

THOUGHT of the DAY
Happiness is not something readymade. It comes from your own actions.
-Dalai Lama

Shri Amarnathji Yatra
HM Shah calls for multi-layered security, real-time monitoring



NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said a multi-layered, impenetrable security grid should be established by CAPFs, the Jammu and Kashmir Police and all security agencies along the Amarnath Yatra route and at tourist places to ensure a peaceful pilgrimage.

Chairing a meeting on the preparedness for the Yatra starting on July 3, Shah said the traditional security apparatus should be further strengthened through the extensive use of drones, CCTV monitoring, surveillance systems and other modern technologies.

The meeting was attended by National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, Army Chief Gen Upenendra Dwivedi, Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Intelligence Bureau Chief Tapan Kumar Deka, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Director General GP Singh, besides other senior security and administrative officials.

The 57-day pilgrimage to the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine in the

US, Iran trade charges over attacks on vessels carrying Indian crew

NEW DELHI: The United States and Iran traded accusations on Friday over a series of attacks on commercial vessels carrying Indian crew members in waters near the Strait of Hormuz and the Oman coast, deepening diplomatic tensions in a region already witnessing heightened instability and raising fresh concerns over the safety of international shipping.

The exchange followed attacks on three vessels with Indian crew this week, including an incident that resulted in the deaths of three Indian seafarers. While US President Donald Trump accused Iran of carrying out drone strikes against Indian ships, Tehran blamed Washington for attacks on merchant vessels and alleged that US actions were endangering maritime security in the region.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump claimed that Iran was responsible for a drone attack on Indian vessels departing the Strait of Hormuz, describing the alleged action as "totally unacceptable". He also accused Tehran of leaking details of a proposed peace agreement to the media, alleging that the disclosures were unrelated to the issues under negotiation.

India summons US charged'affaires

NEW DELHI: India on Friday summoned US Charge d'Affaires Jason Meeks for the second time this week and lodged a strong protest over American naval strikes on commercial vessels carrying Indian crew members off the coast of Oman, signalling a sharp escalation in diplomatic concerns following the deaths of three Indian seafarers.

Meeks was called to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) headquarters in New Delhi, P11

Iran responded sharply, condemning what it described as US attacks on commercial shipping that led to the deaths of Indian nationals. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei expressed condolences to the families of the deceased sailors and to the Government of India, while accusing Washington of actions that threaten freedom of navigation and regional stability.

The diplomatic sparring came amid mounting concern in New Delhi over the safety of Indian seafarers operating in the Gulf region. India has formally protested the attacks on commercial vessels carrying Indian nationals and summoned the senior-most US diplomat in New Delhi to convey its concerns. The government has described the incidents as deeply worrying and called for the protection of civilian shipping and crew operating in international waters.

According to reports, three Indian sailors P11

Bring Back PoJK: Bharat should save its people from atrocities of Pakistan



Shivang Satya Gupta
Editor-in-Chief

INKING THE TRUTH

The issue of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) continues to remain one of the most sensitive and historically significant chapters of the Indian subcontinent's history. Decades after the 1947 aggression, the people living in these areas continue to face political uncertainty, economic challenges and allegations of human rights violations. For India, the question of PoJK is not merely about territory but also about the people who have been separated from their historical, cultural and emotional roots.

The recent discussions around PoJK have once again brought attention to the historical circumstances under which Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh were divided. When India gained independence in 1947, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India after an armed invasion by Pakistan-backed forces. The attack resulted in the occupation of a significant portion of the erstwhile Jammu & Kashmir State by Pakistan. Since then, the region has remained divided, with generations growing up amid conflict and political uncertainty.

Historically, the regions currently under Pakistan's

control were deeply connected with the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state. Areas such as Mirpur, Kotli, Rawalakot, Bhimber, Haveli and parts of Poonch had strong historical links with Jammu. These regions were not merely geographical units but part of a shared cultural and social identity that existed before the conflict changed the course of history.

The people of Jammu, in particular, carry a deep emotional connect with these areas. Thousands of families were displaced and migrated to India during the conflict, leaving behind homes, properties and ancestral lands. The pain of displacement and separation became a long-lasting reality for many families who struggled for rehabilitation and recognition.

Over the years, reports and accounts from PoJK have highlighted concerns related to governance, political representation, economic development and freedom of expression. Critics have repeatedly alleged that local voices in Pakistan-occupied areas have been suppressed and that people have faced restrictions while demanding greater rights and development opportunities.

The recent protests and public dissatisfaction reported from parts of PoJK have once again drawn attention towards these concerns. In the age of technology and social media, events that were earlier limited to regional boundaries are now reaching a global audience. Images and videos emerging from these areas have triggered debates over governance and the aspirations of local populations.

India has consistently maintained that Pakistan's control over these territories is illegal and has reiterated its stand that the entire region of

Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. The Indian government has also highlighted the need for development, connectivity and empowerment of border communities, arguing that peace and prosperity should remain the ultimate goal for all people of the region.

The transformation witnessed in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in recent years has also become part of this broader discussion. Infrastructure projects, improved connectivity, expansion of education and healthcare facilities and increased focus on border development have changed the landscape of these Union Territories. Supporters of the government argue that similar opportunities should reach people living across the Line of Control (LoC) as well.

The history of Jammu and Kashmir is also deeply linked with the legacy of Maharaja Gulab Singh and the formation of the princely state. Jammu emerged as a significant political and cultural centre, with Ladakh becoming part of the state in the 19th century and the Kashmir Valley later becoming the part of the larger entity. Together, these regions formed a unique geographical and cultural identity.

However, the challenges of the past cannot be addressed only through historical references. The aspirations and welfare of ordinary people must remain at the centre of any discussion. The people living in PoJK, like people everywhere, seek security, dignity, opportunities and a peaceful future.

India's position has been that terrorism and violence cannot determine the future of the region. The focus, according to PM Narendra Modi led Government in New Delhi, must remain on peace, development P11

Passport Van to reach Kargil on Jun 15-16

KARGIL: In a move aimed at improving access to passport services in remote regions, the Regional Passport Office (RPO), Srinagar, will deploy a Mobile Passport Van in Kargil district on June 15 and 16, enabling residents of Kargil and adjoining areas to avail passport-related services closer to their place of residence.

The initiative forms part of the Passport Seva Project (PSP) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, under which Mobile Passport Van Services have been introduced to extend passport facilities to applicants residing in far-flung and underserved areas.

According to the RPO, the Mobile Passport P11

Ladakh moves to cut Red-tape, rolls out single-window system for faster Business approvals

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: In a push to streamline investment approvals and strengthen the Ease of Doing Business framework in the Union Territory, the Ladakh Administration on Friday intensified the operational rollout of its newly launched Single Window Portal by training officials from multiple departments on the integrated digital platform designed to provide faster and more transparent business services.

The Training-cum-Workshop, organised by the Department of Industries and Commerce, assumes significance as the administration seeks to reduce procedural delays, improve inter-departmental coordination and create a more investor-friendly ecosystem through technology-driven governance. The Single Window Portal, launched on May 25, currently hosts 24 live services spanning several government departments and serves as a unified interface for approvals, clearances and



investor facilitation.

Officials said the portal is expected to transform the manner in which businesses interact with government departments by bringing multiple services under a single digital framework, thereby minimising physical interfaces and expediting decision-making processes.

The workshop brought together officers and representatives from a range of departments, including Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, Fire and Emergency Services, Forest, Housing and Urban Development, Power Development, Public Health Engineering, Public Works (R&B), Legal Metrology and State Taxes, among others. The exercise focused on building institutional capacity for effective implementation of the platform and ensuring uniform adoption across departments.

During the training sessions, experts from the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Information Technology Department provided a detailed P11

Wangchuk meets Thackeray

MUMBAI: Educationist Sonam Wangchuk on Friday met Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray here.

Wangchuk, "the founder of an educational and cultural movement in Ladakh" met Thackeray at the latter's residence 'Matoshri', the party said in a post on X.

Wangchuk attended the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) protest in Pune the day before. Sena (UBT) leader Aadiya Thackeray and MP Anil Desai were also present during Friday's meeting, the party said.

Kargili seeks early recruitment drive, calls for adherence to domicile policy

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KARGIL: Raising concerns over the absence of recruitment notifications in the higher education sector this year, Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) Chairman Sajjad Kargili on Friday urged the authorities to expedite the hiring process and ensure strict adherence to domicile and reservation provisions in all future appointments in Ladakh.

In a statement, Kargili said educated unemployed youth from across the Union Territory had approached him regarding the limited employment opportunities currently available in higher education institutions. According to him, aspirants

PM eVidya workshop highlights role of digital learning
Digital platforms vital for bridging educational gaps in remote areas: Admn Secy Bhanu Prabha

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Reiterating the Union Territory administration's commitment to expanding digital access to education, Administrative Secretary, School Education Department, UT Ladakh, Bhanu Prabha (IAS) said technology-driven learning platforms will play a pivotal role in bridging educational gaps across the region's remote and geographically challenging areas.

Addressing the valedictory session of a four-day PM eVidya DTH TV Channels Orientation-cum-Training Workshop at DIET Leh, the Administrative Secretary underscored the growing im-

portance of digital learning ecosystems in ensuring equitable access to quality education and strengthening classroom outcomes. She reaffirmed the administration's focus on enhancing digital infrastructure and equipping educators with the tools required to effectively integrate technology into teaching and learning processes.

The workshop concluded with the presentation of educational videos developed by participating teachers, offering a practical demonstration of the skills acquired during the programme and highlighting the increasing emphasis on teacher P11



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sā Ladakh Biennale seeks local interns for Art, Culture and Ecology Projects

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: With preparations underway for the third edition of the sā Ladakh Biennale, organisers have announced an internship programme aimed at engaging Ladakhi youth in a range of field-based roles linked to art, ecology, culture and community engagement ahead of the international exhibition scheduled from August 1 to August 10.

The initiative offers opportunities for young people to work as sā Site Leaders, Art Guides, Art Installers, Exhibition Coordinators, Photographers and Videographers, and Regenerative Researchers. Interns will collaborate with artists, local

communities and partners from across India and abroad while contributing to projects rooted in Ladakh's landscapes and traditional knowledge systems.

Organisers said the programme is designed for individuals eager to learn through practical experience rather than conventional office-based assignments. The internship seeks to provide direct exposure to the planning and execution of one of the world's highest and largest regenerative art exhibitions.

Founded in 2023, the sā Ladakh Biennale focuses on the intersection of climate, culture and community through open-air installations spread along P11

Govt caps Diesel sales at 200 litres per vehicle, curbs bulk purchases

NEW DELHI: The government has capped diesel sales to a vehicle in a day at 200 litres and restricted industrial, commercial, and institutional users from buying petrol and diesel from petrol pumps in a bid to prevent local shortages amid global supply disruption, according to an official order.

Retail outlets can sell diesel only into a vehicle tank or PESO-approved container, and not more than 200 litres per customer or vehicle per day.

Also, industrial, commercial and institutional consumers will no longer be allowed to buy petrol or diesel from retail outlets. They must source their fuel from their own consumer pumps.

The restrictions, which will be in place for up to 90 days, follows abnormal demand growth, particularly that of diesel, in some pockets after bulk users started buying fuel from petrol pumps due to the pricing difference. While diesel at petrol pumps costs Rs 95.20 a litre in Delhi, bulk sales are priced at Rs 134.50.

The differential arose as state-owned oil companies modulated retail prices to insulate common users from the spike in cost that followed the West Asia crisis in late February. While bulk users such as telecom towers and industries using diesel for power generation and other feedstock needs are charged market price, the retail pump rates are way lower than cost. Commercial customers like P11

Public participation crucial to keeping Kargil clean and green: CEC Dr Jaffer



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KARGIL: Calling for greater public involvement in environmental conservation and sustainable waste management, Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor (CEC), LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoun on Friday said the

responsibility of protecting the environment extends beyond government institutions and requires active participation from every citizen.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of Environmental Week 2026, organised by the Municipal Committee Kargil, the CEC underscored

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