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NHAI to begin work on Rs 4,000-Cr Chattergala tunnel, Gadkari reviews important projects

Dr Jitendra thanks for conceding most of his proposals

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: The NHAI will begin work on the Rs 4,000-crore Chattergala tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir at the earliest.

"The prestigious Chhatergala tunnel work costing around Rs. 4,000 crore will be executed by the National Highway Authority of India(NHAI) and the under-passes on the prestigious Kathua Express corridor section, wherever demanded by public, will be undertaken at the earliest" . Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said while briefing the media after a marathon meeting lasting nearly four hours and presided by Union MoRTH Nitin Gadkari to review important road and tunnel projects in Jammu & Kashmir.

Dr Jitendra thanked Gadkari for having conceded most of the suggestions and proposals put across by him.

Elaborating further, Union Minister of State



Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari chairing meeting to review progress of road and highway projects in J&K. LG Manoj Sinha, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh also participated.

(Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, MoS Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the proposal for

Chhatergala tunnel had been initiated about six years back and the DPR was also prepared by the BRO agency 'Beacons' but due to lack of funds it could not be undertaken. He said, now it has been decided that the NHAI will undertake construction of the new national highway from Lakhampur to Basohli-

Bani to Bhaderwah-Doda. The construction shall begin from one end and when it reaches the tunnel site the construction of the historic Chhatergala tunnel will also be executed, he added.

Once this highway is complete, said Dr. Jitendra Singh, it will be a game changer as it will provide an

all-weather connectivity between Lakhampur and district Doda via tourist spots of Basohli and Bani, in addition to reducing the travel time considerably and giving a boost to business, employment and revenue generation. Referring to the under construction

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Working with dedication for J&K's strong tomorrow: LG

SRINAGAR: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari on Monday chaired a high-level meeting at Raj Bhawan to review progress of road and highway projects in J&K.

The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Nitin Gadkari for big-ticket infrastructure projects in the UT.

"We are working with dedication for J&K's strong and glorious tomorrow. The massive infrastructure push has created new employment opportunities and also gave big boost to UT's economy," the Lt Governor said.

"I am grateful to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Gadkari and hearty congratulations to the team for undertaking infrastructure projects of unprecedented magnitude in Jammu Kashmir," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor also posted on X: "Happy to have welcomed Hon'ble Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji to Raj Bhawan. He chaired a high level meeting to review progress of road and highway projects in J&K. Discussed important projects including Z-Morh Tunnel, Ring Road Jammu, 4- Laning of Udhampur Ramban road, different sections of Khellani- Kishtwar-Chattroo road, Chenani-Sudhmahadev section on NH-244 and various other projects under NHAI, NHIDCL & SAMPARK".



LG Manoj Sinha welcoming Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Nitin Gadkari on his arrival at Srinagar.

Amarnath Yatra: Police conducts mock drill at Jammu ahead of pilgrimage

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Ahead of the annual Amarnath Yatra, the quick reaction teams (QRTs) and special operations group (SoG) of the police on Monday conducted a comprehensive mock drill at the base camp of the pilgrimage in Jammu.

This comes close on the heels of Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviewing the security situation and the preparations for the annual pilgrimage.

The 52-day pilgrimage to the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine in south Kashmir will start on June 29 and conclude on August 19.

The police carried out a comprehensive mock drill exercise at base camp yatri niwas in Bhagwati Nagar here, officials said.

First responder team of sub division headquarters, including all territorial officers from the sub division, were involved in the exercise.

The SOG Jammu, along with other territorial Police officers from adjacent sub divisions and their QRTs, also participated in the drill, they said.

"The primary objective of this exercise was to provide practical training to the entire team, ensuring

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CDS visits Jammu, holds security review

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan on Monday arrived on a day-long visit to Jammu to review the security situation and operational preparedness in the region, officials said.

Gen Chauhan's visit comes soon after Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed the security situation and the preparations for the annual Amarnath Yatra on Sunday.

The CDS arrived at 16 Corps headquarters in Nagrota, where he is scheduled to review the security situation of the region and operational preparedness of the security forces, they said.

He will be briefed by top



Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan on his arrival in Jammu on Monday.

commanders of the Army, including the Northern Army Commander and general officer commanding (GoC).

A series of security review meetings have been held at various levels to further chart out a strategy to deal

with growing terrorism in the Jammu region with a strong arm.

Terrorists struck at four places in the Reasi, Kathua and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir within four days last week, killing nine

pilgrims and a CRPF jawan and leaving seven security personnel and several others injured.

Two suspected Pakistani terrorists were also killed in an encounter with security forces in Kathua district.

On June 9, terrorists opened fire on a bus carrying pilgrims when it was en route to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra from the Shiv Khori temple. The bus plunged into a deep gorge following the gunfire, killing nine people and injuring 41 others.

On June 11, terrorists fired at a joint checkpoint of the Rashtriya Rifles and

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Terrorist killed in Bandipora encounter

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: A terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district on Monday, officials said.

The gunfight broke out after security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the Aragam area of the district on Sunday night following information about the presence of terrorists there, they said.

The army's Srinagar-based Chinार Corps said one terrorist has been killed. The operation was in progress till last reports, it said.

"Based on specific intelligence input regarding pres-

ence of terrorists, a joint operation was launched by the Indian Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police on the intervening night of June 16-17 in the general area of Gurihajin, Aragam Bandipora; one terrorist eliminated, operation in progress," the Chinार Corps posted on X.

The officials said the gunfight broke out after terrorists opened firing on security personnel. The identity of the slain terrorist is yet to be ascertained, they said.

"One body has been spotted at the site of the encounter while searches are on to look for more terrorists in the area," an official had said earlier.

Rahul retains Rae Bareli, Priyanka to contest from Wayanad

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will keep the Rae Bareli Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh and vacate the Wayanad seat in Kerala from where his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will contest, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said on Monday.

Kharge was speaking to reporters after the Congress' top leadership held discussions on the issue at his residence here.

Rahul Gandhi said it was a difficult decision for him as he has an emotional connection with both Rae Bareli and Wayanad.

"The last five years as a member of Parliament from Wayanad have been a very fantastic and enjoyable experience. The people of Wayanad gave me support, energy to fight in a very difficult time. I will never forget that....

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Modi meets US NSA, says India committed to boost strategic partnership

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: India is committed to further strengthen its comprehensive global strategic partnership with the US for global good, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday after meeting US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan.

Earlier, NSA Ajit Doval and Sullivan held wide-ranging talks focusing on implementation of the ambitious India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET).



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meeting US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan.

"Met US National Security Advisor @JakeSullivan46. India is committed to further strengthen the India-US

Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership for global good," Modi

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Armed terrorist arrested in Kupwara

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
KUPWARA: Security forces said today that they have arrested an armed terrorist in J&K's Kupwara district.

Police identified the terrorist as Zakir Hameed Mir of Kachri village of Handwara tehsil in Kashmir.

"The arrested terrorist was in touch with his Pakistani handler across the border. His questioning is going on and further disclosures are expected to come to the fore during the investigation," officials said.

More details were awaited.

Justice Sanjiv Khanna inspects Central Jail; greets inmates on Eid

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) along with Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority) and Justice Tashi Rabstan, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority) on



Justice Sanjiv Khanna, of Supreme Court along with Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and others during extensive inspection of Central Jail Srinagar.

Monday conducted an extensive inspection of the Central Jail Srinagar with a purpose to take first hand stock of the living conditions of jail

inmates and functioning of the jail. They were received by Deepak Kumar, Director General (Prisons),

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Eid celebrated across J&K with religious fervour

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU/SRINAGAR: Eid-ul-Adha was celebrated on Monday with religious fervour and traditional gaiety across Jammu region with a large number of people gathering at mosques and Eidgahs to pray for the peace and prosperity.

In Jammu, the biggest congregations were held in Eidgah residency road, Mecca Masjid, and Jama Masjid Khatikan Talab, where hundreds of Muslims offered Eid prayers this morning.

Religious scholars spoke about the significance of the day and philosophy behind the customary sacrifice. Elaborate security arrangements were made by the authorities for the day.

In Srinagar, the biggest such assembly was at the Hazratbal Shrine, where more than 50,000 people gathered for prayers, they said.



Muslim brethren offering prayers in a mosque in Jammu on Monday.

Three former chief ministers -- Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti -- were among those who offered prayers at Hazratbal.

Smaller gatherings were seen at

all Muslim places of worship across the valley, except for the historic Jamia Masjid in old city as the authorities refused permission to the Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid to hold prayers at Eidgah.

Thousands of sheep, goats and other animals were sacrificed across the valley as per tradition, they said.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha greeted the Muslim community on the occasion.

In a message, the Lt Governor said, "Heartiest greetings and best wishes to all on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Zuha."

"The sacred festival of Eid-ul-Zuha is a symbol of selfless sacrifice and sharing. Let us, on this occasion, reaffirm our resolve to further strengthen the spirit of brotherhood and unity. May Eid-ul-Zuha bring peace, prosperity and joy for everyone," he said.

A police official said Eid prayers passed off peacefully and there was no report of any untoward incident.

Leaders of political parties of Jammu and Kashmir also extended Eid greetings to the people.

Goods train rams into Kanchanjunga Express in Bengal, 7 passengers, 2 railway staffers killed

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW JALPAIGURI/ KOLKATA/NEW DELHI: At least nine people were killed and 41 injured after a goods train rammed into the stationary Sealdah-bound Kanchanjunga Express in West Bengal's Darjeeling district on Monday, a senior railway official said.

Among the deceased were the pilot of the goods train and the guard of the passenger train, he added.

Senior West Bengal Police officials, however, put the casualty count at 15.

The collision occurred near



Rangapani station, 30 km from New Jalpaiguri station, causing four rear compartments of Kanchanjunga Express to derail due to the impact by the goods train's locomotive at 8.55 am, the official said.

Soon after the accident, Railway Board chairperson Jaya Varma Sinha said the collision took place because the goods train

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**WEATHER**

Temperature (Jammu)  
Max: 44.3°C Min: 28.8°C

Humidity  
Max: 30 Min: 23

Temperature (Srinagar)  
Max: 33.4°C Min: 15.9°C

Humidity  
Max: 51 Min: 32

Sunset : 19:40 Hours  
Sunrise : 05:22 Hours