

India extends airspace ban for Pak till May 24

NEW DELHI: India has extended the ban on Pakistan planes from using its airspace till May 24.

With the latest extension, the closure of the Indian airspace for Pakistan aircraft will now be in place for more than a year -- a move that first came days after the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, 2025.

Since April last year, both countries have been extending the closure of their airspaces for each other's planes. On Tuesday, Pakistan extended the airspace closure till May 24.

A Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) on Wednesday said the Indian airspace will not be available for Pakistan-registered aircraft and aircraft operated/ owned or leased by Pakistan airlines/operators, including military flights.

The ban will be effective till 2359 hours (UTC) on May 23, which means 0530 hours (IST) on May 24.

Following the terror attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir, on April 22, 2025, ► P11

Sinha calls for students, teachers' role in nation-building

LG inaugurates new School Building of Swami Pranavanand Vidyamandir

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday called upon students and teachers to contribute to nation-building and adapt classrooms to today's changing global landscape, positioning India as the world's leading knowledge economy.

He said that every student talented in art, craft, music, or entrepreneurship deserves equal respect and opportunity.

"Students and teachers must contribute to nation-building and adapt classrooms to today's changing global landscape, positioning India as the world's leading knowledge economy," he said while inaugurating the new school building of Swami Pranavanand Vidyamandir in Panjgrain area on



the outskirts of Jammu city.

The LG said that the new higher secondary building and skill infrastructure will ensure disadvantaged students get quality education.

"Once all the floors of the building are complete, it will serve more than 1,500 students and transform thousands of lives. With future

residential facilities for 100 boys, the local economy will get a boost, backward areas will be transformed, and society will advance with new confidence," the LG said.

Addressing the gathering, Sinha said, "Teachers must recognise that education focused solely on marks and narrow academics,

sidelining art, sports, and skills, is unfit for the future. We must prepare students for irreplaceable human capacities like creativity, critical thinking, moral decision-making, collaboration, and lifelong learning, which no machine can replace."

He said the world is changing rapidly and, unlike the stable careers in the past, the professional workforce requires continuous learning, skilling and upskilling.

"We are at a threshold where AI and automation are transforming industries, offices, hospitals, and schools, and our human resources need to be a step ahead," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) and emphasised that the policy is a potent ► P11

Rajnath invites German industry to co-produce defence tech with India

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday invited the German industry to co-develop and co-produce with India, as he underscored the need to forge partnerships based on reliability and shared interests amid the current shifts in geopolitical alignments and disruptions in supply chains.

He was addressing Indian and German defence industry leaders during the Defence Investor Summit in Munich on the final day of three-day maiden visit to the European nation.

Singh invited the German industry to co-develop and co-produce with India, particularly in the field of niche technologies, the defence ministry said in a statement.

He underscored the need to forge partnerships based on reliability and shared interests, terming them as indispensable in the current shifts in geopolitical alignments, disruptions in supply chains, rapid technological transformations, and increasing global uncertainties.

The defence minister as-



serted that nations and industries are re-evaluating their dependencies, diversifying their supply chains, and seeking reliable partners who ensure resilience, continuity and mutual trust.

Singh said India, in this scenario, offers an expanding market, young and skilled workforce, and a rapidly evolving industrial ecosystem, coupled with stability, pre-

dictability, and a commitment to the rule of law. These are the critical factors for long-term investment decisions in an uncertain world, he added.

Referring to the significant untapped potential under the ReArm Europe and Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiatives, he reiterated that Indian companies are keen to engage with German firms for co-development and ► P11

UT to roll out red carpet in International Film Festival

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: In a significant initiative to promote cinema, culture, and tourism, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir has initiated plans to host a prestigious international film festival through the Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR).

The decision was taken during a high-level meeting on Thursday chaired by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, which was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism; Commissioner Secretary, Information; Director, Information & Public Relations, and other senior officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary directed the Information Department to begin preparations for this maiden film festival in the Union

Territory. He emphasized the need for a professionally managed event of national stature, drawing parallels with the International Film Festival of India held in Goa.

To ensure seamless execution, it was decided that a dedicated committee will be constituted at the earliest to oversee all arrangements related to the festival. The committee will be responsible for planning, coordination, and overall supervision to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the event.

The Chief Secretary further instructed that a competent and experienced agency be identified and engaged for efficient management of the festival. He stressed the importance of exploring best practices by studying similar events organized across the country. ► P11

CM assures priority redressal of public concerns, inclusive devp

Several public delegations, JCCI call on Omar

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said that genuine concerns of various sections of society would be addressed on priority, and reiterated the government's commitment to inclusive development.

The assurance was given during meetings with several public and trade delegations, which called on the chief minister here and presented a wide range of developmental and industry-related issues while seeking continued policy support and facilitation, officials said.

A delegation led by Jammu



Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) president Arun Gupta discussed key concerns related to trade and commerce.

The delegation highlighted issues affecting business activity and

stressed the need for a more conducive environment to boost economic growth and streamline operations, they said.

The industry representatives also expressed gratitude ► P11

Highest-ever polling recorded in WB, TN

KOLKATA/CHENNAI: West Bengal registered a record voter turnout of nearly 92 per cent in the first phase of assembly polls on Thursday amid sporadic incidents of violence, while Tamil Nadu recorded unprecedented voting of over 84 per cent as the BJP pushed to unseat Mamata Banerjee in Bengal and expand in the South.

In the first phase, 152 constituencies in West Bengal went to polls, while voting for the 234-member Tamil Nadu assembly was held in one go. The elections are taking place against the backdrop of a massive politi-

cal row over the SIR of the electoral rolls, a major flash-point between the BJP and opposition parties, including the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

In West Bengal, the BJP is eyeing to wrest power from Banerjee-led TMC, which seeks a fourth straight term in a state the saffron party has never governed, and in Tamil Nadu, key contenders are the ruling DMK and main opposition AIADMK, while actor-politician Vijay-led TVK and Tamil nationalist Seeman-led NTK are putting up a determined fight.

Terming the massive voter turnout in ► P11

Three houses of drug peddlers demolished

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The administration on Thursday demolished three houses belonging to alleged drug peddlers here, officials said.

Amid heavy deployment of police and CRPF personnel, the authorities demolished structures allegedly built using proceeds from drug trafficking in the Rajiv Nagar area.

A senior official said the demolition drive is part of an ongoing campaign against notorious drug peddlers in the region.

"We conducted a similar drive here two to three months ago. Some more drug peddlers



have since been identified, and they are currently absconding. The illegal structures constructed from money earned through the drug trade are being demolished today. Three

structures are being razed," the official told reporters here. "Drug-related activities are harming our society and ruining our children. We want to engage our youth ► P11

4 OGWs held for offering terror support

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Four over ground workers (OGWs), including a woman, were arrested in Jammu and Kashmir's summer capital here for allegedly providing logistic support to terrorists, officials said on Thursday.

Police arrested the four OGWs from Hazratbal area of the city here on Wednesday night.

They identified the OGWs as Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, and Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, all residents of Hazratbal.

The woman was identified as Shazia Mohammad, a resident of ► P11

Rathore seeks apology from Kharge over remarks on PM

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: BJP leader Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore on Thursday said AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge's terrorist remark against Narendra Modi was an attack on crores of Indians who elected the prime minister.

Addressing a press conference here, Rathore, Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of Rajasthan, said the Congress president had indulged in "verbal violence" against Prime Minister Modi, and should apologise.

"There is physical violence, and then there is verbal violence. Such a senior politician indulging in such



behaviour against a constitutional post is electoral frustration, and that too against a constitutional post that has been elected by crores of Indians. You can see where thinking, wisdom and culture have gone," he said.

The BJP leader said the

people of the country today question whether "grabbing power" is so important that people forget about democratic and cultural values and indulge in such attacks.

"This is an attack on crores of Indians who elected Modi as the PM of ► P11

Panel to probe allegations on BDO Office

JAMMU: The administration has constituted a five-member enquiry committee to probe allegations regarding the Block Development Office (BDO) in Nowshera, officials said on Thursday.

The action was taken after some contractors alleged that bills worth lakhs of rupees have been deleted by the BDO in the last one to two years.

According to an official order issued by the Assistant Commissioner Development of Rajouri, Aujil Novaira, the move comes in response to a news story highlighting certain allegations related to the functioning ► P11

Pak should act against LeT, JeM: US lawmaker

WASHINGTON: US Congressman Brad Sherman has called on Pakistan to clamp down on terror groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which has been linked to the 2025 Pahalgam terror attack.

Speaking at an exhibition organised by the Indian Embassy here on the "Human Cost of Terrorism", Sherman remembered the victims of the Pahalgam attack on the first anniversary of the incident in which 26 innocent lives were killed.

"The attackers, identified as The Resistance Front, targeted innocent people, reportedly separating victims by religion. The group is widely seen

as linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba, which has found sanctuary in Pakistan," Sherman said at the exhibition on Wednesday evening.

"We must use this moment to demand that the Pakistani government clamp down on Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed and other terrorist groups," the Democrat leader said.

The exhibition, organised at Capitol Hill, comes at a time when Pakistan is projecting itself as a peacemaker by mediating efforts to end the seven-week US-Iran war.

The event was attended by lawmakers from both Democratic and ► P11

Sinha attends foundation day of Sarv Shakti Chandi Mata Mandir

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday attended the foundation day of Sarv Shakti Chandi Mata Mandir at Dhammi, Nagrota.

The Lieutenant Governor paid obeisance at the holy temple and prayed for peace, prosperity and well-being of all.

The religious proceedings were marked by the lighting of the Akhand Jyot and the traditional reciting of Ved Path.

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor also reviewed the ongoing construction works of Yatri



Halls, being developed by the Temple Committee, to facilitate the devotees traveling to the Shri Amarnath Ji

and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine. He assured all the necessary support and assistance from the ► P11

Jai Mata Di

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