

Landmine defused near Amarnath pilgrimage route

Security forces Monday defused a powerful landmine close to the Srinagar-Baltal route taken by pilgrims to the Amarnath cave shrine in Jammu and Kashmir.

The landmine had been placed under a bridge near the national highway in Wussan village, about 30 km from here.

The highway is being used extensively by devotees of Hindu god Shiva who are on an annual two-month pilgrimage to the Amarnath shrine, which began Wednesday.

Over 200,000 pilgrims from various states have registered for this year's pilgrimage to pay obeisance before a naturally-made Shivalingam at a height of 3,888 metres above sea level.

'The improvised explosive device (IED) had been planted under a bridge some distance away from the main road. It was detected in time and defused by the bomb disposal squad,' a police officer said.

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