

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Success of Amarnathji...

of Camp directors, officials of Shrine Board, Civil and police administration, security forces, service providers, volunteers and every-one involved in the holy yatra for ensuring a pleasant and memorable pilgrimage for the devotees of Baba Barfani.

"Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra has crossed 3,35,000 mark. The success of the yatra will give a significant boost to the tourism sector in the Union Territory. 97 per-cent positive feedback received from Pilgrims. The Yatra is going on smoothly, meeting all the expectations. We are witnessing an overwhelming atmosphere of spiritual fervor and festivity throughout the base camps," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor directed health officials to conduct an in-depth analysis of patterns and causes for the health-related incidents among pilgrims, and take precautionary measures to improve overall health outcomes for the devotees.

He also reviewed the Yatra feedback system and directed for incorporating traffic feedback option for better traffic management and to facilitate the smooth movement of the pilgrims.

The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor and CEO, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board; Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; VK Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Rahul Yadav, MD, JKPDCL and Nodal Officer, Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra for Pahalgam Axis; Syeed Fakhrudin Hamid, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag and other senior officers of District Administration, SASB, Police and Security Forces.

CM advocates holistic...

understanding." Terming the NEP-2020 a "magnificent and far-reaching" framework, Omar Abdullah stressed that real change will come only when the policy is understood in its true spirit and implemented with sensitivity to local needs and realities.

He said the future of Jammu and Kashmir will be shaped significantly by the educators, policymakers, and institutional leaders who guide the younger generation. "You will decide how capable our children will be in contributing to the development of J&K and the country at large. You will shape their competitiveness, confidence, and capacity," he added.

Pointing to persistent gaps in subject availability and staffing, the Chief Minister noted that many government schools and colleges are unable to offer a wide range of subjects due to faculty shortages. "In Jammu, only a few schools offer Urdu; in Kashmir, few offer Hindi. Even regional languages like Kashmiri, Dogri, or Punjabi are taught in very limited number of institutions. These gaps need to be filled gradually, within our available resources," he said.

He also addressed frequent comparisons between government and private schools, highlighting that government institutions operate in areas where private schools often do not venture. "Setting up a school in Srinagar is easy. Try opening one in Gurez, Tangdhar, or Machil. Our teachers work in extreme conditions, away from the spotlight, and deserve recognition," he stated.

Commending the spirit of innovation among students, the Chief Minister appreciated the exhibition held at the venue where students showcased practical solutions to real-life problems-ranging from water conservation, low-plastic alternatives, climate change awareness, to winter-specific water pipe systems.

"Our children don't lack talent; they lack exposure and opportunities. Their creativity, thinking, and innovation give us hope that we are moving in the right direction," he said.

Omar Abdullah also emphasized the importance of inclusivity in education. "Every child-regardless of physical or learning challenges-deserves a chance to learn. Are our schools truly inclusive and accessible to all? This workshop is a good step in that direction," he said.

Speaking about the dynamic nature of education discourse, the Chief Minister observed that decisions regarding school holidays, exam schedules, and even online learning often spark debates in every household, reflecting the deep connection society has with the education system.

He acknowledged the challenges posed by the digital divide and affirmed that as the government's financial capacity improves, efforts to bridge that divide will be intensified.

The Chief Minister said, "The future of Jammu and Kashmir is in the hands of our educators. You are not just teaching curriculum-you are shaping citizens, instilling values, and building futures. Let us work together to make our education system more resilient, inclusive, and transformative."

The Chief Minister congratulated the organizers for holding the conference and expressed hope that such engagements will continue to inspire positive change across the education landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier, the Chief Minister visited the exhibition stalls set up by various government schools, showcasing innovative models and live demonstrations prepared by students and teachers.

Minister for Education, Sakina Itoo, also spoke on the occasion and said that one of the foremost priorities of the government, soon after its formation, was to reform the education system to make it more equitable, inclusive, and future-ready.

Vice Chancellor of the Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST), Prof. Shakeel Romshoo, and Secretary, School Education, Ram Niwas Sharma also addressed the conference, sharing insights on the implementation and impact of NEP-2020.

The event was attended by Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister, Dheeraj Gupta, Managing Director & CEO of J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, Director of The Times of India Group, Rohit Sharma, Director School Education Kashmir, Dr. G.N. Itoo, along with senior officers, senior officials of the Education Department, Chief Education Officers, school principals, masters, teachers, NEP experts, students, and other stakeholders.

On the occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between IUST and the Directorate of School Education, Kashmir, to foster academic collaboration and strengthen school-university linkages.

Shri Amarnathji Yatra...

pilgrimage began on July 3. Escorted by Central Reserve Police Force and police personnel, the 20th batch of 3,536 pilgrims -- 2,601 men, 822 women, 11 children and 102 sadhus and sadhvis -- left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp here in 132 vehicles between 3:33 am and 4:09 am, the officials said.

The first pilgrim convoy, carrying 1,250 pilgrims in 48 vehicles, left for the shorter but steeper 14-km Baltal route in Ganderbal district. The second convoy of 2,286 pilgrims in 84 vehicles undertook the yatra via the traditional 48-km Pahalgam route in Anantnag district, they said.

With this, a total of 1,27,541 pilgrims have departed from the Jammu base camp for the valley since July 2, when Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha flagged off the first batch.

The number of pilgrims undertaking the yatra has witnessed a decline over the past few days.

While 7,908 pilgrims left in the 16th batch on July 18, 6,365 left in the 17th batch on July 19. On July 20, 4,388 pilgrims left in the 18th batch and 3,791 pilgrims left in the 19th batch on July 21. Tuesday's batch was the smallest so far.

According to the officials, on-the-spot registration for the pilgrimage has been closed due to the drop in footfall of pilgrims. The registration will now be done at the Bhagwati Nagar base camp. More than 4 lakh people have registered online for the pilgrimage so far. Last year, over 5.10 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at the cave shrine. The 38-day pilgrimage will conclude on August 9.

DGP reviews security...

August 9. DGP Nalin Prabhat, Special DGP Javaid Gillani, IGP Bhimsen Tuti, and IG CRPF Gopal K Rao visited the district police lines in Poonch and held a joint security review with officers of Rajouri and Poonch districts for the upcoming yatra, police officials said.

BSF raises ‘drone...

personnel who can operate these machines, official sources in the security establishment told PTI.

The squadron will be navigated by a control room based in the western command headquarters of the BSF in Chandigarh, the sources said. The BSF is primarily tasked to guard the India-Pakistan international border (IB).

The decision to raise the unit was taken after a recent review of the strengths, weaknesses and threats facing the force post-Operation Sindoor.

The operation was launched by India to strike at terrorist and defence bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) as a retaliation against the Pahalgam attack of April 22 in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed in the Baisaran meadows.

The BSF actively participated in the operation, launched on May 7, along with

the Army.

Pakistan sent thousands of drones, including a swarm of these flying objects, in response to Operation Sindoor to target Indian bases as well as civilian areas along the western front.

On May 10, a bomb-laden Pakistani drone dropped explosives at its border post Kharkola in the RS Pura sector of Jammu. Two BSF personnel and an Army jawan deployed at the post were killed while four troops were critically injured, with one of them undergoing a leg amputation during treatment.

Sources said the BSF drone squadron will be located in a specific number of BOPs located along the more than 2,000-km-long India-Pakistan border running from Jammu in the north to Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat on the western side of the country.

The squadron will be equipped with a variety of small and large surveillance, reconnaissance and attack drones that will be launched during operations or any 'hot war' like situation similar to Operation Sindoor, the sources in the security establishment said.

A small team of about 2-3 personnel each will be deployed in "vulnerable and specified" BOPs. Some drones and gadgetry are being procured for the maiden squadron and the personnel chosen for the task are being trained in batches, they said.

The BSF, learning from the May 10 drone attack, has also begun hardening its defences and bunkers, along the border with Pakistan to fend off attacks in which enemy drones cross over and drop bombs and explosives.

The roofs and walls of the BOP bunkers are being strengthened using alloy sheets. Some more measures are being taken to fortify the posts that are vulnerable to drone attacks, sources said as they refused to elaborate, citing operational confidentiality. A BSF officer deployed along this front added that the force is in touch with defence research and intelligence agencies to deploy counter-drone machines at select border posts so that "rogue or armed drones" flying in from across the frontier can be neutralised. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had said that the BSF destroyed more than 118 Pakistani posts and "completely dismantled" their surveillance system during Operation Sindoor.

HC issues contempt...

for none of their fault and the said injuries have been confirmed by the doctors of SDH, Basohli and Civil Hospital, Pathankot upon their medical examination.

Advocate S.S Ahmed further pointed out that the two petitioners were produced before Munsiff (JMIC) Basohli, Bhamu Bhasin on June 30,2025 by PSI Kusum Sulakhya for seeking their police remand for 05 days and JMIC, Basohli after going through the CD file observed that all the guidelines and safeguards laid down by the Apex Court in case titled D.K. Basu Vs State of West Bengal reported as AIR 1997 SC 610, stands not complied by Police in the said case as the two accused (petitioners) have been beaten in the Police Station. The JMIC, Basohli further observed that the accused persons have been stated by the doctor to be not medically fit as per their medical examination report annexed with the remand application and doctor has mentioned injuries on both the accused persons. The JMIC Basohli looking into the deteriorating health condition of the two accused, remanded them to Judicial Custody for a period of 05 days instead of Police Custody. The JMIC, Basohli further observed that grounds of arrest have been apprised to the accused persons in the open court.

Advocate S.S Ahmed during the course of arguments further submitted that the Police Officers/Officials named above with a view to justify their illegal act lodged a false/frivolous FIR No.061/2025 under Section 32/221/352/3(5) BNS at P/S Basohli against the innocent petitioners and arrested them in the said FIR while violating the guidelines laid down by the Apex Court in case titled Arnesh Kumar V/s State of Bihar reported as (2014) 8 SCC 273 wherein the Apex Court has held that no person shall be detained/arrested in cases where offence is punishable with imprisonment for a term which may be less than 07 years or which may extend to 07 years whether with or without fine.

Advocate S.S Ahmed strenuously argued that the entire team of Basohli Police bluntly and blatantly violated the mandate of the guidelines laid down by the highest court of the country in the aforementioned judgments passed in DK Basu's and Arnesh Kumar's cases.

Advocate S.S Ahmed also drew the attention of the court towards the physical/clinical examination reports of the petitioners and submitted that the said injuries were the result of the third-degree torture inflicted upon the petitioners at Atal Setu (Basohli) and at P/S Basohli. He further submitted that no arrest memo was prepared nor grounds of arrest were disclosed to the petitioners and moreover, they were not required to be arrested as the punishment prescribed in the alleged offences was less than 7 years.

After considering the submissions of Advocate S.S Ahmed, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi took cognizance of the Contempt Petition and issued notices to the aforementioned Police Officers/Officials and directed the registry to re-notify the instant Contempt Petition on September 3, 2025.

NDA has comfortable...

Rajya Sabha. Of the five vacancies in Rajya Sabha, four are from Jammu and Kashmir and one from Punjab, where sitting member Sanjeev Arora quit the seat after being elected to the state assembly in a bypoll last month.

The effective strength of both the Houses together is 786 and the winning candidate will require to win 394 votes in the election for the vice president, considering all eligible voters exercise their franchise.

In Lok Sabha, the BJP-led NDA enjoys the support of 293 members in the 542-member House. The ruling alliance has the support of 129 members in Rajya Sabha that has an effective strength of 240, assuming that the nominated members vote in support of the NDA nominee.

The ruling alliance has the support of 422 members among 786 members, which is the combined strength of both the Houses.

According to Clause 2 of Article 68 of the Constitution, an election to fill a vacancy in the office of the vice president occurring due to his death, resignation or removal, or otherwise, will be held "as soon as possible" after it goes vacant.

The person elected to fill the vacancy will be entitled to hold office "for the full term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office".

Article 66 (1) of the Constitution provides that the election shall be held in accordance with the system of Proportional Representation by means of the single transferable vote and the voting at such election shall be by secret ballot.

In this system, the elector has to mark preferences against the names of the candidates. The vice president is the second highest constitutional office in the country. He serves for a five-year term, but can continue to be in office, irrespective of the expiry of the term, until the successor assumes office.

Dhankhar resigned as the vice president on Monday evening, citing medical reasons. He sent his resignation to President Droupadi Murmu and said he was stepping down with immediate effect.

EC to soon...

the vice president. From the day the notification is issued, "calling the electoral college to vote", and till the day of the poll, a period of 30 days is stipulated.

A person cannot be elected as the vice president unless he is a citizen of India, has completed 35 years of age and is qualified for election as a member of the Rajya Sabha. A person is also not eligible if he holds any office of profit under the government of India or a state government or any subordinate local authority.

LG launches web...

recorded and acted upon.

In order to ensure regular oversight, coordination, and follow-up on the grievances and pending claims, Special Monitoring Cells have been constituted in the offices of Chief Secretary and Director General of Police.

These Special Cells will periodically review the status of pending and resolved cases, analyze delays or bottlenecks in processing, and coordinate with relevant departments to ensure timely and just resolution of claims.

Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Nalin Prabhat, DGP; Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home Department; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; M Raju, Commissioner Secretary, GAD; Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; VK Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu and Jaskaran Singh Modi, SIO, NIC were present, in person and through virtual mode.

Three killed after...

for autopsy. In another incident, four Amarnath pilgrims suffered minor injuries after their bus collided with a railing inside the Kella Morh tunnel along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway. The pilgrims were returning from the Baltal base camp to Jammu when the accident took place, officials said. Medical superintendent of the Ramban district hospital, Sudarshan Singh Katoch, said the injured persons were in stable condition.

Court awards 15 years, 10 years RIs in NDPS case

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Special Judge NDPS Court Jammu, Yash Pal Sharma, on Monday awarded Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) of 15 years to Kalu Ram and 10 years RI to Tarsem Lal, who were facing trial in a Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act case dating back to 2018.

As per the prosecution, on July 2, 2018, at around 10:00 PM, during a routine vehicle checking at Aap Shambo Morh, Roop Nagar, Jammu, a Maruti car (JK02Q-0133) coming from the Bantalab side and heading toward Jammu city was intercepted by the police. The vehicle was being driven by Tarsem Lal, while Kalu Ram was seated on the rear seat. During a routine search of the car, the police discovered a hidden polythene bag under the rear seat, where Kalu Ram was sitting. The bag contained 88 corn-cob-shaped packets of Charas, wrapped in maize husk, weighing 1.400 kilograms, indicating that the substance was being transported for sale, not personal use.

Special Public Prosecutor Bandhana Janwal argued on behalf of the UT.

After hearing the case, Judge Y.P. Sharma observed that Kalu Ram cannot be treated as a first-time offender, given the quantity of Charas recovered. He remarked on the alarming impact of the drug menace, especially among the younger generation, emphasizing the need for stringent action. The court concluded that the recovered narcotics were of commercial quantity, and no leniency could be shown. Kalu Ram was thus sentenced to 15 years RI and fined Rs 1,10,000, with an additional two years RI in case of default. He will receive the benefit of set-off under Section 428 CrPC. Regarding Tarsem Lal, the court noted that he had no prior criminal record, and no evidence was produced suggesting previous involvement in any NDPS case. While he was the driver, and the contraband was under the rear seat, it could not be ruled out that he was aware of its presence. However, being a first-time offender, and having already undergone over six years of custody and trial, the court sentenced him to 10 years RI and a fine of Rs 1,00,000, with two additional years RI in case of non-payment. Both sentences were awarded under Section 20(b)(ii)(C) of the NDPS Act.

SC/ ST (POA) Act cannot be weaponized to settle personal conflicts/ grudges: Court

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Presiding Officer Fast Track Court Jammu Amarjeet Singh Langeh, in a case title State Vs Varun Saini & Ors declined plea of victim to invoke provisions of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 and rejected prayer of her counsel to submit the case to designated/ special court under the Act.

Allegations against accused in the case were that accused -1 entered into deceitful marriage with prosecutrix in the year 2022 and in December 2023 when prosecutrix became pregnant, accused-1 allegedly administered some medicine to her as a result of which miscarriage took place and accused as such kept on raping her for two years under the bluff and deceit of said fake marriage. Ultimately challan was produced in the court against main accused for offences under sections 376/313/201 of IPC while as remaining accused were found involved in commission of offences under sections 504/506 of IPC.

During arguments on charge, counsel for victim forcefully argued for invocation of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989 against accused by highlighting that accused -1 made insulting castiest remark against victim and that section 3 (2)(V) of SC/ST (POA) Act is also attracted in the case and insisted that accused be accordingly put on trial for these offences also.

While rejecting the submission of counsel for victim, presiding officer of the court, Amarjeet Singh Langeh (Session Judge) held " there is no evidence that such remark was thrown At prosecutrix in public view and by submitting that section 3 of act be also invoked in the case, counsel for victim only goes overboard with this argument which is wholly specious," adding "Aforesaid special Act cannot be permitted to be weaponized to settle personal conflicts and individual grudges mired in acrimony". Rejecting another argument of victim that section 3 (2)(V) of Act in question be also pressed in the case, court further held, "offence of rape was allegedly committed against prosecutrix by accused -1 not because she was a member of SC community but because she was deceitfully bluffed into belief of being married wife of A-1. To attract offence under section 3(2)(V) of Act supra, the offence alluded to an accused must be potentially rooted in castiest mindset or malice and not otherwise" Adding "by raising this argument, counsel for victim has only been more assertive than explorative".

Court accordingly framed charges for offences under sections 376/493/313/201 of IPC against A-1 while as remaining accused were charged for offence under section 506 of IPC and posted the matter for recording plea of accused on next date.

Court convicts two in acid attack case

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a landmark judgment, Additional Sessions Judge, Kulgam, Parvaiz Iqbal, on Tuesday held Mohd Yaseen Kolay and Mohd Iqbal Kolay of Kolinarad Lamad, Tehsil Devsar, Kulgam, guilty in a gruesome acid attack case registered under FIR No. 214 of 2010 at Police Station Qazigund.

The judgment, spread over 134 pages, detailed the brutality of the incident, in which the accused, displaying "savagery and barbarism to the hilt," caused irreparable physical and psychological trauma to the victim, Nazir Ahmad Deedad, who lost both eyes and suffered permanent disfigurement of the face, chest, and limbs. Mst. Hajra, another victim, sustained grievous injuries on her right arm and chest.

The court observed that the victims' suffering-particularly Nazir's lifelong handicap, loss of vision, mobility, and facial disfigurement-plunged him into a life of "gloom and melancholy." Despite the court's earlier recommendations to the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) for victim relief and compensation, these were repeatedly rejected, prompting the court to remark that "the system owes an apology" for failing to support the victims.

Judge Iqbal emphasized that although newer legal provisions like Sections 326-A and 326-B of the RPC (introduced via the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013) were meant to specifically address acid attack cases, they could not be invoked here as the incident occurred in 2010, prior to their enactment. Consequently, the accused were charged under Sections 307 and 326 of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), which, the court noted, inadequately capture the uniquely devastating impact of acid attacks.

The court firmly concluded that the prosecution had proven the case beyond reasonable doubt, noting the failure of the defense to present any alternative hypothesis or cast doubt on the prosecution's case. It stated that while a defense need not prove innocence, it must raise reasonable doubt, which was not achieved despite best efforts.

This judgment not only highlights the severe physical and emotional consequences suffered by acid attack victims but also underscores the need for timely compensation and legal reforms to ensure justice and rehabilitation. The conviction of the two accused underlines the judiciary's resolve to treat such heinous crimes with the seriousness they deserve, even when existing laws fall short.

3 snatchers held with sharp-edged weapon

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: Samba Police has apprehended three snatchers with sharp-edged weapon and recovered snatched money in a case registered at Police Station Samba.

On 18.07.2025, a written complaint was lodged at Police Station Samba by one person namely Chiman Lal S/o Soba Ram R/o Mandi Kheli Samba stating therein that three persons snatched cash of rupees 4900/- from him and threatened with sharp-edged weapon while he was selling vegetables at Samba market.

Taking cognizance into the matter, a case FIR No. 189/2025 u/s 307/3(5) BNS, 4/25 Arms Act has been registered at Police Station Samba and investigation started. During the course of investigation, a team from Police Station Samba has apprehended accused namely Farunis S/o Grifan R/o Pangdour Samba, Tony S/o Hira Lal R/o Pangdour Samba and one more in the instant case. Police has recovered sharp-edged weapon and snatched cash from their possession. The motorcycle Bullet bearing registration No. PB02CW-6999 used in the commission of the offence has also been seized.

6 vehicles including 4 dumpers seized for illegal mining

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: Continuing its drive against illegal mining, Samba Police has seized six vehicles including four dumpers in the jurisdiction of Police Stations Ramgarh, Ghagwal and Samba which were being used for illegal transportation/mining of the construction material.

Police teams headed by SHO PS Ramgarh, Incharge Police Post Rajpura of PS Ghagwal and Incharge Police Post Supwal of PS Samba while performing patrolling duty in their jurisdictional areas, have seized four dumpers bearing registration Nos. JK02BF-1931,JK02CP-1431, JK21D-9880, JK02DJ-7986 and two tractor trolleys without Nos. which were being used for illegal transportation/mining of the construction material in the area.

The above mentioned vehicles have been seized by Samba Police and handed over to the Geology & Mining Department, Samba for further legal action.