

03 Yogi Adityanath, Dr Jitendra lay foundation of Rs 1,000 cr 'Green Data Centre'

05 JeM terrorist killed, 3 others trapped in Udhampur

10 Kabaddi teams leave for Youth Nationals

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

Security grid has been strengthened, multi-layer security is in place and army, CAPFs, J&K Police have ensured all necessary measures for a safe pilgrimage: LG Sinha

Multi-layer security in place; all necessary measures ensured for safe Amarnthji Yatra: LG



Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha addressing press conference at Srinagar on Thursday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday appealed to the devotees to turn up in large numbers at Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which is scheduled to begin from July 3.

Addressing a press conference in Raj Bhawan, Srinagar today, the Lieutenant Governor said that security grid has been

strengthened, multi-layer security is in place and army, CAPFs, J&K Police have ensured all necessary measures for a safe pilgrimage. All necessary arrangements have been made for the pilgrims coming for the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra and for hassle free Darshan at the holy cave.

The Lieutenant Governor said that an atmosphere of

spiritual fervour has filled the air at Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra base camps and Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board (SASB) has made preparations for all essential facilities including movement, lodging, electricity, water, sanitation, communication and health of the pilgrims. The Lieutenant Governor pointed out that significant achievements were made by

SASB in the last two years in creating pilgrims-centric facilities.

► Wider Yatra tracks: Previously narrow and steep Yatra tracks along both the routes have been widened to around 12 feet in most of the stretches.

► Kalimata stretch, which was previously very narrow and with steep gradient, has been widened to almost 12

► LG's Press Conference on Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025

- Appeals to devotees to turn up in large numbers
- All necessary arrangements made for pilgrims and for hassle free Darshan at holy cave
- SASB has made preparations for all essential facilities including movement, lodging, electricity, water, sanitation, communication and health of the pilgrims

feet, with much gentler slope.

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

3 drown, 4 rescued as flash floods hit several areas across Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Three persons, including two children, died while four others were rescued as flash floods triggered by cloudbursts and heavy rains were reported from different areas of Rajouri, Poonch, Doda and Kathua districts in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, officials said.

Shaqafat Ali (14) and his cousin, Safena Kousar (11), drowned due to flash floods in a riverlet at their Sialsui Mou village in Kalakote subdivision of Rajouri, they said.

Saima (10), who was also trapped in the flash floods, was rescued by local volunteers and shifted to a hospital, the officials added.

The children were grazing their cattle when they were swept away by the flash floods due to a cloudburst, the officials said, adding that the bodies were retrieved and handed over to the relatives of the children for the last rites.



Landslide blocks new track to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine

KATRA/JAMMU: A fresh landslide triggered by rains blocked the new track to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in the Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, officials said.

However, the pilgrimage is progressing smoothly through the old route, while both battery car and helicopter service remained suspended, the officials said.

They said the landslide occurred near Satya view point along the Himkoti route at a time when the shrine board had already diverted the pilgrimage to the old route owing to incessant rains and lurking threat of landslides on the new track. A landslide also hit the track leading to Bhairav temple, disrupting the movement of

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

The body of Basharat Dunadi village, was Hussain (32), a resident of

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Mineral supervisor arrested for accepting bribe

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Thursday arrested mineral supervisor of Geology and Mining Department for accepting and demanding bribe of Rs 15000 from a person.

"ACB received a written complaint alleging therein that Basharat Habib, Mineral Supervisor in the Geology & Mining Department, was demanding a bribe for allowing the lifting of minor minerals (sand)," an official said adding that on receipt of the complaint, a discreet veri-

fication was conducted, which confirms the demand of bribe by the public servant concerned and accordingly, a case FIR No. 11/2025 under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended) was registered in Police Station ACB Srinagar and investigation was taken up.

During the course of investigation, official said, a trap team was constituted which laid a successful trap and accused public servant was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting bribe amount of

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Rajnath refuses to sign SCO communique over exclusion of Pahalgam terror attack

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

QINGDAO/NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday refused to sign a joint communique of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) following the omission of the Pahalgam terror attack and not explicitly addressing India's concerns over Pakistan-backed cross-border terrorism.

At a conference of SCO defence ministers' conclave, Singh demanded inclusion of the dastardly terror attack in the communique while the Pakistani side pressed for having a paragraph on mili-



tant activities in Balochistan in an apparent attempt to blame New Delhi, top sources said.

The SCO operates under the framework of consensus and Pakistan's approach

resulted in the conclave ending without the joint communique, they said.

The draft communique neither figured the dastardly Pahalgam terror attack nor reflected India's position on

cross-border terrorism, and it would have diluted New Delhi's position on a critical issue, they said.

In his address at the conclave, Singh took a swipe at Pakistan for backing terrorist groups, as he called for holding accountable the "perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors" of terrorism, including cross-border terrorism.

Highlighting India's Operation Sindoor in response to the Pahalgam strike, the defence minister, who arrived here on Wednesday, said

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

CB files 5 charge-sheets for duping on MBBS seats, visas, jobs

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Crime Branch (CB) on Thursday filed five charge-sheets against several accused for duping hard-earned money amounting to over Rs 35 lakh on the pretext of arranging MBBS seats, visas & jobs.

"CB produced challan against accused Alok Kumar, son of Karam Chand, resident of Mandi, Himachal Pradesh and Maneer Ahmed Bhat, son of Nazam-ud-Din Bhat, resident of Gandoh Blessa, Doda against whom FIR was registered and proved on the complaint of Dr. Muntaz Hussain Shah

Bukhari from Surankote, Poonch wherein it was alleged that accused duped him of Rs. 12 lakh for arranging two MBBS seats to his daughters in Batra Hospital Sidhra, Jammu," an official said.

In another case registered and proved on the complaint of Rakesh Kumar, son of Vijay Kumar, resident of Rattanpur Ganjansoo Marh, Jammu regarding duping Rs. 9.42 lakh on the pretext of providing machinery for business, CB submitted challan against Prop. of M/S Vijay Industries,

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

CB files charge-sheet in Bank loan fraud case

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Special Crime Wing Crime Branch Jammu has filed a charge-sheet in connection with FIR No. 22/2023, registered under Sections 420, 465, 468, 471, and 120-B of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC) at Police Station Special Crime Wing, Jammu.

The chargesheet pertains to a case of bank loan fraud committed by the prime accused, Jatinder Singh Sodhi, son of Gurdeep Singh, resident of 174 Kanispora, P.O. Khwajabagh, Baramulla, Kashmir, an official said.

"The investigation was conducted by Inspector Nissar Ahmed Bhat under the overall supervision of Sanjay Parihar, Senior Superintendent of Police, Special Crime Wing, Crime Branch Jammu," official said adding that the charge-sheet was formally presented on Thursday before the Court of Sub-Judge, Jammu.

"The case originated from a written complaint

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Discussions on restoring statehood to J&K should conclude soon: Omar



CM Omar Abdullah addressing at special National Integration Camp in Srinagar on Thursday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Thursday that discussions on restoring statehood to the Union Territory should be concluded soon so that peo-

ple can get what they have been demanding.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a special national integration camp organised by the Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh NCC Directorate here, Abdullah also lauded

the sanctioning of several projects for the Union Territory.

"Let there be discussions, it is a good thing. But we would want the discussions to conclude soon, so that we get what we are demanding," he said.

Welcoming the sanctioning of projects worth Rs 10,600 crore for Jammu and Kashmir, including tunnels, the chief minister said these initiatives will give a huge boost to the Union Territory.

"There was a demand for a Mughal Road tunnel for long, since the road was

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Sinha meets political leaders, discusses preparations for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra



Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha meeting with political leaders at Raj Bhawan in Srinagar on Thursday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday held a meeting with political leaders at Raj Bhawan Srinagar and discussed the preparations for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which is scheduled to begin

from July 3.

The meeting was attended by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah; Sat Sharma, Dr. Nirmal Singh and Kavinder Gupta (BJP); Tara Chand and Ghulam Ahmad Mir (Indian National Congress); Showkat Ahmad Mir and

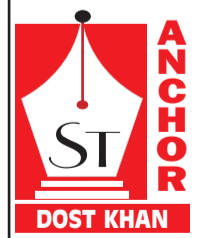
Jagdish Singh Azad (National Conference); Mohamad Yousuf Tarigami (CPIM); Sajad Gani Lone (J&K Peoples Conference); Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari (J&K Apni Party); Iltaja Mufti (PDP) and Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen

Shah (J&K People's Democratic Front).

The Lieutenant Governor shared the dedicated efforts made by the Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Administration, J&K Police, Security Forces and all

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Loose cannon leadership pushes J&K Congress into crisis



JAMMU: The Pradesh Congress in Jammu and Kashmir is facing a serious crisis of trust, and much of it is because of its own mistakes. The party's growing tilt towards one particular community, while ignoring and sidelining Hindus and the Jammu region in the name of vote bank politics, has pushed it into political isolation. This problem has only grown worse under the leadership of its current Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) President, Tariq Hamid Karra, whose controversial actions and soft stance on separatist issues have damaged the party's image. Many people now see him as a "loose cannon"-an unpredictable leader who has weakened the Congress's support across the region.

Once a senior functionary of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Karra's controversial stances and inflammatory rhetoric have not only alienated large sections of the party's traditional support base but also sparked grave concerns about the ideological drift of the Congress in a sensitive border Union Territory. Many of the party functionaries, especially in the Jammu region, regard him as a political liability, whose actions are causing irreversible damage to the Congress, already fighting for its survival.

Karra's political journey is marked by ideological inconsistencies and baggage that he has failed to shed. As a paratrooper from the PDP into the Congress fold, he carried with him ideas that were never perceived as nationalist. The PDP's advocacy of common currency in South Asia starting from Kashmir, joint Indo-Pak control, and self-rule resonate more with separatist inclinations than with the nationalist

commitment.

Perhaps most glaring was Karra's controversial response during Operation Sindoor, a decisive counter-terror military operation against rogue nation of Pakistan. Instead of unequivocally supporting India's security forces and government,

► It is high time the Jammu region is treated equally by Congress High Command and given its fair share in leadership opportunities in J&K

Karra took the regressive route of equating India and Pakistan by calling for dialogue-putting both nations on the same pedestal in the face of terror.

Under Karra's leadership, the electoral fortunes of the Congress have nosedived. In the 2024 assembly elections, the party managed to win a mere six seats-all in Muslim-majority constituencies. The Congress has been wiped out in large swathes of Jammu, where the

party once had a strong and reliable base. The primary reason behind this mass desertion by Jammu voters is their disillusionment with the party's increasing soft-separatist undertones-a narrative reinforced by Karra's rhetoric and policies.

The exodus of voters to the

of Karra's meetings with Congress workers where slogans of "Nara-e-Takbeer, Allah-o-Akbar" were raised. This slogan, often associated with Islamist narratives in conflict zones, was not only jolting in a so-called secular Congress gathering but also added to the growing perception that the party under Karra is compromising its foundational ideals. The silence of Congress's Hindu leaders from Jammu on this issue has only aggravated the damage, rendering them irrelevant and estranged from their own constituencies.

The Congress's refusal to appoint a Hindu Pradesh Congress President in Jammu and Kashmir since independence adds salt to the wound. While leaders from the Valley-often with controversial or questionable leanings-have been repeatedly elevated to top roles, the majority Hindu population of Jammu continues to feel ignored, insulted, and betrayed.

Today, the Congress in J&K stands at a tight rope. The disconnect with ground realities, the unwillingness to course-correct, and the leadership of a figure as polarizing as Tariq Hamid Karra are pushing the party into political oblivion. The question that remains is not whether the Congress can reclaim its past glory, but whether it has already surrendered its soul to an ideology that threatens the unity and integrity of the very nation. If the Congress wants to survive and grow again in Jammu and Kashmir, it must create a genuine balance between the two regions-Jammu and Kashmir Valley. It is high time the Jammu region is treated equally and given its fair share of political representation and leadership opportunities. Only when both regions feel respected and included can the party hope to rebuild its base and regain public trust.

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 33.0°C Min: 24.5°C

Humidity
Max: 95 Min: 70

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 32.3°C Min: 23.6°C

Humidity
Max: 67 Min: 59

Sunset : 19:42 Hours
Sunrise : 05:24 Hours