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## Modi writes to Amarnath pilgrims, urges '5 sankalps'

undertake the sacred journey with unwavering faith to seek the blessings of Baba Barfani.

"Shri Amarnathji Yatra has, over the years, emerged as a living expression of India's unity in diversity, bringing together devotees from different regions, languages and traditions with a shared resolve to worship Almighty Mahadev. The yatra reflects the enduring strength of Sanatan culture and reinforces the nation's spiritual and cultural bonds," he added.

The prime minister commended the dedicated efforts of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board and the Government of Jammu & Kashmir for the efficient management of the annual pilgrimage.

He also acknowledged the invaluable contribution of Army, Central Armed Police Forces, Jammu & Kashmir police, disaster response agencies, healthcare professionals, administrative officials, sanitation workers and thousands of personnel who work tirelessly to ensure the safety, security and smooth conduct of the yatra.

He expressed special appreciation for the hospitality extended by the people of Jammu & Kashmir and the spirit of voluntary service demonstrated by local residents and numerous organisations that establish community kitchens (langars) and service camps for pilgrims along the yatra routes.

Modi described this tradition of selfless service as a true reflection of India's civilisational values and the timeless ideal of "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah".

He called upon devotees to make the pilgrimage a model of responsible citizenship and national service.

He urged them to undertake five pledges during this year's Shri Amarnathji Yatra:

- Maintain Cleanliness: Adhere to all cleanliness norms and actively contribute towards keeping the pilgrimage routes clean and free from litter.
- Ensure Safety: Strictly follow all directions issued by the administration, comply with traffic regulations and safety advisories, remain vigilant during adverse weather conditions, and take necessary precautions against slippery terrain and cold weather.
- Support Local Livelihoods: Inspired by the spirit of Vocal for Local, devote at least ten per cent of pilgrimage expenditure towards purchasing locally made products, thereby strengthening the livelihoods of local families and youth in Jammu & Kashmir.
- Promote Environmental Conservation: On the concluding day of the Yatra, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan, present a sapling to one's brother or sister and actively support the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign.
- Strengthen Nation Building: Uphold the spirit of Nation First by performing one's duties with sincerity throughout the year and contributing actively towards the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Expressing confidence that this year's Amarnathji Yatra would serve as a grand celebration of faith, national unity and selfless service, he prayed for the blessings of Baba Amarnath upon all devotees.

He wished every pilgrim a safe, peaceful and spiritually enriching journey and expressed hope that the pilgrimage would inspire renewed energy, devotion and commitment towards national development.

The prime minister also conveyed his heartfelt wishes for a safe, successful and blessed Shri Amarnathji Yatra to all devotees.

Pilgrims warmly welcomed the Prime Minister's message and described it as thoughtful gesture that further strengthened their spiritual resolve and enthusiasm for undertaking the holy pilgrimage.

## Shah extends greetings to Amarnath pilgrims

Annual Shri Amarnathji Yatra, saying the pilgrimage reflects unwavering devotion to Sanatan culture, patience, restraint and an indomitable spirit.

In a post on X, Shah wished pilgrims undertaking the annual yatra a safe and fulfilling journey.

"The Amarnathji Yatra is a sacred symbol of unwavering devotion to Sanatan culture, steadfast patience, restraint, and an indomitable spirit that never accepts defeat. Today marks the auspicious commencement of this holy journey. My best wishes to all devotees heading for the darshan and worship of Baba Barfani," Shah posted.

Highlighting the Centre's arrangements for the pilgrimage, the union home minister said the government had put in place extensive security and facilities for devotees.

"The Modi government has made robust arrangements along the entire route, including a multi-layer security grid, QR code-based registration, and strengthened facilities for devotees' accommodation, healthcare services, and disaster management, ensuring that every pilgrim's journey remains safe, smooth, and joyful," he said.

This comes after the formal commencement of the 57-day annual Amarnath Yatra earlier in the day, when the first batches of devotees departed from the twin base camps of Baltal in Ganderbal district and Nunwan in Pahalgam towards the holy cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas.

Authorities have put in place elaborate security and logistical arrangements to ensure a safe and hassle-free pilgrimage. Personnel from the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and the Indian Army have been deployed along the yatra routes, while surveillance systems and RFID tracking are being used for crowd management and security.

The 57-day pilgrimage, which officially commenced today, is heavily monitored using digital surveillance and RFID tracking systems to ensure crowd management and safety. The annual yatra is scheduled to conclude on August 28, coinciding with the festival of Raksha Bandhan.

## 2nd batch of 3,865 pilgrims leaves for valley base camps

morning simultaneously via the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in the Anantnag district and the shorter but steeper 14-km Baltal route in the Ganderbal district. The yatra will conclude on August 28.

Authorities have put in place multi-layered security arrangements along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway and at all transit camps to ensure the safe and smooth movement of the yatra convoys. A multi-tier security setup has been activated in and around the Bhagwati Nagar base camp for the annual pilgrimage.

Meanwhile, the pilgrims, who were yesterday flagged from the Jammu base camp, today started their onward pilgrimage from the Baltal and Nunwan base camps in the valley.

At the Baltal base camp, the flagging-off ceremony was led by Rahul Yadav, Managing Director, J&K Power Development Corporation, and Nodal Officer for the Baltal Axis, along with Deputy Commissioner, Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, DIG (Armed, Kashmir) Maqsood-ul-Zaman and Ganderbal SSP Sudhanshu Dhama, besides officers from the civil and police administrations.

On the occasion, the officers extended their best wishes to the pilgrims and prayed for a safe, peaceful and spiritually fulfilling pilgrimage.

The commencement of the yatra marks the beginning of one of the country's most revered spiritual pilgrimages and reflects the coordinated efforts of the administration and all stakeholder departments to facilitate a secure, seamless and memorable pilgrimage experience for every devotee.

Traffic restrictions will remain in force on various stretches of the highway till August 28, with daily advisories and sector-wise cut-off timings to regulate traffic, officials said.

## 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' India's timeless message to world: Kavinder

Almighty Shiva and Goddess Parvati, seeking peace, prosperity, happiness and overall well-being of the people of Himachal Pradesh.

Addressing the gathering, the governor expressed immense joy for being part of the spiritually enriching occasion, and said that such events play a vital role in preserving India's timeless cultural and spiritual heritage.

"Sanatan Dharma is not merely a religion but a way of life rooted in eternal values of compassion, harmony and universal brotherhood," he said.

Quoting the ancient Indian philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (world is one family), he said these ideals continue to guide humanity towards peace and coexistence.

Gupta appreciated the inspiring discourse delivered by the spiritual leader, who highlighted the growing challenges confronting modern families. He remarked that this was not merely a concern for individual households but a matter that directly impacts the future of society and the nation.

"The family has always been the first school of values,

where children learn discipline, compassion, respect and responsibility. The long-standing Indian tradition of beginning the day with prayers, and collective remembrance of the Almighty has strengthened family bonds and nurtured moral values across generations. However, changing lifestyles have gradually weakened these traditions, making it imperative to revive them for the benefit of future generations," he said.

"While the transition from joint families to nuclear families is a natural social evolution, it should not lead to the erosion of family values, emotional bonding and meaningful dialogue among family members," he added.

He stressed that love, mutual respect and communication must remain the foundation of every household.

Expressing concern over the increasing menace of drug abuse among youth, Gupta said that while strict enforcement of law was essential, the strongest safeguard against such social evils lies in value-based upbringing.

He called upon parents to spend quality time with their children, communicate openly, become their trusted companions and connect them with India's rich cultural heritage and spiritual traditions.

"The divine union of Almighty Shiva and Goddess Parvati symbolises love, trust, sacrifice, patience and shared responsibility, offering timeless lessons for every family," he asserted.

He urged society to collectively ensure that India's cultural ethos, family traditions and spiritual values were passed on to future generations.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat, the governor said that a developed India cannot be built solely through economic progress and infrastructure, but also through morally strong families, socially responsible citizens and a culturally rooted society.

"Preserving India's civilisational values while embracing progress will be the true foundation of a prosperous and developed nation," he added.

## Man, son killed in road accident

Sapoot Singh (35), son of Dhanter Singh, and Ravinder Singh (35), son of Girdhari Lal. Both were undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

Police had taken cognizance of the incident.

## HC amends rules on bail applications

plications and any non-bailable warrants or proclamation proceedings.

A notification in this regard was issued by Registrar General M K Sharma in exercise of the powers conferred under Article 225 of the Constitution of India and all other enabling provisions with the previous approval of lieutenant governor.

## Pilgrims asked to travel only on registered dates

imum number of pilgrims permitted daily on the pilgrimage route had been fixed.

"Compliance with this daily ceiling limit is mandatory for the safety of pilgrims and for the smooth conduct of the yatra," it said.

For the convenience of pilgrims, advance registration was made available well before the start of the yatra through bank branches across the country and online channels. Most pilgrims have already taken advantage of this facility and completed their registrations in advance, it said.

Therefore, Tatkal (on-the-spot) registration slots were extremely limited.

All pilgrims were requested to reach Jammu and Kashmir only after completing their advance registration, it added.

The advisory said it was not possible to accommodate thousands of pilgrims arriving in Jammu and Kashmir without registration under the Tatkal facility.

"Such pilgrims are requested to wait for their turn and travel only on the date assigned by the administration," it said.

The advisory stated that many registered pilgrims were arriving in Jammu and Kashmir before their registered travel date.

"No pilgrim will be permitted to travel before the registered date. Please travel only on your registered date. Pilgrims who have arrived in Jammu and Kashmir without registration are again requested to wait for their turn," it added.

Assuring that every pilgrim would get an opportunity to undertake the yatra, the administration stressed that this

would be possible only according to the prescribed procedure and available capacity.

"You are requested to maintain order and cooperate with the administration to ensure everyone's safety," the advisory said.

## JeM 'expansion plan' foiled, 8 arrested

ing Madhya Pradesh, officials said.

Officials said the terror operatives were working to establish an active terror network in Gujarat. Seven of them were arrested from Gujarat and one from Madhya Pradesh.

"Eight accused were arrested from different districts of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. They were members of banned terror organisation Jaish-e-Mohammed and had been working on behalf of it to set up an active terror network in Gujarat," officials said.

They were identified by the ATS as Ahmed Abdullah Gajiwala, Mudassir Abdullah Ghaziwala and Ibrahim Mohammad Husen Ghagha, residents of Banaskantha; Zakariya Durani Mohammad Ammar Ghagha, Mufti Faujan Ismail Dauwa and Mohammad Amin Shera, residents of Patan district; Mohammad Abdul Rahman Savdi of Navsari district and Bilal Durani Mohammad Ammar Ghagha, a resident of Madhya Pradesh.

A case has been registered against them under sections 13 (punishment for unlawful activities), 17 (punishment for raising funds for terrorist act), 18 (punishment for conspiracy), 38 (offence relating to membership of a terrorist organisation) and 39 (offence relating to support given to a terrorist organisation) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Sections 148 (conspiracy to commit offences punishable by section 145) and 61 (criminal conspiracy) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) were also invoked against them. Section 147 of the BNS deals with the offence of waging war, attempting to wage war, or abetting the waging of war against the Government of India, officials said.

## J&amp;K Bank MD assures region-specific measures

The meeting witnessed participation from a cross-section of customers, who appreciated the bank's continued support to trade and business activities in Ladakh. They described J&K Bank as the backbone of the region's commercial ecosystem and hailed its role in supporting businesses amid Ladakh's unique geographical challenges.

Senior bank officials present on the occasion included Zonal Head (Ladakh) Tsewang Dorjai, DGM and Board Secretary Mohammad Shafi Mir, DGM and Special Secretary to MD Tanveer Hussain, Cluster Head Tsewang Dorjay and other officers.

Customers congratulated the bank's leadership for achieving the milestone of crossing Rs 3 trillion in total business and expressed confidence in the institution's continued contribution to Ladakh's economic growth.

During the interaction, participants raised concerns related to operational challenges in the region and urged the bank to enhance delegation of powers to its administrative hierarchy in Ladakh for faster decision-making and improved customer service.

Addressing the gathering, Amitava Chatterjee thanked customers for their candid feedback and reaffirmed the bank's commitment to customer-centric service.

He said customer feedback remains central to improving services and understanding ground-level challenges. Referring to the bank's recent achievement of crossing Rs 3 trillion in business, he credited the milestone to the trust and confidence reposed by customers over the years.

The MD & CEO assured participants that all genuine concerns and suggestions would be examined seriously. He also emphasised that the bank would explore region-specific measures for Ladakh, keeping in view its distinct terrain and strong customer relationship with the bank.

Chatterjee also encouraged customers to make greater use of J&K Bank's digital banking platforms, stating that the bank had significantly strengthened its digital ecosystem to provide enhanced convenience and efficiency.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Zonal Head Tsewang Dorjay, who expressed gratitude to the MD & CEO for personally engaging with customers and appreciated participants for their valuable suggestions and continued trust in the bank.

## SKUAST-K conducts Animal Healthcare Programs in Gurez to promote Indigenous Animal Genetic Resources

**BANDIPORA, JULY 03:** Reinforcing its commitment to sustainable livestock development and conservation of indigenous animal wealth, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) organized a series of Awareness-cum-Input Distribution and Animal Healthcare Programs at Gurez.

The programs were organized by the Division of Animal Genetics & Breeding, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences & Animal Husbandry, Shuhama, under the ICAR-NBAGR Network Project on Animal Genetic Resources, in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Gurez, and the Department of Animal Husbandry. The initiative aimed to promote conservation of indigenous animal genetic resources, improve livestock productivity, and strengthen the livelihoods of tribal farming communities in the region.

Head under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Nazir Ahmad Ganai, the outreach program brought together scientists, veterinary experts, extension professionals, and livestock farmers to promote scientific livestock management and climate-

resilient farming practices.

Dr Ravinder Kumar, Principal Scientist at ICAR-Central Institute for Research on Cattle, attended as chief guest and highlighted the immense value of indigenous livestock genetic resources in ensuring sustainable livestock production, climate resilience, and nutritional security. He emphasised the need to adopt scientific and innovative livestock technologies to improve productivity and contribute to the vision of a "Viksit Gurez".

Guest of Honour, Dr Mahesh Dige, Senior Scientist at ICAR-National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources, stressed the importance of conserving local animal genetic resources and appreciated SKUAST-K's sustained efforts in strengthening the livestock sector through scientific interventions, farmer awareness, and capacity-building initiatives in remote tribal areas.

Earlier, Prof. (Dr) Syed Shanaz Shafi, Professor & Head, Division of Animal Genetics & Breeding, underscored the urgent need for scientific conservation and sustainable management of indigenous animal genetic resources. She noted that native livestock and poultry breeds are invaluable

genetic assets naturally adapted to the harsh agro-climatic conditions of the Kashmir Himalayas and are critical for sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity conservation, and climate-resilient farming systems.

A major highlight of the program was the distribution of livestock inputs to beneficiaries. A total of 100 indigenous Kashmiri poultry birds were distributed under the ICAR-NBAGR Network Project to promote the conservation and multiplication of indigenous poultry germplasm.

Additionally, 300 Keystone Golden birds were distributed under the ICAR-All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Poultry under the guidance of Dr Azmat Alam, Principal Investigator, to encourage backyard poultry farming, particularly among women's Self-Help Groups, thereby improving livelihood opportunities and household nutritional security.

Further strengthening animal health interventions, around 50 livestock farmers received deworming medicines and mineral mixtures free of cost to improve animal health and productivity.

During the technical session, Dr. Shahid Ahmad Shergojry, As-

sociate Professor, Division of Animal Genetics & Breeding, sensitized farmers on the importance of conserving indigenous poultry breeds, scientific breeding strategies, genetic improvement, and sustainable livestock management. He highlighted the significant role of native poultry in improving household nutrition, strengthening rural livelihoods, and generating supplementary income for tribal farming families.

Scientists also conducted practical demonstrations and provided expert guidance on scientific feeding, breeding, healthcare, disease prevention, and climate-resilient livestock production practices. Farmers actively participated in interactive discussions, sharing their experiences and seeking scientific solutions to challenges affecting livestock production.

The program was attended by Dr. Izhar Ahmad, BVO Gurez; Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad, VAS; Dr. Jauhar Rafeeq; Dr. Shahada; scientists and officials from KVK Gurez; officers from the Department of Animal Husbandry; and a large number of progressive livestock farmers and women beneficiaries from across Gurez Valley.

## Commissioner SMC holds high-level review to Fast-Track CAPEX Works

**SRINAGAR, JULY 03:** In a significant move to accelerate infrastructure development and ensure the timely execution of public works, Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, today chaired a high-level review meeting to comprehensively assess the tendering status of Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) works across the city.

The meeting was attended by the Financial Advisor/Chief Accounts Officer, Executive Engineers, and officials responsible for uploading Notices Inviting Tenders (NITs) on the e-Procurement Portal from all Engineering Divisions. A detailed division-wise review was undertaken, during which officers presented the progress achieved in the tendering process and the status of ongoing and proposed CAPEX works.

The Commissioner carried out a comprehensive assessment of works already tendered, projects awaiting tendering, tenders opened, and newly sanctioned works requiring immediate initiation of the tendering process. He critically reviewed the reasons for pendency and directed the concerned officers to remove procedural bottlenecks, streamline the tendering process, and adhere to clearly defined timelines to ensure that all pending works are tendered without delay.

Emphasizing that timely tendering is

fundamental to the successful execution of developmental projects, Haseeb, instructed all Engineering Divisions to undertake daily monitoring of the tendering process and ensure strict adherence to Government guidelines and established procedures while framing and issuing NITs. He stressed that efficient and transparent tendering is essential for the timely delivery of quality civic infrastructure and public services.

The Commissioner further directed all Executive Engineers to closely monitor the progress of works within their respective jurisdictions and ensure that all tender documents, records, and e-Procurement processes remain updated, transparent, and fully compliant with the prescribed norms. He called upon the Engineering Divisions to maintain close coordination and adopt a proactive approach to achieve the developmental targets within the stipulated timelines.

Reaffirming SMC's unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability, and efficient governance, the Commissioner emphasized that expediting the implementation of CAPEX works remains a top priority of the Corporation. He reiterated that timely completion of developmental projects will not only strengthen Srinagar's civic infrastructure but also enhance the quality of urban services and significantly improve the quality of life for the citizens of Srinagar.