

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Undeterred by terror...

Barfani today. Jammu city has come alive with a new vibrancy. The enthusiasm of pilgrims is very high.

Undeterred by terror incidents, devotees of Bhole Baba are arriving in huge numbers, demonstrating their immense faith. I hope that this year's Yatra will be even more historic than previous years," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Eminent spiritual leaders; heads of religious organizations; public representatives; senior officers of civil administration, Police, security forces and Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, prominent citizens, and devotees in large number were present at the Flag-off ceremony.

The first batch of pilgrims for the Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2025 arrived at the Baltal Base Camp, marking the formal commencement of the annual pilgrimage.

In a spirit of devotion and hospitality, the District Administration Ganderbal extended a warm and heartfelt welcome to the Yatis at the base camp. The welcome ceremony was graced by the presence of Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Fahim Bihagi, SDM Kangan, along with officers from the Civil Administration, Police and members of the local community.

Amid chants of "Bum Bum Bhole" and "Har Har Mahadev", enthusiastic pilgrims braved heavy rain as they left in a convoy of vehicles for Shri Amarnath yatra from Jammu, which was transformed into a city of divinity.

Undeterred by the Pahalgam terrorist attack that left 26 people dead on April 22, the pilgrims said the increasing number of devotees thronging the yatra will send a befitting reply to terrorists and Pakistan -- that they do not fear them.

Sarwanand Patel, a yatri from Gujarat who left in the first batch from Jammu, said, "No matter how many attacks happen or how many bombs are hurled, devotees will not be deterred. We are not scared. Pilgrims will definitely come for darshan. I want to tell the nation that there is no need to be afraid. The large number of pilgrims is a befitting reply to them."

Sumita, a teenage pilgrim from Uttar Pradesh, said they had planned to be part of the first batch and today it became a reality.

"We are happy to get darshan of Bholenath in the first batch. We are not scared because we know the security would be adequate. The arrangements are very good -- food, accommodation, sanitation, and all facilities," she said.

Another devotee, Ramesh Chander, who has been travelling to Amarnath for the past nine years, praised the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board and the administration for making the best possible arrangements.

"These are the best arrangements. We pray that everybody gets darshan in peace. There is nothing to fear. The Army and other security forces are here to guard the yatra."

Traffic restrictions will be imposed on various routes from July 2 to August 9, and daily advisories will be issued to minimise inconvenience, a traffic officer said, adding that cut-off timings have been fixed for each sector on the highway, which is monitored through CCTV surveillance.

Apart from the over 3.30 lakh yatis registered for this year's yatra, on-the-spot registration of devotees arriving for the pilgrimage has also started in Jammu, they said.

Jammu has come under a security blanket with enhanced measures, including a multi-layered security grid and the use of technology for surveillance.

Soon after the flagging off, J-K BJP President Sat Sharma said that thousands of devotees have come for the darshan of Baba Amarnath.

"The atmosphere created two months ago by the terror incident (in Pahalgam) has been replaced by religious fervour and divinity. People have faith that they are in safe hands in Jammu and Kashmir," Sharma said.

The DIG of Doda-Kishtwar-Ramban range, Shridhar Patil, said that no drones or any other flying objects will be permitted along the yatra route without prior permission from the concerned deputy commissioner.

"All aerial activities in the area are prohibited to maintain tight security. Anyone violating this rule will face strict action," he warned.

Special arrangements at...

The J-K administration together have created a special holding area for the stay of passengers at Jammu Railway Station, where registration counters have been set up so that the pilgrims can get themselves registered on their arrival in the city.

Health checkup facility has also been made available for the pilgrims at the station, along with this, help booths have also been set up at the station to provide guidance and information regarding the journey, the officer said.

He said special attention has also been given to the food and drink for the pilgrims, and along with the deployment of special and additional security forces for the safety of the pilgrims at the railway station, CCTV cameras have also been installed.

Singhal said special trains are being operated by the Railways for the pilgrims coming from other states.

For the convenience of the passengers at the station, additional reserved and unreserved ticket counters have also been opened by the commercial department, and information about the trains is being given continuously through the announcement system at the station, he said.

Akashvani Srinagar launches...

technologies to ensure seamless and uninterrupted transmission for the benefit of the yatis and stakeholders. "Our aim is to make the broadcast accessible not only on the ground but also globally," he said.

Singh said the broadcasts for SANJY 2025 will be available across several plat-

forms, including 103.7 MHz FM, WAVES OTT Platform, DTH services, NewsonAir Android & iOS App, and Akashvani Aradhana Channel.

Additionally, two special transmitters have been installed at Baltal and Pahalgam to ensure uninterrupted coverage along the trekking routes to the Holy Cave even in remote and high-altitude areas, he added.

The special transmission will include devotional music, daily reports from all base camps and Yatra routes, special interviews, features, segments and informative capsules, Singh said.

Union Minister, CM...

development reaches the grassroots through sustainable livelihoods.

Union Minister said that encouraging youth to enter micro and small-scale livestock and fishery enterprises can generate employment and inclusive growth.

He informed that a detailed plan is being drawn up involving key national institutions like the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) to build strong infrastructure and link farmers to markets.

He also announced the government's intention to hold an Exporters' Conference and a Private Sector Investment Conference in J&K to boost entrepreneurship.

Emphasizing the need to shift dairy operations from the unorganized to the organized sector, the Minister stressed the importance of cooperatives and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).

He cited the example of dairy cooperatives in Varanasi where milk production increased manifold, and additional income was being earned even from cattle waste. He urged J&K's officials to study and replicate such successful models.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah thanked the Union Minister for his visit and reiterated the significance of such joint reviews in identifying local priorities and learning from national best practices.

He observed that in J&K, large industries and factories have not always yielded sustainable results, and the real opportunity lies in strengthening traditional sectors like agriculture, horticulture, livestock, fisheries, and tourism. "Our strength lies in these sectors-not in chasing elusive factories. We must build on what is rooted in J&K," he said.

The Chief Minister highlighted that while J&K contributes 90% of India's trout production, the sector lacks organized processing and value addition. Similarly, despite high per capita meat consumption, much of the mutton is sourced from outside. He emphasized that self-sufficiency in meeting domestic demand can significantly improve incomes and reduce imports. He also spoke about the gradual decline of cooperatives in the dairy sector and assured that his government is committed to reviving cooperative culture and linking milk producers to formal processing networks.

Referring to the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP), the Chief Minister said the initiative was launched to address critical gaps in oilseed production, fodder, dairy, mutton, and fisheries. He appreciated the Union Government's support and assured that all valuable suggestions made during the review would be implemented with sincerity and urgency.

During the event, the Union Minister and Chief Minister virtually inaugurated a 50,000 litres per day Ultra High Temperature (UHT) Milk Plant at Sattwari, Jammu, and held interactions with progressive dairy farmers, who shared their experiences of improved incomes and organized procurement process through cooperative societies.

The meeting concluded with both leaders reaffirming their shared vision for transforming Animal Husbandry and Fisheries into vibrant, employment-generating sectors in J&K. It was resolved to implement joint strategies for infrastructure expansion, market linkages, entrepreneurship development, and cooperatives' revival, aimed at building a resilient rural economy.

Earlier, Principal Secretary Shailendra Kumar gave a detailed presentation on the performance of the Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Departments, noting that the sectors contribute ₹12,634 crore-6.25% of J&K's GDP. The livestock population includes 24.54 lakh cattle, 31 lakh sheep, 15 lakh goats, and 73 lakh backyard poultry, with annual milk production at 2,875 TMT and trout accounting for 90% of the national output.

The presentation highlighted achievements under major schemes. Under the National Livestock Mission, 2.9 lakh animals were insured and Sheep AI Centres established. Livestock Health & Disease Control facilitated mass vaccinations and the deployment of 50 Mobile Veterinary Units has been made. The meeting was informed that NADCP has covered over 96 lakh vaccinations, and Rashtriya Gokul Mission has expanded AI services and trained over 1,500 MAITRIS. PMMSY has supported aquaculture infrastructure, ornamental fisheries, and RAS units, benefiting nearly 80,000 individuals.

Under the National Program for Dairy Development, JKMPCL is targeting Rs 500 crore turnover by 2025-26, with two new milk plants underway at a cost of Rs 258.10 crore. Over 11.33 lakh Kisan Credit Cards have been issued, including 2.46 lakh for AH&F. The AHIDF has achieved a 73% sanction rate, enabling private investments in dairy and poultry infrastructure.

It was noted that Rs 5,013 crore Holistic Agriculture Development Program includes Rs 1,364 crore for livestock and fisheries, aiming at self-sufficiency in milk, mutton, and eggs. More than 1,800 Pashu Sakhis have been deployed, and 500 hydroponic fodder units are being set up to address green fodder needs.

It was stated that digitization is advancing through platforms like the Kisan Sathi Portal, Daksh Kisan LMS, and the Output Tracking App. Over 2,000 Kisan Khidmat Ghars are being established to deliver agricultural services at the grassroots level.

The department's reform efforts have earned national recognition, including the SKOCH Gold Award, Innovation Leadership Award, and the Best UT in

Fisheries Award for 2024.

PM embarks on...

world order," he said in his departure statement.

During the week-long travel, the PM will visit Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, Brazil and Namibia.

Ghana will be his first port of call. Modi said that at the invitation of President John Dramani Mahama, he will be there on July 2 and 3.

Ghana is a valued partner in the Global South and plays an important role in the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, he said, adding that he looked forward to talks aimed at further deepening the two countries' historical ties and opening up new windows of cooperation, including in the areas of investment, energy, health, security, capacity building and development partnership.

He said, "As fellow democracies, it will be an honour to speak at the Parliament of Ghana."

For the next couple of days after visiting Ghana, he will be in Trinidad and Tobago, a country with which India shares deep-rooted historical, cultural and people-to-people connect.

Modi will meet President Christine Carla Kangaloo, who was the chief guest at this year's Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, and Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, who has recently assumed office for the second term.

"Indians first arrived in Trinidad and Tobago 180 years ago. This visit will provide an opportunity to rejuvenate the special bonds of ancestry and kinship that unite us," the Indian prime minister said.

Modi will then travel to Buenos Aires, the first bilateral visit by an Indian prime minister to Argentina in 57 years.

He said Argentina is a key economic partner in Latin America and a close collaborator in the G20 and that he looked forward to discussions with President Javier Milei, whom he had met last year.

"We will focus on advancing our mutually beneficial cooperation, including in the areas of agriculture, critical minerals, energy, trade, tourism, technology, and investment," Modi said.

He will attend the BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro on July 6 and 7.

No linkages between...

studies have conclusively established that there is no direct link between COVID-19 vaccination and reports of sudden deaths.

Studies by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) affirm that COVID-19 vaccines in India are safe and effective, with extremely rare instances of serious side effects, it said.

Sudden cardiac deaths can result from a wide range of factors, including genetics, lifestyle, pre-existing conditions, and post-Covid complications, the ministry said in a statement.

The ICMR and NCDC have been working together to understand the causes behind sudden unexplained deaths, especially in young adults between the ages of 18 and 45 years.

To explore this, two complementary studies were undertaken using different research approaches -- one based on past data and another involving real-time investigation.

The first study conducted by ICMR's National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE) was titled "Factors associated with unexplained sudden deaths among adults aged 18-45 years in India - a multi-centric matched case control study."

This study was carried out from May to August 2023 across 47 tertiary care hospitals in 19 states and Union territories, the statement said.

It looked at individuals who appeared to be healthy but died suddenly between October 2021 and March 2023.

The findings have conclusively showed that COVID-19 vaccination does not increase the risk of unexplained sudden deaths in young adults.

CRPF deploys women...

in coordination with all stakeholders. All our teams are tasked to render timely assistance to the pilgrims and also provide a strong security cover," CRPF deputy inspector general and joint nodal officer for the Yatra, Sudhir Kumar, said.

Kumar, who supervised the yatra last year too, said all security arrangements are in place for the event, taking place against the backdrop of the April 22 gunning down of 26 men in Pahalgam in a terrorist attack.

The CRPF has also deployed a team comprising 30 personnel as part of its mountain rescue teams (MRTs) along the two journey tracks. They will help in rescuing pilgrims in case of medical complications, which usually occur due to high altitude, and respond to any natural or man-made disaster, a senior officer said.

The yatra will conclude on August 9.

More than 3.31 lakh devotees have registered so far for this year's pilgrimage.

Encounter breaks out...

Reinforcements have been rushed to the area to maintain a tight cordon and neutralise the terrorists who are believed to be two to three in number and affiliated with Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit, the officials said.

Army's Jammu-based White Knight Corps, in a post on X, said, "Based on specific intelligence a joint search operation was underway in Kanzal Mandu, Kishtwar. Contact has been established with the terrorists and operations are in progress."

Earlier, three terrorists were killed and a soldier was martyred in two separate encounters in Chatroo belt in April and May, this year.

The latest encounter comes a week after a JeM terrorist was killed in an encounter by security forces in remote Bihari area of Basantgarh in Udhampur district.

Two brothers nabbed with 23 grams heroin, load carrier seized

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Continuing its drive against narcotics under Operation Sanjeevani, Jammu Police, South Zone achieved a breakthrough with the arrest of two drug peddlers, identified as real brothers, and the recovery of 23 grams of heroin-like substance along with the seizure of a load carrier vehicle.

The operation was conducted under the guidance of SP City South & SDPO City East and SHO Police Station Bahu Fort, Insp. Rajesh Jasrotia.

While performing routine patrolling duties, a police team from Police Post Narwal, led by the In-Charge Police Post Narwal, intercepted a suspicious load carrier near Railway Pulli, Narwal.

During the search, the team recovered 23 grams of heroin-like substance from the possession of two individuals. The accused have been identified as Mohd Arif and Nahid Choudhary sons of Mohd Shafi resident of Rajouri.

Both accused were taken into custody on the spot. In this regard, a case FIR No. 206/2025 under Sections 8/21/22/25 of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Bahu Fort, and further investigation is underway.



Udhampur police recovers Rs 1.13 lakh in 7 cyber fraud cases

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: Continuing its efforts to extend services to the general public and address the grievances. Cyber Cell of District Police Udhampur has successfully recovered and refunded Rs 113890/- in seven different fraud complaints.

After receiving these complaints, team of Cyber cell DPO Udhampur swung into the action and started the inquiry into the matter and initiated the process of reversal and recovery of the amount. As a result, the amount of Rs 1.13 lakh of total cheated amount have been recovered and credited to the victim accounts including Rs 60,000/- to Avtar Singh of Rehambal, ₹20,000/- to Kiran Devi (Ramnagar), and Rs 10900/- to Ritesh Lumar (Udhampur) among others.

Man held with sharp-edged weapon during hotel checking drive

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: As part of enhanced security arrangements ahead of the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025, Nowabad Police has been conducting intensified checking operations across hotels, lodges, and vulnerable spots falling under its jurisdiction.

During one such surprise inspection, an alert police party conducted a checking operation at Hotel Grand Inn, Sant Market, Jewel, Jammu. During the operation, a person was found in possession of a sharp-edged weapon (toka) under suspicious circumstances.

The individual was immediately taken into custody and later identified as Gourav Dogra, son of Rashpal, a resident of Jambal Bhatyari, Dhansal, Jammu. Upon questioning, the individual could not provide any satisfactory reason for carrying the weapon in the hotel premises.

In this connection, a case FIR No. 88/2025 under Section 4/25 of the Arms Act has been registered at Police Station Nowabad, and further investigation has been initiated to ascertain the motive and any possible links to criminal activity.

Police attaches drug peddler, his kin's properties worth Rs 1 Cr in Kathua

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday attached Rs 1 crore worth of moveable and immovable properties of an alleged drug peddler and his two brothers in Kathua district, an official said.

The properties of drug peddler Liaqut Ali and his two brothers, residents of Korepunnu village, have been attached under Section 68-F of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in connection with four cases registered against him earlier this year, the police said.

A residential house, land and tractor, with a combined worth of Rs 1.06 crores, were identified as illegally acquired property and were disproportionate to their known sources of income, the police added.

Ali is currently under arrest in these narcotics cases.

CCIU Doda observes 'Cyber Jaagrookta Diwas'

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: On the directions of SSP Doda Sandeep Kumar Mehta-JKPS, CCIU Doda organized Cyber awareness Drive to observe 'Cyber Jaagrookta Diwas' (National Cyber Awareness Day) at District Police Line, Doda with a view to give awareness to the Police personnel/officials about Cyber crime. The event witnessed large numbers of officials/personnel.

On this occasion lectures were delivered by DySP

DAR Aadil Rishu -JKPS, PSI Ankush Nagra Incharge CCIU Doda to the participants and they were made aware about the use of cyber crime portals, floating trends of fraudsters to trap common man in their tricks to loot their hard earned money by way of using various type of online cheating like Bank Apk files regarding KYC of Banks/ Govt schemes, Digital Arrest, credit card fraud, OTP, QR scan frauds, online gaming

frauds, assuring loan frauds etc. Also a lecture regarding Cyber Crime related to Girl Child/ Women were given by Lt/Ct Manta Devi. Participants were also cautioned to keep their social media accounts secure and safe and also remain aware while chatting with unknown person on facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, Twitter etc. Also aware about CEIR Portal in case of Missing/Lost/Stolen mobile phones.

Sukha Biradari congregation celebrated with unity, spiritual devotion, welfare announcements

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a vibrant display of unity and cultural heritage, members of the Sukha Biradari from across the country gathered in large numbers at Dev Sathan, Jhiri for a grand congregation marked by spiritual devotion, cultural bonding, and progressive community announcements.

The focal point of the event was the inauguration of the newly renovated Dev Sathan, led by Mahant Jagdish Mehta Ji, in the esteemed presence of key community figures including Madan Lal Sharma (President, Sukha Biradari), Mohan Lal Sharma, Janak Raj Sharma (General Secretary), and several other dignitaries.

Mahant Ji lauded the renovation efforts and commended the collective spirit and dedication of the community. Speaking on the occasion, Madan Lal Sharma unveiled a series of initiatives aimed at the upliftment



and support of Biradari members including free Scholarships for deserving students pursuing higher education; awards of Appreciation for students securing 80% and above in school and college examinations, daily Need Amenities to be provided free of cost to underprivileged families. Support for Marriages of girls from economically weaker families, offered as a token of love. In a significant structural move, a New Members' Committee has been constitut-

ed under the Biradari Committee to oversee and streamline future welfare activities and initiatives. The congregation stood as a milestone in the journey of the Sukha Biradari, reaffirming its unwavering commitment to community progress, solidarity, and cultural preservation.

The event concluded with a heartfelt appeal from the leadership urging all members to remain united and to uphold the values of sincerity, integrity, and self-reliance.