

Maharashtra TET paper leak: Rahul demands fresh exam date, action against culprits

NEW DELHI, JULY 14: Following the leak of the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) paper in Maharashtra, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday called for a new exam date, action against those responsible for the leak, and age-limit relaxation for candidates affected by the situation.

The TET 2026 was postponed on June 27, just one day before it was scheduled to take place, after police in Thane district discovered that part of the question paper had been leaked, leading to the arrest of three individuals.

The Maharashtra police have since arrested additional suspects, bringing the total to ten.

In a Facebook post in Hindi, Gandhi stated, "The Maharashtra TET paper was leaked, and the exam was cancelled. Six lakh candidates are left in limbo. Two weeks have passed, yet we have no information on a new date."

He highlighted that those responsible for the leak remain at large while candidates suffer the consequences.



"The ones who worked hard and honestly are the current and future teachers of our country-those who will shape India's future," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha added.

He lamented that these candidates prepared year after year, filled out forms, paid fees, and travelled to remote exam centres, only to be left waiting without any updates.

"Chief minister (Devendra Fadnavis), three things are needed today: 1. Timeline: Announce the new TET date im-

mediately. 2. Accountability: Action must be taken against those responsible for the leak, not the candidates. 3. Safeguarding the Future: Grant age-limit relaxation to those whose year has been wasted due to this leak," Gandhi said in his post.Executive Branch

He emphasised that it is unjust for candidates to bear the burden when the institution is at fault.

"On July 17th, in Dehradun, I will speak to you in detail about the escalating crisis of paper leaks. The time has come for an education revolution - to build a system where the youth reap the rewards of their hard work, rather than suffering the consequences of systemic failure," Gandhi said, referring to his upcoming second interaction with students under his 'Chhatron ki Goonj' initiative.

An SIT (Special Investigation Team) is currently tracking financial and digital trails to apprehend the suspected masterminds behind the leak racket, Bijendra Kumar Gupta and Sonukumar Kishanlal, an official informed.

CJP Protest Day 25: Wangchuk In 'Immense Pain', Refuses To End Fast Without Dialogue

NEW DELHI, JUL 14: Activist Sonam Wangchuk has refused to end his indefinite hunger strike despite suffering muscle loss and "immense pain", insisting that the government should initiate dialogue, the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) said on Tuesday as his fast entered the 17th day and the outfit's agitation completed 25 days.

According to the health bulletin issued by the outfit, Wangchuk has lost 8.5 kg since beginning the fast, and his blood pressure was recorded at 109/70 mm Hg.

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke said Wangchuk has been losing muscle mass and was in "immense pain".



support to CJP's protest and to our March to Parliament on July 20," he said.

In another post, Dipke shared that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had also spoken to him and expressed concern over Wangchuk's rapidly deteriorating health.

Thackeray appealed to Wangchuk to end his hunger strike, saying his well-being was of utmost importance, and extended support to the CJP's proposed march to Parliament on July 20, Dipke said. AISA activist Deepak, who was admitted to the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital on Monday after his

health deteriorated during the indefinite hunger strike, was discharged on Tuesday morning.

According to AISA, Deepak's heartbeat fluctuated while he was under observation, following which doctors conducted medical tests. His ECG was normal, and his pulse rate stabilised before he was discharged.

The organisation said its remaining activists -- Neha, Manish and Aameen -- continued their indefinite fast at a separate stage at the protest site. The CJP has been demanding Union Education Minister Dharmendra Prad-

han's resignation and Rs 1 crore compensation for the families of students who died by suicide over alleged examination irregularities.Executive Branch

The outfit has also intensified preparations for its proposed "Chalo Sansad" march on July 20, the opening day of the Monsoon Session, and urged supporters to register their participation through its missed-call campaign.

The CJP protest began on June 20, while Wangchuk joined the agitation on June 28 and has been on an indefinite hunger strike since. (Agencies)

Mortal remains of 5 of the 10 tourists died in Vietnam boat capsize, brought to TN

CHENNAI, JULY 14: The mortal remains of five of the 10 tourists drowned in the July 11 deadly Vietnam boat capsize, were brought to Tamil Nadu on Tuesday.

All the bodies were brought from Vietnam to Mumbai last night. From Mumbai, two bodies were flown to Chennai, while the mortal remains of three others were brought to Coimbatore in the first phase. The bodies of remaining five tourists from the State would be brought from Mumbai later today.

A total of 15 Indian tourists, including 10 from Tamil Nadu drowned in the boat capsize at Phu Quoc Island in Vietnam. Of the remaining five, three were from Andhra Pradesh and two from Kerala. A total of 36 tourists, including four crew members, were travelling to Hon May Rut Ngoai island when the tragedy occurred within minutes after leaving the shore. The boat capsized within 300 to 400 m from the shore apparently due to overcrowding. A total of 21 tourists were rescued.

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survivors, who recounted the harrowing tragedy, said of the 10 deceased from Tamil Nadu four are from Chennai, three from Tiruchirappalli and one each from Salem, Erode, and Tiruppur.

Airport sources said in the first phase, the bodies of Ravishankar from Tiruvannamalai and Vinayakumar from Vellore were brought to Chennai by an Indigo Airlines flight. After official procedures at the airport cargo terminal, the bodies were handed over to family members and district authorities and transported to their native places in government-

arranged vehicles.

Vellore MLA Vinoth Kannan paid floral tributes to the mortal remains of the deceased at the airport and assisted in coordinating arrangements.

Family members expressed deep sorrow over the loss. Relatives of Vinayakumar said he had travelled to Vietnam for a business-related meeting and described the tragedy as an irreparable loss. They also appreciated the support extended by the state government, local officials and Indian diplomatic authorities in bringing the bodies back home.

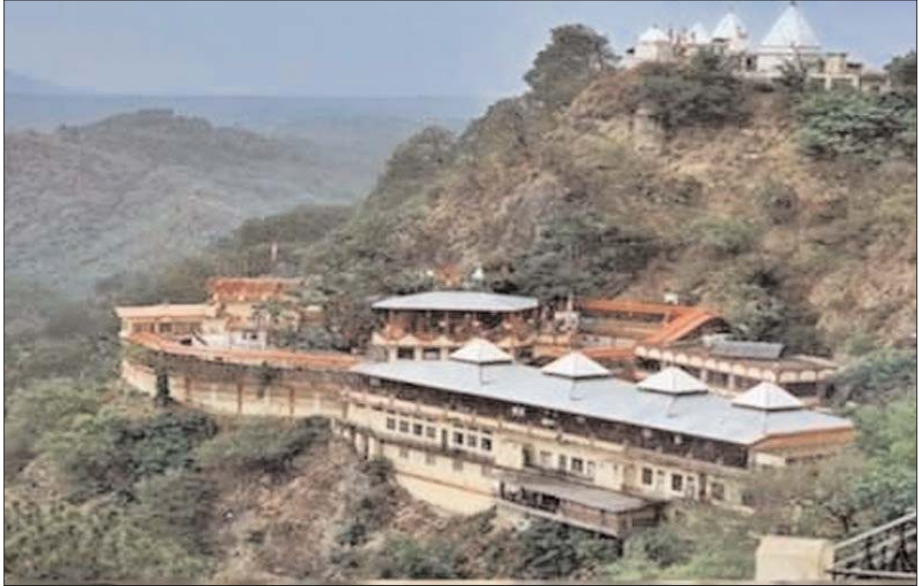
Himachal: Baba Balak Nath Temple mandates pocketless dress code for staff handling offerings

HAMIRPUR, JUL 13: The Baba Balak Nath Temple in Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur on Monday introduced a dress code requiring staff members engaged in counting offerings to wear pocketless clothing to strengthen transparency in the process.

The decision follows an incident involving the alleged theft of offerings at the Ram temple in Ayodhya and was implemented on the instructions of Hamirpur Deputy Commissioner and Sidh Baba Balak Nath Temple Trust Chairperson Gandharva Rathore.

The new dress code requires all staff involved in counting offerings to wear garments without pockets, a temple trust spokesperson said, adding that the measure was introduced to strengthen transparency and accountability in the process.

Rathore said the proposal had been under consideration for a long time and has



now been brought into effect from Monday.

The Baba Balak Nath Temple at Deotsidh, one of the major temples in the state controlled by the Himachal Pradesh government under the HP Endowment Temples Act, receives nearly 70 to 80 lakh pilgrims annually.

Devotees visit the temple

to pay obeisance to Baba Balak Nath, regarded as an incarnation of Lord Kartikeya, the elder son of Lord Shiva to the temple trust, cash offerings are already counted under a prescribed procedure in the presence of authorised staff and officials and under CCTV surveillance.

The mandatory use of

pocketless clothing has now been added as another safeguard to ensure transparency, honesty and accountability in the counting process.

The Deotsidh shrine is one of North India's prominent religious centres and attracts thousands of devotees every day seeking the blessings of Baba Balak Nath.

SC directs SIT to submit status report on Ayodhya's Rama Temple donation theft probe

NEW DELHI, JULY 14: The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Special Investigation Team (SIT), constituted by the Uttar Pradesh government, to submit a status report on its investigation into the alleged theft of devotees' donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohan also issued notices to the Centre, the Uttar Pradesh government and the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust, which manages the affairs of the Ayodhya Ram temple.

The Bench sought an update on the progress of the SIT's investigation into the alleged misappropriation of donations made by devotees at the temple and directed the investigating agency to place its status report before the Court.

Posting the matter for further consideration on Monday, July 20, 2026, the Court said in its order: "Since it is averred in the petition(s) that an FIR has already been registered and an SIT has been constituted to investigate the matter, we direct the SIT



constituted by the State of Uttar Pradesh to submit a status report. The status report shall also provide details of the composition of the SIT."

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Central government as well as the Uttar Pradesh government, informed the Court that the SIT's status report would be submitted in a sealed cover since the investigation was still underway. He also urged the Court not to issue notice to the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust at this stage. The Bench, however, did not accept the request.

The Court's order came while hearing three petitions relating to the alleged theft of

donations.

Solicitor General also posed a plea by one of the petitioners seeking a direction that the SIT's status report be shared with the petitioners, submitting that the investigation was still in progress.

At this stage, Chief Justice Surya Kant observed, "We will see later on. It's an ongoing investigation. You know the law well."

Three petitions raising different but related prayers were heard by the Supreme Court. The first, filed by advocates Ajay Kumar Rai and Dinesh Kumar Yadav, seeks registration of a regular criminal case and a time-bound CBI investigation into the alleged misappropriation and diversion of donations

made by devotees at the Ram Temple.

It also seeks preservation of all physical, electronic and financial records, contending that the SIT constituted by the Uttar Pradesh government lacks the expertise and legal basis to conduct such an investigation without registration of an FIR.

The second petition, filed by Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) MP Sudhakar Singh, seeks transfer of the ongoing probe to the CBI under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

It also prays for the constitution of a temporary court-monitored oversight committee to supervise the Trust's secular financial and administrative affairs, preservation of all financial and electronic records, and periodic public disclosure of audited accounts, donation receipts and utilisation of funds, while protecting the privacy of donors.

A third petitioner, during the hearing, also pressed for urgent preservation of electronic evidence, submitting that it was susceptible to tampering while the investigation remained pending.

High temperatures exposure during early life linked with slower growth of brain's thalamus: Study

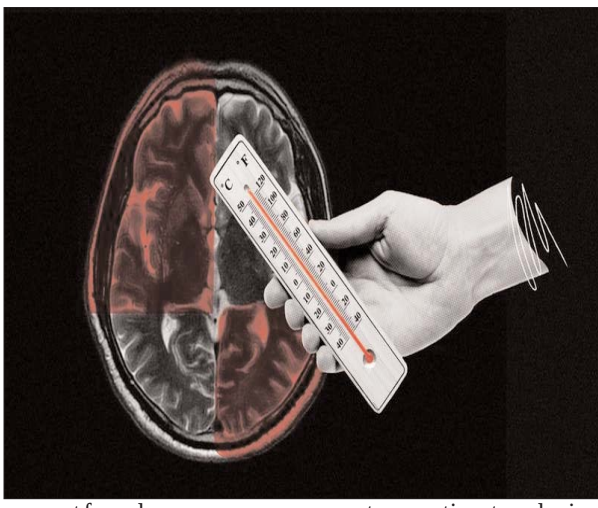
NEW DELHI, July 14: Exposure to high temperatures during pregnancy and early infancy could be associated with a slower growth of the thalamus, brain's information processing centre, later in childhood, a study has found.

Climate change is increasing exposure to extreme temperatures worldwide, raising concerns about its impact on children's health.

Findings published in the journal Environment International suggest that heat exposure during one's earliest stages of life may have lasting effects on brain development.

Researchers, led by those at the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) in Spain, said that while previous studies have linked heat exposure to changes in cognition and mental health, there is not much literature about effects on brain structure.

A slower thalamic growth was also associated with behavioural symptoms during adolescence, including aggression and rule-breaking. However, an association with cognitive performance



was not found.

"With global temperatures continuing to rise, measures to reduce heat exposure during pregnancy and early infancy could play an important role in protecting children's brain development," author Monica Guxens, a research professor at the Barcelona Institute for Global Health and coordinator of the study, said.

The study included 3,251 children participating in the Generation R Study, a birth cohort in the Netherlands.

"We used a high-resolution climate model that provided weekly outdoor tem-

perature estimates during pregnancy and monthly estimates from birth to 8.5 years of age at each participant's place of residence. We then analysed brain MRI scans performed at around 10 and 14 years of age," first author Laura Granes, an ISGlobal researcher, said.

Changes to volume of 11 brain structures over time were analysed, along with whether the changes were linked with an earlier exposure to heat or cold.

Among the brain regions studied, only the thalamus showed a consistent association with early-life heat expo-

sure, the researchers said.

The brain region, which acts as the main relay centre, processing and transmitting sensory and motor information to the cerebral cortex, may be particularly sensitive because it develops very early in pregnancy and follows a tightly regulated developmental timeline, they said.

Rich blood supply to the thalamus during foetal development may also make it more vulnerable to heat-related changes affecting the placenta or blood flow to the foetus, the team added.

A clear period of vulnerability was identified, spanning pregnancy and the first months after birth.

Compared with a reference average temperature of 12.5 degrees Celsius, exposure to monthly mean temperatures of 20.5 degrees Celsius during the period -- calculated across day and night -- was associated with a slower thalamic growth between nine and 15 years of age.

No similar associations were found for other brain structures or for exposure to cold temperatures.