

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Uttarakhand Minister Satpal Maharaj Calls on HP Governor

Discussions Held on Strengthening Inter-State Connectivity and Promoting Tourism

DEHRADUN, JUNE 04: Minister for Tourism, Culture, Public Works and Irrigation in the Government of Uttarakhand Shri Satpal Maharaj, called on Governor Shri Kavinder Gupta at Lok Bhavan, today. It was a courtesy call.

The meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere and provided an opportunity for both leaders to discuss a range of issues of mutual interest concerning the neighbouring States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

During the interaction, special emphasis was laid on strengthening road connectivity in the border areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand to facilitate smoother transportation and enhance tourism activities in the region. The two dignitaries discussed the im-



mense tourism potential of the Himalayan States and underscored the importance of developing robust infrastructure to improve accessibility to religious, cultural and eco-tourism destina-

tions. Shri Kavinder Gupta observed that better road networks between the border districts of the two States would not only boost tourism but also contribute

to economic growth, improve connectivity for local communities and promote greater people-to-people interaction.

The discussion also touched upon the rich cultural heritage shared by the two hill States and the possibilities of further strengthening cooperation in the fields of tourism, culture and infrastructure development.

The Governor also lauds the efforts being made by the Uttarakhand Government in promoting sustainable tourism and regional development.

Both of them expressed confidence that enhanced cooperation between Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand would contribute significantly to the overall growth and prosperity of the Himalayan region.

3 returnees from Ebola-hit African nations kept in home isolation in Chhattisgarh's Durg

DURG, JUN 4: Three persons, who recently returned to Chhattisgarh's Durg district from Ebola virus-affected countries in Africa, have been placed under 21-day home isolation as a precautionary measure, officials said on Thursday.

The three travellers, however, show no symptoms of the disease and have no history of contact with Ebola-infected persons, officials said.

Durg Collector Abhijeet Singh said one woman arrived in Durg from the Democratic Republic of Congo on May 31, while two others reached Bhillai on June 2 from Ethiopia and Uganda.

Of the three travellers, two are Indian nationals and one is a Ugandan citizen, he said.

"As none of them have symptoms and there is no history of contact, all three have been placed under home isolation for 21 days. They are currently asympto-



matic and in good health," Singh said. Health officials have been monitoring their condition through telephonic followup twice a day and collecting information about their health status every morning and evening, he said.

The travellers have been advised to immediately inform the tracing team, health department, control room or the office of the Chief Medical and Health Officer if they

experience any discomfort or symptoms during the monitoring period, he said.

Durg Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr Manoj Dani said international travellers arriving from Ebola-affected countries, particularly in Africa, are being placed under home isolation for 21 days and are being provided daily health monitoring and medical advice.

He said international passengers are being clinically

screened at airports and classified into different risk categories based on symptoms and contact history.

According to the classification system, Category 1 includes travellers with no symptoms and no contact history, Category 2 comprises those with no symptoms but a contact history, while Category 3 includes symptomatic travellers, he said. All three returnees to Durg district fall under Category 1, indicating they are asymptomatic and have no known exposure to Ebola patients, Dani said. No confirmed case of Ebola virus infection has been found in Chhattisgarh so far, officials said.

On May 17, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

CJP Attacks Govt On JEE Data Exposure, Calls For Pradhan's Sacking

NEW DELHI, Jun 4: The Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) on Thursday said the reported exposure of JEE (Advanced) 2026 candidate data due to a cloud storage configuration issue in the results portal showed how "incompetent" people were running the country's education system and digital infrastructure.

The leaders of the campaign, which began on social media and went on to take a life of its own, also appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to immediately sack Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, saying he had failed to ensure accountability in the education sector.

Addressing a press conference here, CJP leaders said the incident had raised fresh concerns about the security of student data and the government's handling of examination systems.

CJP spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka, an alumnus of IIT Kanpur and the London School of Economics who was appointed the campaign's spokesperson on Wednesday, said the exposure of candidate information reflected the poor state of cybersecurity safeguards.

"Names, phone numbers and images of nearly two lakh students got exposed. In a country that has produced techies leading top technology companies across the world, the education minister and the government are



so incompetent that they are unable to run basic systems securely," Ranka said.

"The education minister is totally incompetent. He has run the education system into the ground. We appeal to the Prime Minister to sack Dharmendra Pradhan immediately. This is about the future of our students and a lot is at stake," he added.

He also said public institutions required individuals with scientific temper and technical competence.

Questioning the response of IIT Roorkee, which conducted the exam this year as its nodal body, Ranka said the institute's assertion that the exposed data was in a "read-only" format did not diminish the seriousness of the issue.

"IIT Roorkee said the data was read-only. Is this a joke? You are saying it could be read but not edited. One basic IIT portal cannot be run securely. Sixteen, 17 and 18-year-olds are discovering vulnerabilities and alerting CERT. This shows the level of competence of the people

running the system," he said.

On Tuesday, IIT Roorkee acknowledged a cloud storage configuration issue linked to the JEE (Advanced) 2026 results portal after a teenage cybersecurity researcher reported that candidate records and admission documents were accessible without authentication.

The institute said corrective action was being taken on priority and maintained that the exposed data was in read-only mode, ruling out any possibility of alteration of records.

Ranka demanded that the government disclose details of all data exposure incidents and cybersecurity lapses under its watch. "We want to know where this country's data has landed and who all have access to it. Details of all such breaches, especially those that could impact national security, should be made public," he said.

Ranka sought to dispel speculation that the CJP's proposed June 6 agitation could turn violent and reiterated its commitment to peaceful protest. "Rumours are being spread about violence. The Cockroach Janata Party calls for peaceful and democratic protests in line with law and order. We urge people to shun violence," he said.

The press conference came a day after the outfit held its first media interaction at the Constitution Club of India, where it said it was open to dialogue with both the government and the Opposition over its demands while continuing to seek Pradhan's resignation.

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke, who is pursuing higher education in the United States, is expected to arrive in Delhi on June 6 and seek permission for a protest at Jantar Mantar. The party has said climate activist Sonam Wangchuk will also join the proposed demonstration.

The CJP traces its origins to a controversy sparked by remarks made by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant last month, when he referred to certain individuals as "cockroaches" and "parasites" during a court hearing.

The remarks triggered a backlash on social media, with CJP founder Dipke and his supporters appropriating the term "cockroach" as a political symbol and launching what began as an online youth movement before evolving into an organised campaign. (Agencies)

Ruined Education System For Past 12 Years: Rahul Slams PM After NEET Aspirant's Suicide

NEW DELHI, JUNE 4: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi after an alleged suicide by a NEET aspirant came to light, saying an entire generation of youth is paying the price for the extent to which the PM has "ruined" the education system over the past 12 years.

Gandhi's attack on the Modi government came after media reports said Akanksha Chaturvedi, a NEET aspirant from Madhya Pradesh's Maunanj district, allegedly died by suicide in Nagpur after reportedly falling into depression following reports of irregularities in the NEET-UG examination.

"Akanksha aspired to become a doctor and serve her



country and society. Akanksha's father is a farmer. To support his daughter's dream of becoming a doctor, he took out a loan of Rs 3 lakh against his Kisan Credit Card. He even took up a job as a cook in Nagpur himself, so that his daughter could attend coaching classes there," Gandhi said in his post in Hindi on X.

"A father did everything humanly possible. Then, the NEET paper leaked. The examination was cancelled. Amidst that uncertainty, Akanksha left us forever," the Leader of Opposition said.

Akanksha's death was not a suicide — it is the tragic outcome of a corrupt and broken system under Prime Minister Modi, Gandhi al-

leged. "And Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan? He remains firmly seated in his position even today. The same old committees. The same old transfers. The same old inquiries. No reform; no justice," Gandhi said.

"Mr. Modi, power is not permanent — it comes and goes. But the entire generation of India's youth is now paying the price for the extent to which you have ruined the education system over the past 12 years," the Congress leader said.

The NEET (UG) 2026 exam held on May 3 by the National Testing Agency (NTA) was cancelled on May 12 amid allegations of paper leak which is now being probed by the CBI.

Re-examination has been scheduled for June 21. (PTI)

Modi Govt In Panic Mode On Current Economic Situation: Cong

NEW DELHI, JUN 4: The Congress on Thursday claimed the Modi government is in "panic mode" and "under siege" from within its ecosystem on the current economic situation, asserting that the real problem is that private corporate investment is very tepid within the country.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh cited a media channel claim that the Centre is planning to issue an ordinance amending the Income Tax Act to completely eliminate the 12.5% long-term capital gains tax on investments made by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in Indian government securities, as he attacked the government.

"The Modi government is clearly in panic mode and is under siege from within its ecosystem on the current economic situation,"



Ramesh said on X.

According to a news flash by a TV channel that is plugged into the ruling establishment, the Modi government is planning to issue an ordinance amending the Income Tax Act to completely eliminate the 12.5% long-term capital gains tax on investments made by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in Indian government securities, he said.

This rate was fixed in the Union Budget of July 2024, Ramesh pointed out. He claimed the "real problem" is that private corporate investment is very tepid within India.

Those who can and must invest in India are either investing abroad or postponing investments at home, the Congress general secretary

in-charge communications said.

"Corporate earnings are at record highs, but yet the rate of private corporate investment as a % of GDP has actually declined in a marked manner.

Band-aid ordinances may provide headlines but are no substitute for addressing the structural causes of depressed rates of private corporate investment," Ramesh said.

These include stagnation in real wages, sharpening income and wealth inequalities, ever-increasing concentration of economic power in sector after sector, and an intimidatory atmosphere created by the misuse of investigative agencies, he added.

"Allowing imports from China to keep growing has only added to domestic investment woes," the Congress leader said. (Agencies)

Shah chairs NEC plenary in Shillong, leaders discuss North East Vision Plan 2047

SHILLONG, JUN 4: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday chaired the 73rd plenary session of the North Eastern Council, where leaders from the eight northeastern states resolved to work towards a stronger and more prosperous region and deliberated on the North East Vision Plan 2047.

The session brought together governors, chief ministers, deputy chief ministers and senior officials from across the Northeast.

"Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Minister for DoNER Jyotiraditya M Scindia, governors, chief ministers, deputy chief ministers, and senior officials assembled ahead of the plenary deliberations," the NEC said in a post on X.

All the leaders reaffirmed their collective commitment to the growth, connectivity and prosperity of the region, it added.

Union Minister of the Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Scindia

said all the leaders are united in their resolve to create a "stronger and more prosperous" Northeast.

According to an official communique, stakeholders from all eight northeastern states discussed the North East Vision Plan 2047 and key regional development priorities.

"The plenary session discussed and deliberated on progress made by the CM High-Level Task Forces constituted for critical sectors of regional development," the DoNER Ministry said on X.

The session also reviewed important initiatives of the DoNER ministry, including updates on major schemes and programmes, outcomes of the North East Investment Summit and Bankers' Conclave, it added.

The ministry said leaders analysed youth-focused initiatives, efforts related to tourism and logistics, and the region's unique selling proposition (USP) projects. Presentations were made

on tourism, agriculture and horticulture, investment promotion, self-reliance in milk, eggs, fish and meat production, sports promotion, economic corridor development, infrastructure and connectivity, and handloom and handicrafts.

"The deliberations are expected to facilitate coordinated action among states and stakeholders for achieving shared development goals," an official said.

The North East Vision Plan 2047 seeks to provide a long-term roadmap for transforming the region into a vibrant hub of economic growth, connectivity, innovation, sustainability and cultural prosperity by the centenary year of India's independence.

Earlier in the day, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma welcomed Shah to Shillong for the meeting.

"Glad to welcome Hon'ble Union Home Minister and Chairman of the North Eastern Council, Shri @AmitShah ji to Shillong

for the 73rd NEC Plenary Session," he said.

Ahead of the main session, a pre-Plenary meeting was held, bringing together senior officials from the government of India and all eight Northeastern states on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by chief secretaries, state planning secretaries, senior officers of DoNER ministry, NEC officials and other key stakeholders. The North Eastern Council, established under the North Eastern Council Act, 1971, serves as the apex regional planning body for the Northeastern region and plays a pivotal role in fostering coordinated development and strengthening cooperative federalism in the region.

It is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the region, which consists of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. (Agencies)

Pakistan plans new security policy to curb terror financing, improve intel sharing

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 4: Pakistan is working on a new internal security policy aimed at curbing terror financing by integrating criminal databases and improving intelligence-sharing among provinces. The proposed National Internal Security Policy 2026-30 will be discussed at an "extraordinary meeting" of the National Police Management Board (NPMB) later this month and will incorporate recommendations from all provincial police chiefs.

It will also include inputs from the heads of police in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, the Dawn newspaper reported on Thursday.

According to the report, the proposals include the establishment of a Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in Gilgit-Baltistan, integration of police data at the national level, improved interprovincial intelligence-sharing mechanisms and measures to curb terror financing. The policy envisages a greater role for the National Police Bureau (NPB) in formulating nationwide police reforms and security strategies. The bureau is currently headed by Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Director General Usman Anwar.

Speaking to Dawn, Anwar said there was a "serious disconnect" among vari-

ous civilian law enforcement agencies and stressed the need for a uniform policing mechanism across provinces.

"It is a dire need of the time to establish a uniform mechanism across provinces and collaborate with international and domestic intelligence agencies to fight terrorism and choke terrorist financing," he said. Anwar said the upcoming meeting would also discuss functional specialisation, police welfare, transnational crimes, criminal data integration, training requirements, women police networking, interprovincial intelligence-sharing and development of the CTD in Gilgit-Baltistan.