

Vol. 30 Issue 172 • Jammu • Monday • June 23, 2025 • Pages 12 • ₹ 5.00

Air surcharge 50 paisa for Leh Bumrah picks up fifer but England draw

Last 11 years saw democratisation of Civil UU Services, youth aspiration: Dr Jitendra

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

After 2022 heartbreak, Indian women eye fresh start in Asian Cup Qualifiers

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parity with India by making 465 all out

# US strikes 3 Iranian nuclear sites

DUBAI: The United States attacked three sites in Iran early Sunday, inserting itself into Israel's war aimed at destroying the Iranian nuclear programme in a risky gambit to weaken a longtime foe that prompted fears of a wider regional conflict as Tehran accused Washington of launching "a dangerous war."

US President Donald Trump asserted that Iran's key nuclear sites were "completely and fully obliterated" in an address to the nation from the White House.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the time for diplomacy had passed and that his country had the right to defend itself.

"The warmongering, a lawless administration in Washington is solely and fully responsible for the dangerous consequences and far reaching implications of its act of aggression," he said at a news briefing at a conference in Turkive in the first comments by a high-ranking Iranian official since the strikes.

Araghchi also said that "there is no red line" that the US has not crossed - and that "the most dangerous one was what happened only last night when they crossed a very big red line by attacking nuclear facilities only."

He added that he will be travelling to Moscow later on Sunday to meet



with President Vladimir Putin as the US enters its regional war with

The Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran confirmed that attacks took place on its Fordo, Isfahan and Natanz sites, but it insisted that its nuclear programme will not be stopped.

Iran and the UN nuclear watchdog said there were no immediate signs of radioactive contamination at the three locations following the strikes.

Satellite images taken after the American attack, analysed by The Associated Press, show damage to the entryways to the Fordo facility, which is dug deep into a mountain, while light gray smoke lingered in the

The images by Planet Labs PBC also appeared to show damage to the mountain itself, apparently blocking its entry tunnels, which means Iran would have to dig out the facility to reach anything inside.

It was not clear whether the US would continue attacking Iran alongside its ally Israel, which has been engaged in a war with Iran for nine days. Countries around the globe are calling for diplomacy and no further escalation. Trump acted without congressional authorisation, and he also warned there would be additional strikes if Tehran retaliated against

### Modi calls for de-escalation of conflict

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday conveyed to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian India's "deep concern' over Iran's conflict with Israel and called for immediate de-escalation of the situation through "dialogue and diplomacy". The phone conversation between Modi and Pezeshkian came hours after the US bombed three major nuclear sites -- Fordow. Natanz and Isfahan -- in Iran, bring ing itself into the Israel-Iran conflict. In a social media post, Modi said he expressed "deep concern" at the recent escalations and that dialogue and diplomacy is the way forward for the early restoration of regional peace. "We discussed in detail about the current situation. Expressed deep concern at the recent escalations," Modi said. "Reiterated our call for immediate de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy as the way forward and for early restoration of regional peace, security and stability," the prime minister added.

US forces. "There will either be peace or there will be tragedy for Iran," he said. Iran's Foreign Ministry said Washington ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

# Pahalgam attack: NIA arrests two men for harbouring terrorists

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: In a major breakthrough, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested two men for harbouring the terrorists who had carried out the Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 people dead, the agency said on Sunday.

According to the NIA, the two men -- Parvaiz Ahmad Jothar from Batkote and Bashir Ahmad Jothar of Hill Park in Pahalgam -- have disclosed the identities of the three armed terrorists involved in the attack.

They have also confirmed that the assailants were Pakistani nationals affiliated to the proscribed terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). "Parvaiz and Bashir had

armed terrorists at a seasonal dhok (hut) at Hill Park before the attack," the NIA said. The two men had provided food, shelter and logistical support to the terrorists, who

knowingly harboured the three

the basis of their religious identity on April 22, making it one of the most gruesome terrorist attacks ever. The NIA has arrested the

duo under Section 19 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Further investigations are

## selectively killed the tourists on LS Speaker to inaugurate national meet of Estimates Committees

#### STATE TIMES NEWS

MUMBAI: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will inaugurate the National Conference of Estimates Committees of Parliament and State Legislative Bodies here on Monday.

During the two-day conference, chairpersons and members of Estimates Committees of Parliament and legislative bodies of states and union territories will brainstorm on the 'Role of Estimates Committee in Effective

for ensuring Efficiency and Economy in Administration'. The Lok Sabha speaker will also release the

Monitoring and Review of Budget Estimates

75th anniversary souvenir of the Estimates Committee of Parliament. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra

Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, Maharashtra Legislative ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

## 'Sarhad Shauryathon', grand event to honour Kargil heroes, held in Ladakh

Chairman

### **STATE TIMES NEWS**

KARGIL: "Sarhad Shaurvathon", a race to honour the valour and sacrifice of Kargil War heroes, was held at the iconic Kargil War Memorial in Drass on Sunday, drawing a large number of participants from across Ladakh and other parts of the country.

The race marked the beginning of a series of commemorative events leading up to Kargil Vijay Diwas on July 26, which honours India's victory against Pakistan and the sacrifices made during the 1999 Kargil War.

Minister Eknath Shinde,

Maharashtra Deput

### Rajnath to release collection of President Murmu's speeches in Delhi today STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday will release a curated collection of 51 speeches of President Droupadi Murmu delivered by her during her second year in office, the government said.

This volume follows its predecessor in chronicling the evolving discourse on governance, inclusivity, and national aspirations, it said on Sunday.

The event will take place at the Rashtrapati Bhavan complex.

Singh will release the compilation the president's speeches, 'Wings to our Hopes "Volume II', and its Hindi version, 'Ashaon Ki Udaan" Khand 2', on Monday, a senior official

The collection has been compiled by the Rashtrapati Bhavan and published by the publications division of the Ministry of Information

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Max: 33.0°C Min: 23.4°C

Max: 62 Min: 41 Sunset: 19:41 Hours Sunrise: 05:23 Hours

and Chief Executive Councillor (CEC), LAHDC-Kargil, Mohammad Jaffer Akhoon and senior Army and civil officers attended the event that combined fitness, patriotism and remembrance against the backdrop of the very moun-

Organised by the Army and Sarhad Pune, Shauryathon saw participation in various race categories -- five km, 10 km and 21 km -- attracting youngsters, school students, armed forces personnel and civiliang an official said

STATE TIMES NEWS

RAIPUR: Union Home

Minister Amit Shah on

Sunday said Naxalites won't

get rest during monsoon as

operations against them

will continue during

rains, even as he ruled

out talks and appealed to

the ultras to lay down

arms and join the jour-

year, more than 400

Maoist ultras have been

gunned down by security

forces in separate encounters

in the state, the most notable

being the killing of Nambala

Keshay Rao alias Basayarain

(70), the general secretary

and top most operative of the

nev of development. Since January last

tains that witnessed the

heroism of the Kargil War.

# Engaging with states to ensure effective implementation of **UMEED portal for Waqf properties: Govt**

**STATE TIMES NEWS** 

NEW DELHI: The Minority Affairs Ministry on Sunday said it has been actively engaging with states and union territories to ensure effective implementation of the UMEED portal, stressing that details of all registered Waqf properties across India are to be mandatorily uploaded on this platform within six months.

In line with this effort, the ministry said, Minority Affairs Secretary Chandra Shekhar Kumar visited Mumbai on June 21 to hold a comprehensive review meet. ing with the state secretary,

Shah warns Naxals of no respite, rules out talks

outlawed Communist Party

of India (Maoist), in Bastar

"Every time during mon-

soon, Naxalites used to get

rest (as swollen rivers ham-

per anti-Naxal operations

inside dense forest). But this

time, we will not let them

sleep during monsoon and we

will move further to achieve

the target of 31/3 (2026 to

on May 21.

senior Maharashtra State Waqf Board CEO.

This marks his second such visit following a similar review in Bihar last week, it said.

During the meeting, Kumar apprised the officials of the rules to be rolled out shortly to support the statutory requirements of the portal, the statement said.

He encouraged proactive participation and invited suggestions from state authorities to streamline the implementation process, it

eliminate Naxalism)", Shah

surrender policy.

Board requested the Centre to revisit and ease certain leasing provisions related to Waqf properties.

Kumar assured that the request will be examined sympathetically, reaffirming the Centre's commitment to empowering Waqf Boards and enhancing Waqf property management, the statement said.

Apart from reviewing UMEED implementation, the Secretary also assessed the status of projects under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) in Maharashtra

He directed the state offi-

### DySP dies of cardiac arrest

## **STATE TIMES NEWS**

KUPWARA: A young police He appealed to Naxals to officer from Kupwara dissurrender, join the journey of trict died due to sudden cardevelopment and avail of the diac arrest on Sunday, offibenefits of a "lucrative" said. Deputy Superintendent of Police "No need for talks. (DSP) Aamir Amin Bhat Just give up armed suffered a massive heart struggle and join the attack at his home at Ujroo mainstream. I wholein Langate area of Kupwara district, they said. The offiheartedly welcome all cials said that Bhat (30) was those who have laid down arms and joined rushed to a hospital, but he died as the doctors tried to the mainstream and assure them whatever promrevive him. Bhat, who qualiises the Chhattisgarh govfied the Jammu and ernment and the Centre have Administrative Kashmir made to them will be fulfilled. Service examination in 2024, We will try to help you even had just finished his probation period and was awaiting his first posting. ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

cials to submit all pending proposals to the ministry within one week for necessary action.

Kumar also held a meeting

with officials of the Haj Committee of India (HCoI) in Mumbai, congratulating them on the smooth and successful conduct of Haj 2025. He noted with satisfaction that this year recorded the

lowest number of deaths and health-related incidents among Indian Haj pilgrims. Kumar attributed this achievement to improved

coordination between the Ministry, Hai Committee

# Satisfied over tourism revival in Pahalgam: Omar

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS SRINAGAR: Chief Minister

Omar Abdullah on Sunday said the efforts put in by him and his colleagues for the revival of tourism in Kashmir are bearing fruit, as tourists are returning to the Valley. "The last time I was in Pahalgam, I cycled through a market that was all but deserted. Today, I came back to a Pahalgam that was bustling with activity. "Tourists from various parts of the country competed for space with local picnickers who were enjoying the cool climate and rainy weather," Abdullah said in a post on X, expressing satisfaction over the revival of tourism ■ CONTD ON PAGE 9 in Pahalgam. Tourism in Abdullah said.



Pahalgam was badly hit after the April 22 terror attack at the Baisaran meadow, which martyred 25 tourists and a local pony ride operator: "It's very satisfying to see the efforts my colleagues and I have been putting in slowly bearing fruit.

# Ahmedabad plane crash: 251 victims identified through DNA tests; 245 bodies given to kin

## **STATE TIMES NEWS**

AHMEDABAD: A total of 251 victims of the horrific June 12 Ahmedabad plane crash have been identified through DNA tests so far and 245 bodies have been handed over to kin, officials said on Sunday.

The London-bound aircraft crashed into a hostel complex in Meghaninagar moments after taking off from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport at 1.39 pm that day, killing 270 persons, including 241 on board. One passenger survived.

Authorities are carrying out DNA tests to establish

the identity of the victims as many bodies were charred beyond recognition as the aircraft burst into flames or damaged on impact.

"A total of 251 victims of the crash have been identified through DNA tests. The bodies of 245 victims, comprising 176 Indians, 49 Britons, seven Portuguese and one Canadian as well as 12 non-passengers,

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# iongress, is Hindu JK



Congress lose its sheen and secular character if a Hindu appointed as Jammu and

Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President? Why has the Pradesh Congress

Committee in this part of the country lways had a Muslim President and that too predominantly from the Kashmir Valley, despite the party's once-robust base in Hindu-majority Jammu? In fact, only twice in its history has the Congress appointed leaders from the Jammu region as PCC presidents-and even then, both were Muslims: Choudhary Aslam and Ghulam Nabi Azad. Not a single Hindu leader from Jammu has ever been given the opportunity to lead the Pradesh Congress. This 'secular' fault line within

the party, has hugely eroded the trust and confidence among its Jammu-based workers and voters, which is why the Congress performance in the 2024 Assembly elections has left many within its own ranks soul-searching for answers. Among the core grievances brewing within the Congress cadre is a decades-old question that has now reached a boiling This discontent is not without historical

more," he added.

merit. Since 1947, JKPCC has seen an uninterrupted tradition of appointing Muslim leaders to helm the Pradesh unit. Jammu, which contributes a significant portion of Congress's voter base, particularly among Hindus, has repeatedly been bypassed in the selection of the PCC

The Assembly elections of 2024 served as a wake-up call. The Congress party faced an unprecedented rout in the Jammu region, a clear signal from the electorate that the party's internal leadership biases had gone too far. Many observers and party insiders now agree that the refusal to allow a Hindu leader from Jammu to head the PCC was perceived as a betrayal, resulting in voters punishing the party at the EVM booths.

Adding fuel to this fire is the controversial role of the current Pradesh Congress President, Tariq Hamid Karra. His tenure has been marked not only by political underperformance but by divisive rhetoric and actions that many allege have been blatantly anti-Jammu, and

Karra's perceived disdain for the sentiments and sensitivities of the Jammu electorate has made him a lightning rod for criticism. The party insiders claim that his leadership has alienated core Congress supporters, widened the trust deficit with weaker sections, and caused irreparable damage to the party's image in the region. His insistence on pushing a Valley-centric narrative has not only rein-

forced regional imbalance but has also led to the marginalization of the very cadre that once formed the spine of the Congress in Jammu. Even in the Valley, senior party functionaries are deserting and exploring opportunities in other parties. The damage is not just electoral. Organizationally, the Congress in Jammu and Kashmir is fractured and demoralized. Discontent is no longer simmering-it is boiling over. Senior Congress leaders, particularly from Jammu, have expressed their frustration behind closed doors and are now beginning to publicly question the party's top leadership on their choices. Grassroots workers feel ignored and humiliated, with several even threatening to leave the party if corrective measures are not taken immediately.

There is also growing resentment over the perception that the Congress high command continues to pander to a particular regional and religious leadership at the cost of broader inclusivity. The party's

unwillingness to correct this imbalance i increasingly being seen as a reflection of its inability to evolve and adapt to chang ing political realities. If the Congress is serious about reclaiming political rele vance in Jammu and Kashmir, it must begin by addressing the genuine griev ances of its base. The demand is not com munal or sectarian-it is about fairness inclusion, and political justice. Appointing a capable Hindu leader from

Jammu as the next Pradesh Congres Committee president will not just be symbolic gesture-it is a political impera tive. It is a necessary course correction that can begin the process of healing the deep wounds of neglect and restore some measure of credibility to the party in the eyes of Jammu's electorate. Until then the Congress in Jammu will continue to hemorrhage support, crippled by a leader ship model that no longer represents the aspirations or realities of the people it seeks to serve.