



NH reopens after 3 days

The Jammu-Srinagar national highway was this evening thrown open to vehicular traffic after remaining closed for three days due to rain-triggered landslides and shooting stones at multiple places. Relentless rains, cloud-bursts and flash floods over the past six days have claimed 26 lives in Jammu region, while six persons were still missing in Poonch & Rajouri districts. Officials said the highway, which was blocked at Deohal bridge, Samroli & Jakhani due to land

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Govt issues August roster for ministers

The government has issued the roster of ministers who would remain available at the civil secretariat here in August. As per an order, deputy CM Surinder Kumar Choudhary will remain available at the civil secretariat here from August 3 to 7, and Sakina Itoo, minister for health & medical education, school education, higher educa

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DGP reviews search operations along faultlines



DGP Nalin Prabhat today conducted a comprehensive review of security and operational preparedness along the faultlines in Central Kashmir.

During the visit, senior officers assessed the pre

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Rs 15.22 cr approved for augmentation of Kathua Grid Station

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, JULY 24

The government has approved the augmentation of grid station at Kathua by enhancing its capacity from 3x50 MVA to 4x50 MVA, along with the execution of allied infrastructure work-sat an estimated cost of Rs 15.22 cr.

The project is aimed at strengthening the power transmission network in the region to meet the growing electricity demand and ensure a more robust and reliable power infrastructure.

The augmentation will significantly improve the re

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Union Minister Ravneet Bittu resigns



NEW DELHI, Jul 24: President Draupadi Murmu today accepted the resignation of Union Minister of State for Railways and Food Processing Industries Ravneet Singh Bittu.

On the advice of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the President accepted the resignation of Bittu from the Union Council of Minis

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"Nothing Less Than Pradhan's Resignation": CJP's Abhijeet Dipke Sets Terms Ahead Of Talks With Govt

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ASCEND J&K 2026 concludes on a high note; two startups secure funding, investment commitments

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10 years jail, Rs 10 cr fine Union Cabinet clears bill for tougher punishment in paper leak cases

NEW DELHI, JUL 24: *The Union Cabinet today approved a draft bill proposing stricter punishments for those involved in examination paper leaks, hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an announcement.*

The proposed legislation, aimed at strengthening the legal framework against exam-related fraud, is expected to be introduced in Parliament next week.

The cabinet meeting chaired by the prime minister at the Parliament House complex approved the draft bill to hand stricter punishments to those involved in paper leaks than the existing laws, sources said.

Under the proposed amendments, the government plans to significantly tighten punishments for paper leak offences. The draft

Bill provides for a maximum prison term of 10 years and a fine of up to Rs 10 crore for those found guilty of leaking examination papers. It also seeks to raise the minimum imprisonment from three years to five years, strengthening the existing provisions under the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.

The move comes a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Cabinet would consider stronger legal measures to tackle paper leaks, saying the government was committed to protecting the future of students.

The proposed law is also expected to provide for faster prosecution of offenders through dedicated mechanisms, including fast-track courts.

The proposal comes amid

a political storm over the alleged NEET paper leak and repeated disruptions in Parliament, with the Opposition demanding accountability and a discussion on examination irregularities.

The move also comes amid Cockroach Janta Party emergence as a youth-led movement after alleged paper leaks in major competitive examinations, particularly NEET, and later expanded its demands to include accountability for examination irregularities and resignation of the Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

The fresh legislation builds on the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, which was notified in June 2024 in the wake of the alleged NEET-UG and UGC-NET paper leak controversies. While the existing law

prescribes imprisonment of three to 10 years depending on the offence and a minimum fine of Rs 1 crore for organised examination fraud, the proposed amendments seek to make the law more stringent by increasing the minimum punishment for paper leak offences and raising the maximum fine to Rs 10 cr.

Before the 2024 law, there was no dedicated central legislation dealing specifically with unfair means and organised offences in public examinations.

The existing Act makes offences related to organised paper leaks cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable. It prescribes imprisonment ranging from three to 10 years, depending on the offence, with organised crime at

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Sinha visits family of martyred cop



Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, JULY 24

LG Manoj Sinha today visited the family of Head Constable Ashiq Hussain Qureshi, who was martyred in a terror attack at Lal Choak, Anantnag, on July 22 at Lalpora, Beerwah, in Budgam district of the valley.

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13 killed as falling boulders crush cab in HP

SHIMLA, JUL 24: Thirteen people, including a six-month-old infant, were killed while two others had a narrow escape after massive boulders from a nearby hill suddenly fell on a moving taxi on Udaipur-Pangi road in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul & Spiti today.

Fifteen people were in the SUV, which was on its way from Kullu to Killar when large boulders suddenly crashed onto the vehicle near Kadu nallah, completely crushing it. Follow

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SC bars uploading court proceedings on social media

NEW DELHI, JUL 24: The Supreme Court today barred posting, reposting or uploading of audio-video recordings of court proceedings on social media and other digital platforms without prior permission of the concerned secretary general of the apex court or the registrar generals of the high courts.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana also sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea raising the misuse of live-streaming and circulation of videos of court pro

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Overhaul amid paper leak row In major crackdown, NTA terminates 47 officials

NEW DELHI, JUL 2: In a major crackdown amid the controversy over paper leaks, the National Testing Agency (NTA) has terminated 47 officials from service, noting that legal and criminal actions would also be taken against some of these officials.

According to sources, the steps were part of a complete overhaul of NTA that was in controversy over paper leaks.

The move is the sixth big decision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has said that those who try to harm the future of our youth will not be spared.

NTA holds the NEET-UG exam for which a retest was done in June this year after the paper led to cancellation of the test done in May this year.

There has been a long

protest by students in the national capital over the paper leaks. Opposition parties are also supporting the protesters over their demands.

The 47 employees were sacked a day after Higher Education Secretary Vineet Joshi was shunted out to the Panchayati Raj Ministry.

Outrage surrounding paper leaks and the CBSE digital evaluation glitches has triggered a series of shunting of top officials.

The agency has faced intense scrutiny following allegations surrounding the NEET examination and growing calls for reforms to improve transparency and security.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had on Thursday evening emphasised that nothing was more impor

tant than the welfare and future of the youth.

He stated that the government had decided to set up fast-track courts to ensure swift and stringent punishment for those involved in paper leaks.

PM Modi noted in a post on X that he had directed the concerned authorities and officials to take all necessary steps in this regard, adding that this continues a series of measures aimed at safeguarding the interests of students.

The Prime Minister asserted that those who try to harm the future of the youth will not be spared.

In a related move, the Education Department has got two new secretaries.

Naresh Pal Gangwar has been appointed as Secretary of the Department of

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Narco-terror funding case ED searches 9 locations in J&K, Punjab; freezes Rs 49.9 lakh

NEW DELHI, JUL 24: Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jammu Sub-Zonal Office, conducted search operations under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 at nine locations in Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir near Line of Control (LoC) in connection with an ongoing money laundering investigation relating to a narco-terror funding case, involving cases registered by J&K police and Punjab police.

According to officials, the investigation revealed a well-organised and multi-

layered narco-terror funding network operating between J&K and the neighbouring Punjab, involving Punjab-based handlers including Satnam Singh and Manjit Singh alias Maan, and Kupwara, Kashmir (near LoC) based operatives including Safeer Ahmed and Kafeel Ahmed.

Heroin consignments were smuggled from Pakistan through Pakistan based handlers linked with terrorist organization, Hizbul Mujahideen, who coordinated with Kashmir-based accused including Safeer Ahmed and Kafeel

Ahmed for smuggling heroin through the Amrohi border/LoC adjoining areas into India, in one instance, 35 packets of heroin were retrieved out of which five packets were distributed/retained locally and 30 packets were concealed in a truck tyre for transportation to Srinagar.

Officials said the consignment was delivered in Srinagar to Punjab-based carriers Sarabjeet Singh and Honey Baara, who were later intercepted at Banthal in September 2023 with 30 packets weighing about 31

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LS adjourned till Monday Not holding debate on NEET will send wrong message: Rijiju



to opposition parties to let debate on the paper leak take place in Parliament.

He said while several opposition MPs were of the view that debate should take place, Gandhi should make his party members understand the need for a discussion.

He said making excuses and attaching pre-condi

tions before a debate will send a wrong message to the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also assured of a stringent law on paper leaks and holding trial of the accused in fast-track courts, he said, while also noting that activist Sonam Wangchuk has ended his hunger strike.

He said the Union Cabinet will take a decision on the proposed law on Friday.

However, the Congress and other opposition parties continued to insist on resignation of Pradhan and shouted slogans like "Istifa

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US imposes 10 pc tariff on Indian imports over forced labour concerns

WASHINGTON, JUL 24: The US has imposed 10 pc tariffs on goods purchased from India and 16 other countries over the issue of the use of forced labour in the production of such items.

USTRade Representative Jamieson Greer announced the new tariffs on 60 countries under Section 301 of the Trade Act on Friday (July 24, 2026), a day before the expiration of 10 pc additional levies on all countries.

The USTR statement said that Mr. Greer had taken the final action, at President Donald Trump's direction,

under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 by imposing tariffs on 60 economies for their failure to impose and effectively enforce a prohibition on the importation of goods produced with forced labour.

The action will begin to correct what is both a human rights abuse and a distortive trade practice to improve the welfare of workers everywhere," Greer said in a statement here.

The 10 pc tariff rate applies to 17 countries, including India, Canada, the UK, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Earlier, India was bracketed in countries attracting 12.5

pc tariffs. A Federal Note in this regard took note of India's adoption of a forced labour import prohibition after the unveiling of the proposed tariffs in June.

On June 14, India amended its foreign trade policy to prohibit the import of goods produced using forced labour.

The Trump administration had initiated the two investigations after the U.S. Supreme Court, in February, dismissed last year's "reciprocal tariffs" using emergency powers as illegal. The administration re

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