their unwavering dedication to duty, selfless devotion and high standards of professionalism. Meanwhile, with Amarnath yatra less than a fortnight away, authorities this afternoon checked the security and other arrangements along the 270-km Jammu-Srinagar national highway for the pilgrims, officials said. Jammu Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar and Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh led a convoy of 20 security vehicles this morning from Jammu to Banihal -- the gateway to Kashmir -- as part of what officials described as a "trial run" for the yatra's security. The officials said all arrangements including security made by the Jammu, Udhampur and Ramban districts for the pilgrimage were checked personally by the two senior civil and police officers heading Jammu division. The 43-day-long yatra to the cave shrine of Amarnath, at an altitude of 3,880



PM Narendra Modi meeting his mother Heeraba Modi on her 100th birthday on Saturday.

meters, is scheduled to start on June 30 from the twin routes - the traditional 48-km Nunwan in south Kashmir's Pahalgam and the shorter 14-km Baltal in central Kashmir's Ganderbal.

The first batch of the pilgrims will leave for the yatra a day ahead from Bhagwati Nagar base camp Jammu and pass through Jammu-Srinagar national highway before reaching their respective base camps in Pahalgam and Baltal.

The officials said a contingency plan has already been chalked out to ensure accommodation of pilgrims in transit camps in case of inclement weather forces closure of the highway besides the measures for early opening of the highway by clearing landslide debris.

Bribery Case: Court...

who demanded an amount of Rs 10,000 as bribe for issuance of mulba clearance certificate of the works done by him. She also asked the complainant to contact her husband for payment of bribe money. Upon receiving the complaint, FIR 10/2022 P/S ACB-J U/s 7 of Prevention of Corruption Act 1988 and 120-B IPC was registered at Police Station ACB-Jammu and a trap team was constituted. The trap team caught Sham Lal Red handed while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 10,000 on behalf of his wife Jyoti Devi from the complainant. Both the accused persons were taken into custody on the spot. Searches at the residential house of the accused persons were also conducted.

BJP expels Corporator...

Lal has been caught accepting a bribe on her behalf. The ACB trapped and arrested Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) Corporator Jyoti Devi and her husband Sham Lal on Friday following a complaint by a contractor that she demanded a bribe of Rs 10,000 for issuance of Mulba' (debris) clearance certificate to release his payment for the construction work undertaken by him. Bhartiya Janata Party, as a principled party, has zero tolerance for corruption in public life and believes in maintaining purity in conduct by its leaders and even their families in public functioning and also in private life, said BJP spokesperson. Report was called from Disciplinary Committee of the party who after looking to fact that her husband having been caught red handed by ACB while taking bribe, recommended strong and quick action against Corporator to instill confidence among masses and workers in the party. Party is led by personal example by Prime Minister Narendra Modi of maintaining highest standards and dedication with honesty and there can be no compromise on the fight against corruption. Bhartiya Janata Party is not like other parties who shields or protects corrupt politicians. While accepting the report of Disciplinary Committee Party President Ravinder Raina took decision to expel Jyoti Devi from Primary Membership of the party.

Fresh landslide blocks...

highway in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir, leaving hundreds of vehicles stranded, officials said. The landslide struck the 270-km highway, the only all weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, around 1.30 pm at Samroli, forcing suspension of the traffic from both sides, the officials said. They said the concerned road clearance agencies have pressed its men and machines and efforts are on to restore the traffic at the earliest despite continuous rains. The officials said at least two private cars suffered damages after being hit by rolling stones from a hillock overlooking the highway near Panthiyal in Ramban district. However, the passengers travelling in both the vehicles escaped unhurt, they said. The highway, which had remained closed for nearly 10 hours the previous day following a landslide near Banihal, was opened for one-way traffic Friday night, the officials said, adding the light motor vehicles were allowed from both sides this morning. Intermittent rainfall continued in most parts of Jammu and Kashmir over the past two days, providing much needed relief to the people from the scorching heat especially in the plains of Jammu region. Reports from Rajouri said several roads were submerged due to sudden rise in the flow of water in rivers and streams, the officials said.

Amarnath cave experiences...

much needed relief to the people, especially in the plains of Jammu region, from the scorching heat. The officials said the holy Amarnath cave in south Kashmir Himalayas recorded light snowfall during the day but there was no disruption in ongoing works being undertaken along the route ahead of the commencement of the annual 43-day yatra on June 30. The officials said snowfall was also received at upper reaches of north and south Kashmir besides parts of Jammu region including Sarkantha top in Gool and Aram Nakh and Agreez Thum mountain peaks in Banihal area of Ramban district. Batote in Ramban district received the highest of 37.4 mm of rainfall between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm followed by Gulmarg hill resort in north Kashmir (35.2 mm), base camp Katra in Reasi district (30.8), Jammu city (21.2 mm) and Srinagar (15.5 mm), an official of the MeT department said. He said Jammu recorded a high of 31.3 degrees Celsius (7.1 degrees below normal during this part of the season), while the maximum temperature in Srinagar was recorded at 19.3 degrees Celsius, which is 9.1 notches below normal. Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi shrine, recorded a maximum of 24.4 degrees Celsius, 10.6 notches below season's average. The weatherman has forecast fairly widespread light to moderate rain and thunderstorms during the next two days.

Centre announces incentives...

grievances with an open mind and make changes, if required. Singh also met Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chandhari, Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar and Vice Chief of Army Staff Gen B S Raju and is learnt to have discussed a quick rollout of the Agnipath scheme and ways to pacify the agitators. Mobs set ablaze Taregana railway station in Bihar during a bandh on Saturday and vandalised Ludhiana railway station in Punjab, as protesters continued to target railway properties on the fourth day of the stir and blocked roads and rail tracks in several states including West Bengal, Haryana, Rajasthan, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh. Railways cancelled 369 trains on Saturday and passengers faced a harrowing time. Over 200 trains were cancelled a day earlier after the railways faced the brunt of the protests. The agitation also spread to the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala, with aspirants doing push-ups on roads at some places to register their protest. Congress president Sonia Gandhi termed the scheme as "directionless" and said her party will work for its withdrawal while appealing to the youths to adopt peaceful and non-violent means to fight for their demands. Party leader Rahul Gandhi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will have to withdraw Agnipath like the farm laws.

"He will have to accept the demand of the youth of the country by becoming 'maafiveer' and take back the 'Agnipath' scheme," the former Congress chief said. As army job aspirants staged a protest in Chennai, DMK leader and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin asked the Centre to rethink the scheme. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann demanded a rollback and said those who cleared physical tests in the last two years must get a chance to appear in written exams for joining the Army. "The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader claimed that the Agnipath scheme will "dilute" the fighting ability of soldiers and render the youth jobless. With the protesting youths alleging that they will be left in a lurch with no retirement benefits after the end of the four-year contract under the scheme, the ministries of home affairs and defence announced concessions and incentives that will assist retirees in their further employment. The central government indicated that other departments too were working in this direction after several BJP-ruled states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Assam announced various measures to encourage the youths to apply under the Agnipath scheme and assured them reservation. Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said some political parties, which keep looking for every opportunity under an agenda to block any change taking place, have "provoked" the youths. He said the government's approach on the issue is that it is ready to consider any changes in the interest of the youth and the country.

"I would like to appeal to the country's youth that the path of violence would not take you anywhere. ... If you have any better suggestions, you can place your views.... Government is always ready to consider with an open mind," he said and suggested the protesting youths come for talks with the central government. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said it has decided to reserve 10 per cent vacancies for recruitment in CAPFs and Assam Rifles for Agniveers. "The MHA also decides to give 3 years age relaxation beyond the prescribed upper age limit to Agniveers for recruitment in CAPFs & Assam Rifles," the ministry tweeted further, for the first batch of Agniveer, the age relaxation will be for five years beyond the prescribed upper age limit, it said. At present, jawans between the age of 18-23 years are recruited into the paramil-

itary forces.

A 10 per cent reservation will be implemented in the Indian Coast Guard and defence civilian posts, and all the 16 Defence Public Sector Undertakings, according to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's office.

It said this reservation would be in addition to the existing quota for ex-servicemen.

"Defence Public Sector Undertakings will be advised to make similar amendments to their respective recruitment rules. Necessary age relaxation provision will also be made," it said.

The defence minister said the scheme was announced after around two years of deliberations including with the ex-servicemen community and a decision was taken based on a consensus.

"It is bringing revolutionary changes in the recruitment process in the armed forces. Some people are spreading misunderstanding about it. Maybe, there could be some confusion among the people as it is a new scheme," Singh said speaking at the conclave organised by a media group.

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the PSUs under his housing and petroleum ministries are working on hiring 'Agniveers' and also slammed the Opposition for spreading "misinformation".

Despite the Centre's steps to assuage concerns, there was no let-up in the protests. In Patna and its outskirts, bandh supporters were restrained by Bihar police from forcing shops to down their shutters, but they hurled stones and set fire to Taregana railway station in Masaurhi sub-division and a jeep belonging to the railway police.

There was also cross-firing and journalists covering the clash were assaulted. In the Danapur sub-division, bandh supporters vandalised an ambulance and the driver alleged that a patient and attendants inside were also beaten up by the mob. The railways had suffered massive losses in the state during protests in the last three days. More than 60 train coaches, 10 engines and some stations have been torched.

Earlier, bandh supporters had attacked a police outpost in Jehanabad district, leaving several personnel injured.

Large-scale violence in the past few days has led to the suspension of internet services, barring the ones controlled by the government, in 12 severely affected districts. A home department notification said the restrictions would remain effective for at least three days.

The Union Home Ministry, meanwhile, accorded a VIP security cover of the CRPF to at least 10 Bihar BJP legislators and leaders including Deputy Chief Minister Renu Devi and state BJP president Sanjay Jaiswal, citing threat to them in the wake of the violent protests.

The bandh received in-principle support from all opposition parties RJD, Congress, the Left and AAP.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), partner of the BJP in the state and the Centre, has also sought a review of the scheme, and urged the Union government to allay the fears of the protesters.

Train services on the Sealdah-Barrackpore route in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district were disrupted for around one hour on Saturday as a group of anti-Agnipath agitators blocked railway tracks and did push-ups to register their protest.

Afghan Sikh among...

In the latest targeted assault on a place of worship of the Sikh community in Afghanistan, Gurdwara Karte Parwan in Kabul's Bagh-e Bala neighborhood was attacked early Saturday morning and a gun battle lasting several hours between the terrorists and Taliban fighters ensued, said Abdul Nafi Takor, a spokesperson for the Interior Ministry.

Three attackers were killed by the Taliban forces, the Pajhwok news agency reported.

Takor confirmed that at least one member of the Islamic Emirate forces and an Afghan Sikh national were killed in the incident. Seven others were injured and hospitalized.

According to the statement from the Interior Ministry, an explosive-laden vehicle aiming to target the place was thwarted before reaching its goal.

The gurdwara was attacked early in the morning when up to 30 people were inside, the BBC reported.

Takor said a vehicle full of explosives was detonated outside of the gurdwara but that resulted in no casualties.

First the gunmen threw a hand grenade which caused a fire near the gate of the gurdwara, the Associated Press quoted the Interior Ministry spokesman as saying. Khalid Zadran, a spokesman for the Kabul police chief, said the police operation ended after the last attacker was killed several hours later.

"The security forces were able to act quickly to control the attack and eliminate the attackers in a short period of time to prevent further casualties, he said.

In New Delhi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday strongly condemned the "cowardly attack" on a gurdwara in Kabul and said the government was closely monitoring the situation following the incident.

"The cowardly attack on Gurdwara Karte Parwan should be condemned in the strongest terms by all. We have been closely monitoring developments since the news of the attack was received. Our first and foremost concern is for the welfare of the community," Jaishankar tweeted.

"We are deeply concerned at the reports emanating from Kabul about an attack on a sacred Gurdwara in that city. We are closely monitoring the situation and waiting for further details on the unfolding developments," the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs also tweeted.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has strongly condemned the attack and urged the Centre to extend immediate assistance to ensure the safety of minorities in the Afghan capital.

"There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. However, the attack is suspected to have been carried out by ISIS Khurasan.

The Islamic State group known as the Islamic State in Khorasan Province has in the past claimed responsibility for attacks on mosques and minorities across the country.

"We heard a huge blast in the Kart-e-Parwan neighbourhood at around 6 am local time. The blast was followed by another explosion which occurred about half an hour after the first blast. The whole place has now been sealed off," China's state-run Xinhua news agency quoted an eyewitness as saying.

The security forces have cordoned off the area for precautionary measures, he said.

The blast sent a column of thick smoke into the sky and triggered panic, the witness said.

There were less than 700 Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan at the time of the 2020 attack. Since then, dozens of families have left but many cannot financially afford to move and have remained in Afghanistan, mainly in Kabul, Jalalabad and Ghazni, according to AP.

Since the Taliban took power in August last year, the country has seen continuing attacks by rival Sunni Muslim militant group Islamic State.

Saturday's incident is the latest targeted attack on a place of worship of a minority community in Afghanistan.

Curfew relaxed for...

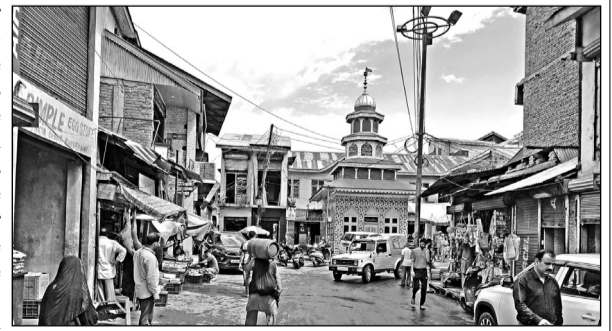
of protests over remarks by now-suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on Prophet Mohammad and some social media posts by local right-wing activists in her support.

Announcing the curfew relaxation from 7 am to 7 pm, the officials said all educational institutions will remain closed for the 10th day on Saturday as a precautionary measure and are likely to reopen on Monday.

Barring Bhadarwah, broadband and mobile internet services were restored in

Doda after remaining suspended for nine days. The services are expected to be restored in Bhadarwah after a fresh review of the situation by senior civil and police officers later in the day, they said. Broadband and mobile internet services were also restored in the nearby Kishtwar district, they added. Police vehicles fitted with public address systems were seen making rounds in the Bhadarwah, informing residents about the relaxation in the curfew and requesting their cooperation in maintaining law and order. Normal activities resumed in the town with the announcement of relaxation in curfew. People stepped out of their homes to buy milk, bread and other essentials.

The curfew was first relaxed in Bhadarwah for two hours on June 15, followed by five hours in two phases on June 16 and four hours on June 17. The relaxation periods passed off peacefully. Police and security forces are deployed in strength in the town to maintain law and order, the officials said.



People thronging market during curfew relaxation in Bhadarwah.