

TERROR GRIPS KASHMIR

26 people, mostly tourists, gunned down in Pahalgam's 'mini Switzerland'

PTI, PAHALGAM: Terrorists opened fire at a famed meadow near Kashmir's Pahalgam town on Tuesday afternoon, killing 26 people, mostly tourists, in what is the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019.

MICRO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Dates:
28th April to 9th May 2025

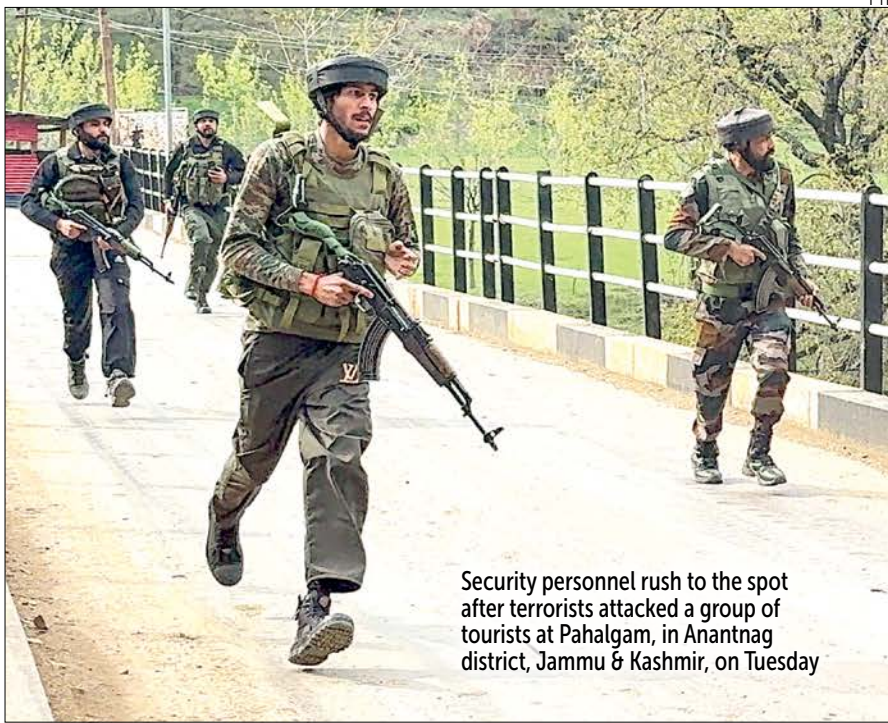
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The 26 dead included two foreigners and two locals, a high ranking official said without getting into details. The toll is still being ascertained, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said, while describing the terror attack as 'much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years'.

The attack, which coincides with US Vice President J D Vance's visit to India and just as the tourist and trekking season is picking up momentum, took place around 3 pm, officials said.

Baisaran, about six kilometres from the resort town of Pahalgam, is an expansive meadow ringed by dense pine forests and mountains and



Security personnel rush to the spot after terrorists attacked a group of tourists at Pahalgam, in Anantnag district, Jammu & Kashmir, on Tuesday

■ **Armed terrorists came into the grass-land, dubbed 'mini Switzerland', and started firing at tourists milling around eateries, taking pony rides or just picnicking, officials and eyewitnesses said**

■ **At least 20 people were injured in the strike in the volatile Kashmir Valley**

■ **As news of the terror attack targeting**

DASTARDLY ATTACK

tourists in Kashmir spread, The Resistance Front (TRF), shadow group of the banned Pak-based LeT terror group, claimed responsibility

■ **Officials said it was possible the terror group could have crossed over from Kishtwar in Jammu and reached Baisaran through Kokernag in south Kashmir**

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milling around eateries, taking pony rides or just picnicking, officials and eyewitnesses said. At least 20 people were injured in the strike in the volatile Kashmir Valley where

tourists have so far mostly been spared.

As news of the terror attack targeting tourists in Kashmir spread, The Resistance Front (TRF), shadow group of the

PAST TERROR INCIDENTS

FEB 14, 2019: 40 CRPF personnel killed in suicide attack in south Kashmir's Pulwama area

2000: Over 30 people killed in attack on Amarnath base camp in Pahalgam

MARCH 2000: When then US president Bill Clinton was visiting India, terrorists killed 35 Sikhs in Chhattisgarh in a strike on Amarnath pilgrims at Sheshnag

2001: 13 people died in a strike on Amarnath pilgrims at Sheshnag

2002: 11 persons killed in an attack in the Pahalgam area

MAY 2024: A tourist couple from Rajasthan was injured in a firing incident by terrorists at Yannar in Pahalgam

banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, claimed responsibility.

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PARCHED THROATS



A woman climbs down a deep well using a rope to fetch water, amid the ongoing water crisis in the hot summer season, in Nashik district, Maharashtra, on Tuesday

Bhoma tense as villagers confront NH officials

Not convinced by the engineers' explanations, they press ahead with their demand for a bypass

Team Herald

PONDA: Tension prevailed in Bhoma on Tuesday as residents confronted National Highway (NH) officials who had arrived to measure the road for expansion. Reiterating their demand for a bypass, the villagers urged the officials not to mislead the locals. Despite the protests, the officials proceeded with the measurements, leading to chaos and subsequent traffic congestion.

Voicing concerns that the NH expansion and land-marking would destroy the village, its temples, and centuries-old culture, the Bhomkars said they plan to reach out once again to Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to push for their demand for a bypass.

The visit by PWD NH officials, including Executive Engineer Satendra Bhohe and PWD AE Chandra Parwar, was on the directions of the Chief Minister. They were there to present an on-site project report of the NH expansion, including detailed markings meant to clarify the project's implications. However, locals expressed



Bhoma residents confronted NH officials, who proceeded with the measurements, which led to chaos and traffic congestion

dissatisfaction with the explanations provided, rejecting the proposed 25-metre marking for the six-lane flyover road widening as unacceptable.

The villagers insisted that the plan had not been explained as agreed upon in their earlier meeting with the Chief Minister. They had expected a demonstration of the flyover pillar foundations and flyover arms, but the highway authorities only conducted road measurements. Additionally, villagers claimed that an edge marking point for the NH expansion — measured from the central line — fell

within the premises of the Sateri Temple.

Bhomkars also claimed that the project presented on Tuesday was the same as the 2015 plan, which they had earlier rejected. Reiterating their opposition to the flyover, they stated it would destroy their village culture. Villagers further accused the officials of misrepresentation, pointing out a discrepancy between a PWD affidavit submitted in court — mentioning a 60-metre land acquisition — and the current proposal of a 25-metre flyover.

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Belgian court rejects Choksi's bail plea

AGENCIES, BRUSSELS: A Belgian court has declined the bail plea of Mehul Choksi, a key accused in the Rs 13,500 crore Punjab National Bank (PNB) loan fraud case.



The three-judge bench, which conducted the hearing in Dutch, ruled against granting bail after reviewing the arguments.

Choksi was arrested in Belgium last week following a request from Indian authorities.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal had said during the weekly media briefing that India is working with the Belgian side for Choksi's extradition.

Sharp decline in vocations behind Missionaries of Charity leaving Panjim

MC clarifies that many Sisters are getting old and plagued by illness, thus unable to run the home in Panjim

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Missionaries of Charity headquarters in Kolkata has confirmed that it has decided to close its operations in Panjim after finding it difficult to continue services because of a sharp decline on vocations. For nearly 50 years, the Sisters have operated in the Capital from a building in St Inez, owned by Assistência Goa.

"It is after much prayer and discernment that we have decided to close

“It is after much prayer and discernment that we have decided to close our house in Panjim. We are grateful to God who brought Mother Teresa and Assistência Goa together for the purpose of serving His poorest of the poor in Panjim. Since 1976, it has been our privilege in Panjim to serve our brothers and sisters suffering from material want, physical infirmities and spiritual needs

— Sr M Joseph MC, Superior General, Missionaries of Charity, Kolkata (in a press note)

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Panjim. Since 1976, it has been our privilege in Panjim to serve our brothers and sisters suffering from material want, physical infirmities and spiritual

needs,” Sr M Joseph MC, Superior General, Missionaries of Charity, Kolkata, said.

“Now, we are finding it difficult to continue our service because of a sharp decline in vocations. While there are fewer younger sisters, the majority of sisters are growing in age and facing restrictions because of sickness. They are now unable to continue running homes for the elderly and disabled men and women.” Sr Joseph said.

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The day little Vania made a new friend, the Pope

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

BETALBATIM: On a cold morning of May 1, 2019 in Italy, the family of Joe Pereira from Betalbatim were surprised when the cavalcade carrying late Pope Francis stopped by them, and a Pontifical Swiss Guard lifted three-year-old Vania Pereira from her father's shoulders and placed her in the Pope's hands.

“When I was hugged, I was happy to make a new friend. I am sad of what happened, but he will be my friend forever,” says Vania who is now eight and trying to understand the gloom at her residence.

Late Pope Francis touched millions of lives and his touch still reverberates in the Pereira family; memories of that family trip to Vatican City and the encounter with the late Pope Francis bring tears in their eyes.

“I could not believe it

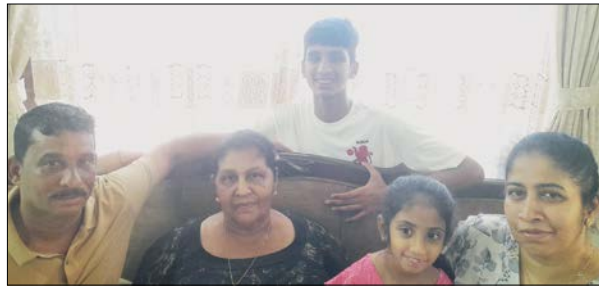


Pope Francis blesses three-year-old Vania Pereira

when they took my daughter and placed her in his arms. We were praying that we would just be able to see the Pope but I took what happened as a message that life is beyond prayer. It is about being good,” says Vania's father Joe.

“She (Vania) was very surprised when she was picked up and placed in his Holiness's arms. ‘I have a new friend, Mama’ were her first words to me after she was handed back,” recalls her mother Natasha.

“I pray that not just my



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daughter but the whole family gains the strength and courage to reach out to those in need. It is only then that the understanding of being singled out, amongst thousands present to see the Pope, will sink in,” reflects Natasha.

“Just being able to see the Pope was an experience worth living for because the man I saw from up close lived a life fighting through God for the poor of the world. He went to countries to experience the pain of the deprived and I am sure,

if our government wanted, they could have easily invited him for the Exposition,” thinks Natasha.

“Our late Pope came to countries that were just two hours away from India by flight. For sure, he would have come here to see the relics of St Francis Xavier,” she adds as daughter Vania joyfully interjects saying, “he would have hugged me again.”

“Faith,” according to Vania's grandmother Carafira, “shows itself in many ways. There was a message for my family from God through that act and it is a lesson that we will never forget.”

“The lesson,” according to Carafira, “is that, prayer is one step that brings us close to God. Being good to others is the next and the best way to keep the memory of this great Pope alive. And it is only after this that we can expect to walk with God forever.”

PI, constable arrested for accepting bribe

Team Herald

PANJIM: Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) on Tuesday arrested Police Inspector (PI) Sunil Gudler of Konkani Railway Police Station, Margao, and constable Hussain, in a bribery case involving a Belgaum-based businessman licensed to supply goat meat.

Speaking to reporters, SP Nelson Albuquerque said the ACB received a complaint alleging that PI Gudler had demanded a bribe of Rs 2 lakh and a monthly payment of Rs 25,000 from the businessman. The demand was reportedly conveyed to the complainant through constable Hussain. Acting on the complaint, the ACB laid a trap and its team caught the accused red-handed while

accepting an advance payment of Rs 25,000 on Monday, April 21, 2025.

The transaction took place inside the office of PI Sunil Gudler, in the presence of the complainant and constable Hussain.

The Rs 25,000 cash was later recovered from a drawer in PI Gudler's office, Albuquerque said.

The businessman had earlier allegedly been threatened with arrest by PI Gudler in connection with a case registered on March 30 against unknown persons.

Despite informing the officer that he had no involvement in the matter, the complainant alleged that he was summoned and intimidated, the SP said.

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