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Every child ...

meals in schools, we are not merely filling stomachs but we are shaping future thinking.

The next generation is not just our future but they are the living expression of the dream and aspiration we wish to build as a nation. Their education, health, and confidence are a shared pledge and a collective responsibility of society. The values, knowledge, and faith we instill in children today will shape Jammu Kashmir's and India's decades to come," the Lieutenant Governor said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor applauded selfless service of Akshay Patra, which is among the world's largest NGOs in the school meal sector, currently serving over 20 lakh children across 16 states and 3 UTs.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor also served the meal to the school students.

Bharatarshabha Dasa, National President & Trustee, The Akshaya Patra Foundation; Baldev Raj Sharma, Member of Legislative Assembly, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi; Kuldeep Raj Dubey, Member of Legislative Assembly from Reasi; Dr Manddeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Ram Niwas Sharma, Commissioner/Secretary School Education Department; Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Kashmir; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Shiv Kumar Sharma, DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range; Kumar Abhishek, Deputy Commissioner, Reasi; Shri Uday C. Rege from Savita Oil Technologies; senior officials, members of Akshaya Patra Foundation and students in large number attended the ceremony.

2019 Pulwama ...

orchestrating the February 14, 2019, suicide terror attack conducted by Pakistan-based terrorist organisation Jaish-e-Mohammad, on a CRPF convoy in Pulwama, which killed 40 personnel.

In retaliation, the Indian security forces ran an intelligence-led operation led by IAF jets in the early hours of February 26, 2019, striking the biggest training camp of JeM in Balakot.

Hamza, who also had an alias, Doctor, was currently living in Cheela Bandi, a densely populated neighbourhood on the outskirts of Muzaffarabad, with security details of eight commandos, a bullet-resistant (BR) vehicle, and an escort vehicle, indicating state-level protection and operational importance, sources said.

The security cover was given to him after he allegedly made a fabricated attack on himself somewhere between January and February 2025, they said.

He worked closely with Farooq Qureshi, a former Al Baraq commander whose name has repeatedly surfaced in dossiers linked to narcotics trafficking, counterfeit currency rackets, arms smuggling and cross-border militant operations in the Kashmir Valley.

The two operated from an industrial compound locally referred to as the "Machis Factory" in Muzaffarabad, the sources said.

Hamza maintained close ties with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, particularly with an officer identified as Col Rizwan, suggesting deeper intelligence ties and protection, they said.

The terrorist had recently married the daughter of Qadir Lala, a former Hizbul Mujahideen operative from Kupwara, currently employed as a security operator at the terror group's housing project in Chek Shezad, Pakistan.

He was also said to have maintained close ties with Murtaza, another former Hizbul Mujahideen operative from Pulwama, now based in Islamabad, making frequent visits to his residence, the sources said.

India slams ...

from air strikes. According to UNAMA, 94 of the 95 incidents involving civilian casualties were attributed to Pakistani security forces.

Parvathaneni said the "world has not forgotten" that during the holy month of Ramadan in March, Pakistan carried out a "barbaric airstrike" on the Omid Addiction Treatment Hospital in Kabul.

Citing UNAMA estimates, he said the "cowardly and unconscionable" act of violence killed 269 civilians and injured 122 others at the facility that "by no means can be justified as a military target".

"It is hypocritical to espouse high principles of international law while targeting innocent civilians in the dark," the Indian envoy said.

Parvathaneni further said the strikes were carried out after 'tarawih' evening prayers, when several patients were leaving the mosque.

He also cited UNAMA estimates that more than 94,000 people were displaced due to cross-border armed violence against Afghan civilians.

"But such heinous acts of aggression by Pakistan should not come as a surprise from a country that bombs its own people and conducts systematic genocide," he said, recalling Operation Searchlight in 1971, when Islamabad had sanctioned the "systematic" campaign of genocidal mass rape of 400,000 women in former East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) by its own army.

"Such inhuman conduct reflects Pakistan's repeated attempts over decades to externalise internal failures through increasingly desperate acts of violence both within and beyond its borders. With no faith, no law, and no morality, the world can see through Pakistan's propaganda," Parvathaneni said.

He said Pakistan ignored the call by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, urging member states to uphold international obligations relating to the protection of civilians, including the principle of non-refoulement in the context of Afghanistan.

India also voiced concern over the persistent threat posed by cross-border terrorism, which it said continues to undermine regional peace, stability, and international security.

"India has been a victim of such form of terrorism for decades. States that sponsor, shelter or support terrorism must be held accountable," Parvathaneni said, making a clear reference to Pakistan.

He stressed that India has consistently emphasised that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations remains one of the gravest threats to civilians worldwide.

"No cause or grievance can justify deliberate attacks against civilians," the envoy said.

Parvathaneni said, as highlighted in the UNSG's report, the use of missiles, bombs and other explosive weapons in cities and populated areas remains a major cause of civilian harm.

"The growing trend of use of drones to deploy explosive weapons in urban areas is especially concerning.

"The use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and autonomous systems by parties to conflict must be in conformity with international law and humanitarian principles," he said, adding that safeguards must be in place to prevent misuse and unintended harm to civilians.

"Protection of civilians cannot be achieved through humanitarian responses alone. The targeted use of violence against civilians to achieve political objectives, including terrorism, must be addressed comprehensively," the envoy said.

Budha Amarnath ...

route have been preserved, and among minority Hindus living near the India-Pakistan border, the spirit of valour instead of migration has grown," he said.

According to the VHP leader, the pilgrimage has also contributed to infrastructure growth in the region. A highway from Jammu to Poonch has now largely been ready. There has also been a survey regarding the extension of a railway line to the area," he said.

Parande said this year's Budha Amarnath Yatra will begin on August 16 and continue till August 27.

The inauguration will take place at Bhagwati Nagar Base Camp in Jammu, while pilgrims will leave for Poonch on August 17.

According to Parande, the Bajrang Dal has been organising the "Shri Baba Budha Amarnath Sahasik Yatra" for the past 21 years to the shrine near the India-Pakistan border.

He said the centuries-old pilgrimage had become "almost defunct" during the 1990s due to terrorism in the Valley and continuous cross-border shelling.

Parande said the Bajrang Dal took responsibility for reviving the pilgrimage around 2005 and initially mobilised around 7,000-8,000 participants annually.

"The yatra that had started with 7,000-8,000 people under Bajrang Dal's initiative has now become a pilgrimage of the larger society. Today, around 1.5 to 2 lakh people participate in it," he claimed.

"During the initial years, the yatra faced firing incidents and grenade attacks. Despite all this, the pilgrimage continued," he said.

Bajrang Dal national coordinator Kishan Prajapat said a dedicated website and registration portal have been launched for the pilgrimage to help devotees across the country register online and access information about the temple, route and travel arrangements.

Prajapat said the initiative aims to encourage more people to visit the shrine located in Mandi Rajpura village of Poonch district near the border.

Police attaches ...

illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The actions were carried out the directions of Kathua's Senior Superintendent of Police Mohita Sharma.

The properties were formally attached under various sections of the Act, after it was identified as illegally acquired during the course of investigation, officials said.

They said that Singh has been involved in four NDPS-related cases registered in Kathua district over the years.

Local residents have welcomed the action, describing it as a strong step against narcotics-related activities in the district.

Police reiterated its commitment to making the district drug-free by targeting both drug traffickers and assets allegedly created through proceeds of the narcotics trade.

Police tighten ...

In Baramulla's Boniyar area, police arrested Sabbir Mumtaz of Trikanjan after recovering a charas-like substance wrapped in polythene during routine patrolling. A case under the NDPS Act has been registered and investigation has been initiated, the official said.

In Anantnag district, police arrested an alleged "most wanted" drug peddler, identified as Nasir Ahmad Dohbi of Sallar, during naka checking at Shakras in Srigufwara area. Around five kilograms of charas powder-like substance was recovered from his possession, he said.

In another operation in the Achabal area of Anantnag, police arrested Irshad Ahmad Bhat of Magraypora and recovered a heroin-like substance from him, the official added.

Meanwhile, Police in Kulgam also made multiple arrests during naka checking operations. Bilal Ahmad Hajam of Larkipora was arrested at Chowgam Bridge and around 4.5 kilograms of charas powder was recovered from a nylon bag in his possession, police said.

Another accused, Sameer Ahmad Sheikh of Bangedar, Anantnag, was arrested with 157 grams of charas-like substance concealed in a polythene bag, police said.

In a separate operation near Sopat in Kulgam, Nazir Ahmad Rather was arrested after he allegedly tried to flee on noticing a police party. Around 2.6 kilograms of poppy straw-like substance was recovered from him, police added.

Police said all the accused were arrested and cases under relevant sections of the NDPS Act were registered at respective police stations.

In Pulwama district, police registered a case under the Essential Commodities Act after a huge quantity of urea fertiliser was allegedly found stored illegally in a godown at Parigam area. The owner failed to produce valid documents or licence for storage of the fertiliser, officials said.

Meanwhile, police conducted anti-drug awareness rallies, road races, village-level meetings and checking drives across Budgam, Baramulla, Awantipora and Pulwama districts under the anti-drug campaign.

Police said poppy plants cultivated illegally in the Rajpora area of Pulwama were destroyed, medical shops were checked in Kakapora and raids were conducted at several locations linked to narcotics activities.

DIPR hosts ...

School Panjgrain Jammu.

The programme was aimed at sensitising students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and motivating them to adopt a healthy and responsible lifestyle. Students actively participated in the symposium and shared insightful views on the issue, reflecting awareness and concern towards building a drug-free society.

The chief guest- Headmaster Manju Chaudhary appreciated the initiative and encouraged students to act as responsible citizens by spreading awareness against drug abuse.

Sonakshi secured the first position for an impressive presentation, whereas Reetika and Kritika were adjudged second and third, respectively.

Symposium was judged by Rekha Sharma, Meena Sharma and Rajinder Singh.

Adding further impact to the programme, a Nukkad Natak on Nasha Mukti was presented by the students of the school, effectively conveying a strong social message. The artists of the Cultural Unit Jammu also presented theme-based songs in Hindi and Punjabi, which inspired the audience and reinforced the campaign's message.

The programme witnessed active participation from students, staff members and faculty, making it a meaningful awareness initiative.

The entire programme was conducted under the direction of Deepak Dubey, Joint Director Jammu and under the supervision of Mohit Sharma, Cultural Officer.

Chinese pistol, ...

The recovered items included a Chinese-origin pistol and some packets which are suspected to contain narcotics. One of the bags had 'Lahore' written on it.

Further investigation is underway and more details are awaited.

Meanwhile, Security forces have arrested an over ground worker of terrorists in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Thursday.

Police, army and CRPF launched a joint operation in village Mohammadpora of Kulgam district on Wednesday evening and intercepted one suspicious person, the officials said.

They said two hand grenades were recovered during the search of the suspect.

The suspect has been identified as Aadil Hussain Lone, a local resident of the village Mohammadpora.

A case under relevant sections of the law has been registered at police station Kulgam.

Snow, rain ...

spells of light rain and thundershowers with gusty winds and hailstorm at many places over Thursday and Friday.

The weather is likely to stay generally dry in the forenoon, with brief showers likely towards late afternoon hours at isolated to scattered places till May 25, it said.

Sajad Lone ...

President and MLA Handwara, Sajad Gani Lone, on the death anniversary of Shaheed Abdul Gani Lone," the party said in a statement.

It called the house arrest of the party president and Handwara MLA, undemocratic.

"Such actions hurt public sentiments and weaken democratic values," the party said.

Party leaders said Sajad Lone was scheduled to visit the graveyard and attend commemorative events in memory of his father in north Kashmir.

Supporters of the party also gathered at several places to pay tributes to Abdul Gani Lone, remembering his political contribution and advocacy for dialogue and peace in Jammu and Kashmir during a turbulent period in the region's history.

Parliamentary panel

Report on NTA reforms and informed that around 70 per cent of the short-term measures suggested have already been implemented.

The NTA officials told the members of the panel that steps are being taken to evolve a foolproof examination system and a comprehensive review is being conducted. They also said credible people should be involved in the paper setting and distribution system.

The NTA officials said holding the NEET through a computer-based testing (CBT) platform is being considered and future exams could be conducted through this mode.

The MPs are learnt to have raised the issue of a shortage of staff and filling vacancies in the NTA to ensure that the agency functions efficiently and leakages are prevented.

The sources said the NTA informed the members of the committee that there is a staff shortage of around 25 per cent in the agency currently and steps are being taken systematically to fill up all such vacancies to plug any loophole.

After the meeting, the chairperson of the parliamentary panel, Congress MP Digvijaya Singh, said, "Whatever discussions happen in the parliamentary committee, we are under oath and we cannot discuss it."

He later said, "The meeting went off very well. We got inputs from all the members. The members expressed their concerns over the NEET paper leak."

Earlier, listing out the steps taken by the NTA and the government to prevent breaches and malpractices, the officials of the agency said detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs) and checklists for breach management in both PPT and CBT modes have been sent to stakeholders and the collaboration established with the state or district administrations for conducting high-stake examinations and reporting malpractices are being actively monitored on social-media platforms.

The NTA informed the panel that the NEET (UG) 2026 was conducted by it on May 3 at 5,432 centres in 565 cities (including 14 cities abroad). The examination was conducted in 13 languages and more than 22.7 lakh candidates had registered, with over 22.05 lakh appearing in the examination.

The medical-entrance exam was cancelled recently amid allegations of paper leak. A re-test is scheduled to be held on June 21.

India, Egypt ..

underscored the importance of bilateral cooperation in countering terrorism, reflecting the spirit of India-Egypt Strategic Partnership," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on the India-Egypt Joint Working Group meeting on Counter-Terrorism.

It said the two sides unequivocally and strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms, including cross-border terrorism, while reaffirming the principle of zero tolerance towards the menace.

India and Egypt reiterated that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group, the MEA said.

The two sides also strongly condemned the Pahalgam terrorist attack as well as the terror incident near the Red Fort in November last year.

India and Egypt stressed that all those involved in terrorist activities and their supporters must be held accountable and brought to justice, the MEA said.

"Egypt reaffirmed its solidarity with India against all forms of terrorism aimed at undermining the country's security and stability," it said.

The MEA said the two sides called for "concerted actions against all UN-designated terrorists and terrorist entities and their affiliates, proxy groups, supporters, sponsors, financiers and backers."

It said both sides reviewed a wide range of traditional and emerging threats and challenges such as terrorist recruitment, abuse of technology for terrorist purposes and financing of terrorism.

"They expressed concerns over the increasing use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), drones and AI for terrorist purposes," it said.

"The two sides discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in areas of training and capacity building, cyber security, judicial cooperation, exchange of best practices and information sharing," the MEA added.

Sinha opens ....

after inaugurating the helipad at Katra, Sinha said the Mata Vaishno Devi Board and the Shiv Khori Board -- both civil authorities -- have jointly developed the facility.

"It is a very modern heliport, designed keeping in view passenger facilities and with full emphasis on safety," he said.

The LG said the heliport has been constructed in accordance with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA) norms.

"From here, devotees visiting Shiv Khori can also travel by helicopter for darshan. As demand for helicopter services was

increasing, especially among Mata Vaishno Devi pilgrims, we decided to construct a modern and highly-safe helipad as per the DGCA norms," he said.

Sinha expressed hope that improved facilities would benefit devotees at both shrines and boost religious tourism in the region.

Katra already has two helipads at Katra city and Sanjichat to ferry pilgrims visiting the cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi.

Meanwhile, LG Manoj Sinha today also dedicated the new Vaishnavi Bhawan at the holy shrine Shri Mata Vaishno Devi to the devotees.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the new facility will significantly enhance the pilgrim accommodation capacity at Bhawan, improve overall pilgrim amenities and create a modern, efficient and comfortable infrastructure designed to accommodate the growing influx of devotees.

The project was conceptualized under the comprehensive Master Plan for the Bhawan and its extended areas. Recognizing the need for enhanced infrastructure and creation of modern Yatri Accommodation facilities, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) approved the redevelopment of the Pannishalla area, which was previously used for staff quarters, into Yatri-cum-Staff Accommodation complex.

The New Vaishnavi Bhawan has been constructed over a total area of approximately 45,784 Sq. ft. The facility will provide 78 well-furnished rooms for pilgrims.

The construction work of the building commenced in the month of February 2024 and the building was completed in a time period of two years.

The ground floor houses reception and waiting areas, Manager Office and Staff Mess with Kitchen, ensuring efficient operational management of the facility. A Bhojanalaya is also available on the terrace for catering to pilgrims and staff.

To ensure accessibility and convenience, the building is equipped with five lifts, including three passenger lifts of 26-person capacity, one service lift and one connecting lift linking the facility with Parvati Bhawan.

The Lieutenant Governor also paid obeisance at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi ji Shrine. He prayed for peace and prosperity of J&K UT and well-being of one and all.

Members of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board - Mahamandleshwar Shri Swami Vishveshvaranand Giri Maharaj, Dr. Ashok Bhan, Suresh Kumar Sharma; Lalit Bhasin, Kulbushan Ahuja; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB; Shiv Kumar Sharma, DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range; Kumar Abhishek, Deputy Commissioner, Reasi; Alok Maurya, Additional CEO SMVDSB, senior officials of the Shrine Board, police and District Administration attended the inaugural ceremony

Sinha reviews ...

Shrine Board including Mahamandleshwar Shri Swami Vishveshvaranand Giri Maharaj, Baleshwar Rai, Dr. Ashok Bhan, Sudha Murty, Gunjan Rana, Dr. K.K. Talwar, Kulbushan Ahuja, Lalit Bhasin, and Suresh Kumar Sharma.

Padma Shri Prof. Vishwa Murti Shastri; Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu; Prof. K.S. Chandrasekar, Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu; Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB; Alok Maurya, Additional CEO, SMVDSB; and Shruti Awasthi, Regional Director, IGNOA, Prof. Satish Kumar Kapoor, Director, Central Sanskrit University, Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Campus; Dr. Chandler Mouli Raina, Sanskrit Scholar and senior officials also attended the meeting.

During the deliberations, Board members and other stakeholders shared their valuable insights and suggestions for creation of a world-class spiritual and cultural landmark. The proposed museum aims to offer pilgrims a deeper understanding of Mata Shakti by seamlessly blending immersive storytelling, artifacts, and rich local traditions with cutting-edge modern technology. The state-of-the-art institution will showcase the sacred iconography of 51 Shakti Peethas alongside the nine divine Swaroops of Maa Durga.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board briefed the meeting on steps taken so far. These include the launch of a dedicated website to invite suggestions from across the globe, study visits by teams to existing premier museums across the country, and the identification of leading domain experts to bring the grand vision to fruition.

The Board approved the creation of a permanent post for a Director General, who will head the International Museum of Goddess alongside a dedicated team of experts and officials. Furthermore, the Board granted approval for a dedicated corpus of funds to seamlessly drive the conceptualization, development, and operations of the prestigious project.

The Lieutenant Governor suggested deputing a team of experts to visit the various sacred Shaktipeeths to be featured in the museum. The Board also resolved to appoint a specialized consultant to spearhead detailed research and architectural conceptualization.

The Museum shall serve as a spiritual sanctuary and a premier center of knowledge. With an integrated library and research center, it will play a pivotal role in awakening the young generation to the rich cultural, traditional, and spiritual values of our Shaktipeeths and the region.

J&K Bank ...

MoU on behalf of J&K Bank, while Managing Director Seong Woo Shim signed on behalf of HD Construction Equipment India Pvt. Ltd. Senior officials present on the occasion included the company's AVP Joydeep Bakshi and Head Sales-NCW Sharwan Agnihotri, Bank's AGM Ashfaq Ahmad Hakak, authorised Hyundai dealer partner for J&K (Fuel Automobiles) Oves ur Rehman, besides other officials of the Bank and the company.

Speaking on the occasion, General Manager (RAM) Rakesh Magotra said, "This MoU underlines the Bank's continued focus on supporting infrastructure-led growth and entrepreneurship through responsive and need-based financial solutions. By combining the Bank's strong financing capabilities with HD Construction Equipment India's trusted range of construction and mining equipment, we aim to facilitate easier access to technologically advanced machinery for contractors, entrepreneurs and businesses engaged in infrastructure creation across Jammu & Kashmir and other regions."

"Given the rapid pace of infrastructure expansion across the country, especially in the UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, the collaboration will not only simplify the financing process for customers but also contribute towards accelerating economic activity, employment generation and development of critical infrastructure," he added.

In his remarks on the occasion, Managing Director, HD Construction Equipment India, Seong Woo Shim said, "We are pleased to partner with J&K Bank -- the premier financial institution of the region. This collaboration will enhance financing accessibility and strengthen customer support in the region. Through our partnership with J&K Bank, we aim to facilitate faster adoption of advanced Hyundai equipment while contributing to infrastructure growth and economic development in Jammu & Kashmir."

Notably, the partnership assumes significance in view of the increasing infrastructural development activities across the country, particularly in the UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, where sectors such as roads, railways, hydroelectric projects, tourism infrastructure, and allied construction activities are witnessing rapid growth.

Presenting the vote of thanks on the occasion, DGM (RAM) Arjun Singh Rathore thanked the participants, expressing confidence that the agreement will benefit customers with streamlined financing for advanced equipment and strong after-sales support.