

# North in News

E-mail: [ninnorthinnews@gmail.com](mailto:ninnorthinnews@gmail.com)  
 editor.northinnews@gmail.com

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## 'Future wars will be won by synergy, innovation': Rajnath

**Operation Sindoor reflected India's "collective resolve and new military ethos"**

NEW DELHI, MAY 8: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today said Operation Sindoor reflected India's "collective resolve and new military ethos", describing it as a "short-duration, deep-penetration, high-intensity and high-impact" operation that demonstrated the country's ability to compel its adversary to back down. Addressing the second edition of the Joint Commanders' Conference in Japur, Singh called on the armed forces to remain prepared for evolving threats amid growing geopolitical uncertainty and stressed that future conflicts would increasingly be shaped by technological innovation and inter-



coordination. "Operation Sindoor is a testament to the swift, precise, and joint response of the Indian Defence Forces to safeguard national interests," Singh said. Describing the

operation as a defining example of India's military preparedness, he said, "Operation Sindoor was a short-duration, deep-penetration, high-intensity, and high-impact operation

which showcased India's ability to compel its adversary to surrender." He added that the operation was "a demonstration of India's growing capabilities and a symbol of the nation's collective resolve and new military ethos." The Defence Minister urged senior commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force to maintain operational unpredictability in future conflicts. "The element of surprise is key to remain unpredictable to the nation's adversaries,"

(Contd on Pg 2)

## Bharat Is Sacred, Bound Together By A Sense Of Oneness: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, MAY 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that every part of Bharat is sacred, bound together by a sense of oneness that transcends geography, and in a world often marked by divisions, this spirit of unity is more relevant than ever. Modi, in a signed article marking 75 years since the restored Somnath Temple was reopened to devotees, said the struggles and sacrifices of those who laid down their lives to protect the temple in Gujarat and those who rebuilt it time and again will never be forgotten. He said in a world often



marked by divisions, this spirit of unity is more relevant than ever and Somnath will continue to stand tall in all its glory because the sense of unity and shared civilisational consciousness lives on in the hearts of every Indian. "Countless individuals from different corners of

India contributed to restoring its glory. They saw every part of Bharat as sacred, bound together by a sense of oneness that transcended geography. In a world often marked by divisions, this spirit of unity is more relevant than ever," he said. He said as a tribute to this, remembering the extraordinary courage of a thousand years, there will be special pujas at Somnath for the next thousand days. It is gladdening to see several people donating for these pujas as well, he said. "I urge my fellow Indians to travel to Somnath in this

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## 'No Eknath Shinde In NC': Omar Says All Party MLAs United



SRINAGAR, MAY 8: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday accused the BJP of pursuing "blackmail politics" over the issue of statehood and said the delay in cabinet expansion was linked to the Union

Territory's status and not due to any fear within the ruling National Conference. Responding to remarks by the Leader of Opposition in the J&K Assembly, Abdullah said there was "no Eknath Shinde in the National

Conference" and asserted that all party legislators stood united. "It is obvious that the LoP is impatient to sit on the chair of Jammu and Kashmir's minister," Abdullah told reporters here. Referring to the ongoing debate around delimitation, the chief minister alleged that the exercise in J&K was carried out "only to benefit the BJP and its friends." "We suffered their delimitation and we know about delimitation. It was done only to benefit BJP and BJP's friends," he said. Abdullah

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## LG Manoj Sinha Offers Prayers At Tirumala Venkateswara Temple, Performs Abhishekam Ceremony



TRIPURATI (ANDHRA PRADESH), MAY 8: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday visited the Lord Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Tirumala in Andhra Pradesh to offer prayers and participate in part of the Abhishekam

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## Atal Tunnel opened new era of Development for Lahaul-Spiti: Governor Kavinder Gupta

**Says Atal Tunnel Embodies Vajpayee's dream of connecting the Himalayas**



MANALI/SHISSU, MAY 8: The Governor of Himachal Pradesh Kavinder Gupta on Thursday visited the world-famous Atal Tunnel Rohtang during his tour of Lahaul-Spiti and Manali and praised its technical excellence, strategic importance and transformative role in the region's development. The Governor traversed the tunnel from the South

Portal to the North Portal and received a detailed briefing from Border Roads Organisation (BRO) officials on its construction, safety systems and year-round operational management. He said the

Atal Tunnel is a remarkable feat of modern engineering and advanced technology that has opened new dimensions of connectivity and development in the

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### BRIEF NEWS

**Army, civil administration rescue 20 stranded tourists in Gulmarg**

SRINAGAR, MAY 8: Army and civil administration on Friday rescued 20 tourists, including eight children, from the higher reaches of Gulmarg in Jammu and Kashmir after they got stranded due to a technical snag in a private helicopter, officials said. The tourists – six men, six women and eight children – had travelled to the snow-bound area for skiing with two local ski guides, they added. The tourists were stranded after the helicopter developed a technical problem. Army helicopters were later pressed into service to evacuate the tourists, who hail from Gujarat, Kerala and Karnataka, to safety, the officials said. Chief Minister Omar

**Advisory On CUET-UG Dress Code, Permissible Items Released**

NEW DELHI, MAY 8: The National Testing Agency (NTA) has issued an advisory for candidates appearing in the Common University Entrance Test (CUET-UG) 2026, informing them about the dress code and permissible items at examination centres. The CUET-UG exam will be held from May 11 to May 31 in India, and in 15 cities outside the country. In an advisory issued on Thursday, the NTA said the examination will be conducted in computer-based test (CBT) mode. It also informed candidates about the dress code and permissible items at the examination

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## SC Orders Establishment Of Special Courts For Expeditious Trial In NIA Cases

NEW DELHI, MAY 8: The Supreme Court on Friday directed that at least one special court be established to deal with 10 to 15 pending trials in cases probed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA). Passing a slew of directions to expedite trials in cases where the Centre, through the NIA, is the prosecutor, the apex court said the special courts should be set up within a month. A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joyymalya Bagchi directed the Centre to approach the chief justice of the jurisdictional high

courts and have consultations for establishing exclusive courts under Section 11 of the NIA Act, 2008. Section 11 of the Act deals with the power of the central government to constitute special courts. "We request the chief justice of the high courts to consult the state governments to provide requisite and sufficient space for the establishment of special courts where the presiding officers will be entrusted with the trial of cases," the bench said. The top court was hearing a suo motu case titled "In Re: creation of the jurisdictional high

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## China confirms its support to Pakistan during four-day conflict with India

BEIJING, MAY 8: China, for the first time, has confirmed that it provided on-site technical support to Pakistan during the four-day conflict with India last year, official media reports here said. China's state broadcaster CCTV on Thursday aired an interview with Zhang Heng, an engineer from the Aviation Industry Corporation of China's (AVIC) Chengdu Aircraft Design and Research Institute, a key developer of advanced fighter aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicle design. Zhang had provided technical support to Pakistan during the four-day war last May, Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported, quoting CCTV. Pakistan's air force operates a fleet of Chinese-made J-10CE jets, produced by an AVIC subsidiary. "At the support base, we frequently heard the roar of fighter jets taking off and the constant wail of air-

raid sirens. By late morning, in May, the temperature was already approaching 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit). It was a real ordeal for us, both mentally and physically," Zhang said. What drove his team was the "desire to do an even better job with on-site support" and to ensure their equipment could "truly perform at its full combat potential," Zhang told CCTV. That wasn't just a recognition of the J10CE; it was also a testament to the deep bond we formed through working side by side, day in and day out," he said. Chinese foreign ministry and military officials have either parried or played down allegations of China's support for Pakistan during the conflict. There was no official reaction to India's Deputy Chief of Army Staff Lt General Rahul R Singh's assertion

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## 'Bar Has Much To Offer': CJJ Shares Anecdote As He Dismisses Lawyer's Plea For Reevaluation

NEW DELHI, MAY 8: In a rare moment of candour, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant shared an anecdote when as a young lawyer he was rebuked by a high court judge for aspiring to become a judicial officer, and was told, "The bar is waiting for you." The story came in a way of encouragement to a judicial services aspirant, who was seeking reevaluation of an examination paper. Though the plea of Prema Gupta was dismissed by a bench comprising the CJJ and Justice

Joyymalya Bagchi, she left the court smiling. As Gupta pressed services, the CJJ intervened and said, "Let me share my personal story and I hope you will go happily as we cannot allow your petition." The CJJ recounted his time as a final-year law student when he, too, wanted to become a judicial officer, had cleared the written test, and was to appear for the interview. "When I was in the final year, I applied for judicial services. At that time, final-year

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## 2 Indian Nationals Part Of Crew Of Luxury Cruise Ship That Reported Hantavirus Outbreak



LONDON, MAY 8: At least two Indian nationals are part of the crew of the Dutch vessel MV Hondius which reported a hantavirus outbreak with five confirmed cases and three deaths so far, according to the BBC. The luxury cruise ship, operated by Oceanwide Expeditions, began its journey on April 1 from Argentina's Ushuaia and is expected to arrive in Spain's Canary Islands on May 10. About 150 passengers and crew from 28 countries were initially aboard the luxury cruise, but dozens disembarked on the island of St Helena on April 24, according to the report. Of the 28 nationalities onboard, 38 are from the

Philippines, 31 from the UK, 23 from the US, 16 from the Netherlands, 14 from Spain, nine from Germany, six from Canada, and two crew members from India, among others, the BBC reported. The World Health Organization said on Thursday that five of the eight suspected hantavirus cases had been confirmed. A 69-year-old Dutch woman, confirmed to have the virus, has died; her Dutch husband and a German woman were also among the fatalities. Their cases are being investigated. The UN health agency has said the outbreak is not the start of a pandemic. Maria van Kerkhove, an infectious disease epidemiologist at WHO, told a news briefing that the situation is not the same as six years ago with Covid-19 because hantavirus spreads through "close, intimate contact". Van Kerkhove said "this is not Covid, this is not influenza, it spreads very differently". She said authorities had asked "everyone to wear a mask" on board the MV Hondius. Those in contact with or caring for the

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## Drug Peddler's Property Demolished; Commercial Establishment Sealed

BARAMULLA, MAY 8: Intensifying its crackdown on drug trafficking and allied illegal activities under the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, police in Baramulla, in coordination with the Revenue authorities and Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA), carried out decisive action against individuals involved in narcotics-related offences in the Tangmarg area. "In a joint operation conducted at Ferozpora Tangmarg, a shop belonging to notorious drug peddler Intiyaz Ahmad Mir son of Ab Majid Mir resident of Ferozpora Tangmarg was demolished by Police along with Revenue officials. The action forms part of the intensified campaign aimed at dismantling the

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## Dr Jitendra Inaugurates 'Future Skills Centre' In Parul University Vadodra, Underlines Govt Supported Ecosystem

VADODARA, MAY 8: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today inaugurated "Lakshya 2047" Centre for Future Skills, Cadaveric Centre and Advanced Medical Simulation Facilities at Parul University here. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh said India is moving at a "very fast pace" in emerging technologies including Quantum, Artificial Intelligence, Semiconductors and Deep-Tech, with the country's youth set to play the central role in building a Viksit Bharat by 2047. The Minister outlined the gov-



ernment's broader push to align higher education with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, semiconductors, cybersecurity and quantum technologies. He said the Centre, developed in collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Ethnotech and Cambridge University Press and Assessment, would train students in nine future-technology

domains with globally recognised certifications. Highlighting progress under the National Quantum Mission, the Minister said India has already completed 1,000 km of secure quantum communication within just three years, achieving the target in less than half the projected timeline, and added that the eight-year Mission is advancing rapidly through four

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**Future...**  
and secure a strategic edge in any given situation," he said, while cautioning military leaders to remain alert against similar tactics employed by adversaries. He further asked commanders to ensure that India's armed forces remain technologically prepared for future warfare. "There is a need to strengthen capabilities in Artificial Intelligence, autonomous systems, data analytics and secure communication networks," Singh said. Highlighting the changing nature of warfare, he asserted that technological advancement and coordination among the three services would determine military success in the years ahead. Future wars will be won by innovative thinking and enhanced synergy," he said. Reaffirming the Narendra Modi government's commitment to modernising the armed forces, Singh said efforts were underway to equip the military with state-of-the-art weapons and platforms, with special emphasis on research in niche domains. During the conference, the Defence minister also released a documentary on Operation Sindoor, which highlighted the armed forces' operational preparedness and rapid response capabilities. He also unveiled the Hindi version of Vision 2047 and the Joint Doctrine for Integrated Communication Architecture, aimed at improving doctrinal clarity, interoperability and integrated communications for future multidomain operations. The conference, themed "Military Capabilities in New Domains," brought together senior leadership from the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces to deliberate on emerging security challenges and future preparedness. Discussions focused on future warfare, multidomain operations, technological transformation, indigenous innovation, cyber resilience, cognitive warfare and AI-enabled combat concepts. Demonstrations of advanced systems designed for intelligence fusion, operational planning and information management were also showcased, reflecting the growing integration of cutting-edge technologies into India's joint operational structures. The event was attended by General Anil Chauhan, Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, General Upendra Dwiwedi, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, Dr Samir V Kamat and other senior civil and military officials.

**Bharat Is...**  
special time. When you stand on the shores of Somanth, let its ancient echoes speak to you. You will not only be overwhelmed by devotion but will also feel the strong pulse of a civilisational spirit that defies time, that is unbroken and unyielding," he said. Modi said the devotees will experience Bharat's unquenchable spirit and understand why, despite every effort, the Indian culture remained undefeated and the people will have the opportunity to behold the vision of eternal triumph, which will surely be unforgettable. The prime minister said that at the start of 2026, he had gone to Somanth for the Somanth Swasthman Parv, marking thousands of years since the first attack on the Somanth Temple. Now, he said, he will be back in Somanth on May 11 to mark 75 years since the inauguration of the restored temple by the then President of India, Rajendra Prasad. He said that in less than half a year, it is a privilege to be attending two important milestones relating to Somanth and its journey from ruin to renewal or what everyone describes as from Vidvans to Srijan. "Somanth gives us a civilisational message. The vast sea before it evokes timelessness. The waves tell us that no matter how fierce the storms are or how turbulent the tides are, one can always rise again with dignity and strength."

"The waves return to the shore, as though reminding every generation that the spirit of the people can never be subdued for long," he said. Modi said Indian ancient scriptures say that a 'pradakhshina' of the divine Somanth is equal to a 'pradakhshina' of the whole earth. He said while people have come here to pray, they have also experienced the remarkable continuity of a civilisation whose flame could never be extinguished. "Empires rose and fell, tides changed, history moved through conquest and upheaval, yet Somanth continued to endure in our consciousness. It is time to remember the countless generations who stood firm in the face of tyranny," he said. The prime minister said there were Lakulisha and Soma Sarman, who transformed Prabhasa into a great centre of philosophy. He said Chakravarti Maharaja Dharmaraja IV of Vallabhi built the Second Temple three centuries ago and Bhima Deva, Jayapala and Anandapala will always be remembered for defending civilisational honour against invasions.

Modi said it is said that Raja Bhoja, too, helped with the reconstruction and Kama Deva and Sidharaja Jayasinha played a vital role in restoring Gujarat's political and cultural strength. Bhava Brhmapati, Kumarapala Solanki and the Pashupata Acharyas rebuilt and sustained the shrine as a great centre of worship and learning and Vishaladeva Vaghela and Tripurantaka protected its intellectual and spiritual traditions, he said. "Mahapaladeva and Ra Khangar were instrumental in reviving worship after destruction, Purnyashok Ahilyabai Holkar, whose 300th birth anniversary is being marked, ensured the continuity of devotion in the most difficult of times," he said. The PM said there were the Gaekwads of Baroda, who safeguarded the rights of pilgrims, and the country's soil is blessed to have nurtured brave personalities like Veer Hanraj Gohil and Veer Vegdaji Bhi, whose sacrifice and courage have become a part of Somanth's living memory. In the 1940s, he said, when the spirit of freedom swept across India and the foundations of a new republic were being laid under the leadership of towering figures like Sardar Patel, one thing continued to trouble him deeply — the condition of Somanth.

"On 13th November 1947, during Diwali time, he stood next to the dilapidated ruins of the temple with sea-water in his hands and said, 'On this auspicious day of the (Gujarati) New Year, we have decided that Somanth should be reconstructed. You, people of Saurashtra, should do your best. This is a holy task in which all should participate,'" he said. Modi said following the election call of Sardar Patel, it was not only the people of Gujarat but also the people of the whole of India responded enthusiastically. Unfortunately, he said, fate did not allow Sardar Patel to witness the fulfilment of the dream he had so passionately championed as before the restored Somanth Temple could open its doors to devotees, he had departed from this world. Yet, his (Patel's) impact continued to be felt over the sacred shores of Prabhas Patan, he said. "His vision was championed by Shri KM Munshi, ably supported by the Jansahab of Navanagar. In 1951, when the temple was complete, it was decided to call the President of India, Dr Rajendra Prasad, for the ceremony. Overcoming

strong objections from the then Prime Minister Pandit Nehru, Dr Prasad graced the ceremony, thus making it even more special and historic," he said. Modi said his mind also goes back to October 2001, when he had just taken over as chief minister of Gujarat and on October 31, 2001, the Jayanti of Sardar Patel, the Gujarat government had the honour of organising a programme to mark 50 years since the Somanth Temple opened its doors. He said it also coincided with the 125th birth anniversary celebrations of Sardar Patel and the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the then Home Minister LK Advani for the programme.

Modi said during his speech on May 11, 1951, President Rajendra Prasad said that the Somanth Temple proclaims to the world that anything with unparalleled faith and love cannot be destroyed. Prasad expressed hope that this temple will live in the hearts of people. "He (Prasad) also said that the restoration of the temple was a fulfilment of Sardar Patel's dream, but taking that spirit forward, it is important that we restore prosperity to the lives of people. These are important and inspiring messages he gave," he said.

"This is the path we have been walking for over a decade. I consider it my good fortune that, inspired by the principle of 'Vikas Bhi, Vinast Bhi', from Somanth to Kashi, Kamakhya to Kedarnath, Ayodhya to Ujjain, Trimbakeshwar to Srisaikal, our team has had the opportunity to equip our spiritual centres with the latest facilities while at the same time preserving their traditional character," Modi said. This, he said, along with efforts to improve connectivity, ensures more people can visit them and it boosts the local economy, secures livelihoods and deepens the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'.

**'No Eknath...**  
said the cabinet expansion had not been stalled due to political instability but because Jammu and Kashmir was yet to regain statehood. "Cabinet expansion has stopped because we have not been given the status of a state. Cabinet expansion has not stopped because of fear," he said. The chief minister further accused the BJP of trying to obstruct the functioning of the elected government in Jammu and Kashmir. "LOP sahib proves with his statements that until BJP gets a government here, they will not let us work properly and they will not make Jammu and Kashmir a state," he said. He alleged that the people of Jammu and Kashmir were being "threatened in the name of statehood" and said those who voted for the BJP in the last election should remember that the party was indulging in "blackmail politics".

Abdullah also referred to Supreme Court observations and past precedents regarding government formation, saying the single largest party should be invited to form the government and given an opportunity to prove its majority on the floor of the House. "There is no reason to stop this process. BJP should be allowed to form a government. If they prove their majority in the Assembly, they will remain. If they do not prove it, they will have to resign," he said.

**LG Manoj...**  
ceremony. Accompanied by temple officials, the governor was seen draped in a vibrant traditional shawl, marking his presence at the revered pilgrimage site. The Trimala Venkateswara Temple, situated atop the seventh peak of the Seshachalam Hills, is among India's most revered Hindu shrines. Dedicated to Lord Venkateswara, also known as Balaji, the centuries-old temple draws millions of devotees from across the country and abroad every year.

**Atal Tunnel...**  
Himalayan region. Governor Gupta said the project is a living testament to the vision and determination of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. "The Atal Tunnel is not merely an engineering structure — it is a symbol of India's strategic strength, border area development and public welfare," he said. He noted that Lahaul-Spiti, once cut off from the rest of the state for months, now remains connected throughout the year, greatly benefiting local residents in terms of mobility, healthcare, education and essential services. The Governor added that the tunnel has significantly boosted tourism, attracting visitors from across the country and abroad, thereby strengthening local employment and the regional economy. Governor Gupta also visited Sissu Lake and Sissu Waterfall, appreciating the scenic natural beauty of the Lahaul Valley. He said Sissu has carved a unique identity among Himachal Pradesh's premier tourist destinations. The Governor visited the Raja Ghepan Temple — the revered deity of Lahaul — and prayed for the peace and prosperity of the people of the state and the nation. He was accorded a traditional welcome by the local administration at the North Portal, with District Collector Kiran Bhadana receiving him on behalf of Lahaul-Spiti district. He was also honoured in accordance with the rich cultural traditions of the Lahaul Valley. Subsequently, the Governor visited the famous Hidimba Devi Temple in Manali, offered prayers and sought the goddess's blessings. He interacted with devotees in the temple complex and appreciated Himachal Pradesh's rich religious and cultural heritage. Governor Gupta said Himachal Pradesh holds a unique place in the world as Dev Bhoomi — the Land of Gods — and that the people's deep faith and devotion are an inseparable part of the state's identity. He called the preservation of Himachal's religious heritage, natural beauty and cultural diversity a collective responsibility of all Deputy Commissioner, Kullu Anurag Sharma, SP Kullu Madan Lal and other senior officials were present on the occasion.

**SC Orders...**  
of special exclusive courts'. The bench directed that no other cases shall be entrusted to the special courts and the trial would be conducted on a day-to-day basis. The bench said the special court judges would be at liberty to list the matters in the manner they want while ensuring that at least one trial is concluded within a month. "It is made clear that there shall be at least one special court for 10 to 15 pending trials," the bench directed. It said two special courts would be set up if the number of pending trials were above 15. The bench asked the states to comply with its earlier order in which it had said that it would be necessary for them to provide the requisite courtrooms and other immovable infrastructure for the establishment of the exclusive special courts. The bench also dealt with the issue of trials in cases under Section 22 of the Act where the state is the prosecutor.

Section 22 deals with the power of the state government to constitute special courts. The top court asked the advocate generals of the state, in consultation with the registrar general of the high courts, to furnish details of pending trials in their respective jurisdictions. It posted the matter for hearing in July. While hearing the matter on April 20, the top court asked all the states and Union Territories (UTs) to provide details of terror and narcotics cases being probed by the central and state agencies, including the NIA and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), as a step towards setting up special exclusive courts for early disposal of the cases. It asked the Centre to consider providing funds of Rs 1 crore each for setting up the courts in all states and UTs to prosecute cases lodged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS). On March 24, the apex court directed the establishment of special courts for cases investigated by the NIA and those falling under the UAPA.

Expanding the ambit, the bench had asked advocate generals of 17 states to furnish the details of cases lodged under the UAPA and the NDPS Acts, irrespective of whether they were prosecuted by the NIA or the state police and by NCB or by state agencies. The bench highlighted that early disposal would balance the rights of the accused and victims both. It had also issued notices to the remaining states and asked them to furnish the requisite information. The suo moto petition was initiated following concerns that NIA trials were languishing for years.

**China...**  
that Beijing provided active military support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, using the conflict as a "live lab". In an address at a seminar on "New Age Military Technologies" organised by industry chamber FICCI in July last year, Lt Gen Singh suggested that China used its satellites to monitor Indian military deployment as the Pakistani military was getting live inputs on it during the DGMO (Director General of Military Operations)-level phone talks. The Deputy Chief of Army Staff likened China's strategy during Operation Sindoor to its ancient military strategy of "36 stratagems" and killing the adversary with a "borrowed knife" to buttress the point that Beijing extended all possible support to Pakistan to cause pain to India. Chinese officials and social media played up Pakistan's claims of shooting down Indian fighter planes to showcase Chinese tech superiority, even though there was no evidence to support Islamabad's assertion. But Chinese officials and media remained silent about Pakistan suffering heavy collateral damage, including several terrorist headquarters, key air bases and failure of Chinese radars, which enable India's air superiority. Latest media reports here said China plans to sell its stealth bomber J-35 to Pakistan. The disclosures by the Chinese officials about China's assistance to Pakistan during the May conflict with India are seen as a new "sales pitch", observers said. Xu Da, another employee from the Chengdu Aircraft Design and Research Institute, who also provided on-site support to Pakistan during the war, compared the J-10CE jet to a "child". "We nurtured it, cared for it, and it grew up to be a major terror. And now, it was facing a major test," Xu said. "As for the outstanding results the J-10CE achieved, we weren't very surprised, and it didn't feel sudden at all." In fact, it felt inevitable. The aircraft just needed the right opportunity. And when that moment came, it delivered exactly as we knew it would," he said. The J-10CE is the export variant of the J-10C 4.5-generation fighter and is considered the most advanced model in the J-10 series. It includes an active electronically scanned array or AESA radar and is compatible with advanced Chinese weapons, including air-to-air missiles. Pakistan is the only known operator of J-10Cs outside China. It ordered 36 of the fighters along with 250 PL-15 missiles in 2020. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, up to 80 per cent of Pakistan's arms imports between 2021 and 2025 came from China. The Pakistan Air Force also uses the JF-17 fighter jet, which was jointly developed with China, as its primary combat aircraft.

**'Bar Has...**  
students could apply. By the time the results came, the procedure had changed. Earlier, the public service commission used to conduct the selection. Then a Supreme Court judgment came, pursuant to which judges of the high court were to act as subject experts, and their opinion would be binding on the commission," he said. The CJJ recalled that around the same period, he had shifted to the Punjab and Haryana High Court and started practising there. The senior-most judge on the interview panel happened to be the judge before whom he had recently argued two significant matters. "The senior-most judge who had been nominated for the interview panel already knew me because I had argued two matters before him. One of the matters was Sunita Rani vs Baldev Raj, where he had allowed my appeal in a matrimonial case and set aside the decree of divorce granted by the district judge on the ground of schizophrenia," Justice Surya Kant shared. "One day, he called me into his chamber and asked, 'Do you want to become a judicial officer?' I said yes. He immediately said, 'Get out from (my) the chamber.' The courtroom fell silent as he related the rebuke. "I came out trembling. All my dreams were shattered. I thought he had snubbed me and that my career was over," the CJJ said. However, the story took another turn the next day when the judge summoned him again, this time offering a piece of advice that would change the trajectory of his life. "He said, 'If you want to become (a judge), you are welcome. But my advice is, don't become a judicial officer. The Bar is waiting for you,'" Justice Surya Kant recalled. The CJJ said he decided to skip his interview and didn't even tell his parents at first, fearing their disappointment, and instead chose to dedicate himself to his practice as an advocate. "Now tell me did I make a bad right or bad decision," the CJJ asked the litigant lawyer, as he advised her to look forward to the future rather than dwelling on the reevaluation of a single paper. "Apply for superior judicial services next time. The Bar has more to offer," he said. Gupta, who had entered the court seeking a legal remedy, left with a smile despite dismissal of her plea.

**2 Indian...**  
peaked cases, she added, should "wear a higher level of personal protective equipment".

Hantavirus typically spreads from rodents — but in the latest outbreak the transmission between people was documented for the first time, the WHO said. Meanwhile, health authorities are racing to trace dozens of people who have recently disembarked from the Dutch vessel MV Hondius. Oceanwide Expedition said 29 passengers, of at least 12 different nationalities, had left the MV Hondius in St Helena, the British Overseas Territory. It also said the body of one deceased person now known to be a Dutch man was taken off the vessel. Seven of those who left the cruise liner were British nationals.

**Drug Peddler...**  
support structures of drug trafficking networks and sending a strong message against the menace of narcotics," a police spokesperson said in a statement. In a parallel action, he said, North Wind Cafe, an outsourced property of the Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA), was sealed today by the Chief Executive Officer, GDA. The lessee of the said property, namely Yaseen Khanday is an accused in an NDPS case registered at Police Post Wagwora. Pertinently, the entire jurisdiction of Police Station Gulmarg falls on GDA land and the properties operating therein are situated on government land. Authorities have initiated further proceedings, including cancellation of the lease allotted to the accused. Police reiterated its unwavering commitment towards the eradication of drug abuse and narcotics trafficking from society. Such stringent actions shall continue against drug peddlers and all those facilitating the drug trade, in order to safeguard the youth and ensure a drug-free society.

**Dr Jitendra...**  
thematic hubs and collaborations with institutions across the country. The Minister said the IndiaAI Mission launched in 2024 is creating a strong ecosystem around compute infrastructure, datasets, innovation and future skills. Referring to India's growing global standing in innovation, he said the country today ranks third globally in the startup ecosystem and has crossed one lakh patents, a majority of them filed by Indian residents. India also ranks among the top nations globally in scientific publications, with Indian research increasingly receiving international citations and recognition. Dr. Jitendra Singh said the pace of technological evolution has made continuous skilling and re-skilling essential, especially in areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Quantum Technologies and Semiconductor Design. He said India's demographic advantage, with nearly 70 per cent of the population below the age of 40 years, presents a major opportunity to emerge as a global skilled workforce hub over the next two to three decades.

The Minister said the Government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has adopted an integrated and collaborative approach towards innovation, research and skilling, moving beyond traditional silos and encouraging greater participation from academia, startups and the private sector. He referred to initiatives such as the National Education Policy 2020, the National Quantum Mission, IndiaAI Mission, Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), Atal Tinkering Labs and various startup support programmes aimed at nurturing innovation from the school level onwards. Highlighting the Government's emphasis on inclusive scientific growth, Dr. Jitendra Singh spoke about dedicated programmes for women scientists, school students, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, as well as support mechanisms for universities and young researchers through schemes such as PURSE, FIAT, STUTI and technology innovation platforms like FUSE. He said these initiatives are designed to democratise access to science, research infrastructure and innovation opportunities across the country.

On Artificial Intelligence, the Minister said India is pursuing an approach rooted in inclusion, responsibility and public good. Referring to the Global South AI Summit hosted by India earlier this year and the adoption of the Delhi Declaration on responsible AI, he said technology must serve the most vulnerable and underserved sections of society. "One has to be intelligent enough to use Artificial Intelligence," he remarked, adding that AI guided by ethics and equity can become a powerful force for healthcare, governance and social transformation. Dr. Jitendra Singh also referred to the opening of India's nuclear sector for greater private participation, including in nuclear medicine research and applications, describing it as a major step towards expanding innovation and vocational opportunities in advanced healthcare technologies. Calling upon the youth to become active partners in the journey towards Viksit Bharat, the Minister said the year 2047 will belong to the present generation of young Indians, who will be at the peak of their energy, careers and capabilities when the country completes 100 years of Independence. He said the Government's responsibility is to build their capacity and create opportunities so that India's growth story is driven by innovation, science and skilled human resources.

**Army, civil...**  
Abdullah appreciated the prompt and coordinated efforts of the Army and civil administration. In a post on X, "The chief minister's office said Abdullah had directed the administration to strengthen safety measures and ensure a safe experience for tourists to prevent recurrence of such incidents."

**Advisory On...**  
centres. According to the advisory, candidates will be allowed to carry transparent water bottles to the examination centres. Candidates are also allowed to wear articles or objects of faith, subject to reporting at the centre well in advance to enable frisking, it said. "It is emphasised that religious threads such as 'kalava' are allowed," the NTA said. The advisory further stated that white light clothing is preferred and candidates may wear woollens if required, subject to reporting early for frisking. Normal shoes, slippers and low heels are preferred footwear for candidates appearing in the examination, it added.

**CM Interacts with public representatives, deputations discusses developmental, public welfare issues**



SRINAGAR, MAY 08: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today met several public representatives, various deputations and individuals at his Public Services & Outreach Office Raabta here and discussed a range of public welfare and developmental issues concerning Jammu & Kashmir. MLA Zaidal, Tanvir Sadiq, called on the Chief Minister and discussed issues related to parks and gardens in his constituency. MLA Banihal, Sajad Shaheen, also raised several issues of public importance concerning his constituency. Former Minister Javid Mustafa Mir

also separately called on the Chief Minister. Grand Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam also met the Chief Minister and discussed various social and public issues. Educationist G. N. Var met the Chief Minister and expressed gratitude over the passing of the J&K Private Universities Bill while also apprising him of several issues related to the education sector.

Several deputations and individuals from different areas of Kashmir valley also called on the Chief Minister and apprised him of various public issues and grievances.

**JU Organises Interactive Session on Relevance of Research Publication in Higher Education**

Jammu, May 08: The Department of Psychology, University of Jammu organized an interactive session on the topic "Relevance of Research Publication in Higher Education." Dr. Vishnu Narayan Kucheria from the Department of Psychology, Central University of Haryana was the resource person for the session.



During the session, Dr. Vishnu Narayan Kucheria highlighted the importance of publishing research in reputed journals and discussed contemporary trends, challenges, and ethical concerns associated with academic publishing. He stressed the need for

originality, methodological rigour, and critical thinking in research work. He also reflected on the process of research and guided participants on selecting suitable journals and enhancing the visibility as well as the impact of scholarly work.

Further, he elaborated on how publishing in reputed journals enhances visibility, fosters collaboration, and opens avenues for academic growth. In addition, he encouraged the participants to convert research ideas into patents. Earlier Prof. Prakash Chand Anthal, Head, Department of Psychology in his welcome address, highlighted the growing significance of quality research publications in the academic and professional development of students and scholars. He emphasized that research publications not only contribute to the advancement of knowledge but also strengthen the standards of higher education institutions. He encouraged students and scholars to actively engage in meaningful research and develop a scientific temper and academic integrity. The interactive session provided an enriching platform for students and scholars to engage in meaningful discussions and seek guidance on various aspects of research writing and publication. Participants actively interacted with the resource person and raised queries related to research methodology, publication ethics, indexing, and career opportunities in academia. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Sarita Sood, who appreciated the valuable insights shared by Dr. Kucheria. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, research scholars, and faculty members of the department.

**Jammu to observe Maharana Pratap Jayanti with Grand 'Dharam Jagran' Programme on May 10**

Jammu, May 8, 2026: A grand "Dharam Jagran" programme will be organised on May 10 in Jammu to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maharana Pratap, the legendary warrior king remembered for his unmatched bravery, sacrifice, patriotism, and commitment to dharma and self-respect.

The programme is being organised under the aegis of Dharam Jagran Samanvay, Jammu & Kashmir, and will be held at Bhartiya Yog Sansthan, Camp Road, Talab Tillo, Jammu, from 4:40 PM onwards. Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and BJP J&K President Sat Paul Sharma will attend the programme as Chief Guest, while Shri Arun Kant Ji, Akhil Bhartiya Sheh Pramukh of Dharam Jagran Samanvay, will be the Chief Speaker. A press conference regarding the programme was organised at Press Club Jammu by Advocate P. S. Chandel Ji, Prant Vidhi Pramukh, Dharam Jagran as Advocate of the press conference. The media was addressed by Shri Narayan Singh Ji, President Amar Kshatriya Rajput Sabha and



Programme Pramukh, Pt. Shiv Raina Ji, Prant Sang Rakshak Dharam Jagran, and Shri Tarseem Chib Ji, Rajput Pariyoza Pramukh, Dharam Jagran. Addressing the media, Shri Narayan Singh Ji said Maharana Pratap's life continues to inspire generations with ideals of courage, nationalism, sacrifice, and resistance against injustice. He said the programme is aimed at awakening social consciousness and encouraging youth to contribute positively towards nation-building. Pt. Shiv Raina Ji said that "Dharam

Jagran" is not merely a religious initiative but also a movement to strengthen social harmony, cultural awareness, and national unity. He stressed the importance of educating younger generations about India's glorious history and great national icons. Shri Tarseem Chib Ji stated that Maharana Pratap belongs to the entire nation and his legacy should serve as a guiding force for society. He appealed to people to rise above caste and regional divisions and work collectively for social and national welfare.

Gharu Bhatti, President, Vamiki Colony Gandhi Nagar said that Maharana Pratap symbolises the spirit of self-respect, courage, and unwavering devotion towards the nation. He said today's generation must understand the sacrifices made by great warriors and draw inspiration from their lives to protect the country's cultural and moral values. Advocate P. S. Chandel Ji appealed to intellectuals, youth organisations, and members of civil society to actively participate in such initiatives and help build a socially aware and united nation. The organisers informed that the programme will include addresses by distinguished speakers, cultural presentations, and discussions on the relevance of Maharana Pratap's ideals in present times, particularly in promoting patriotism, social unity, and moral values. All citizens, youth organisations, and social groups have been invited to participate in large numbers and pay tribute to one of India's greatest warriors.

**Stop Destabilising J&K, Restore Full Statehood: Shiv Sena (UBT)**



Jammu, May 8: Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) Jammu and Kashmir unit on Thursday expressed serious concern over the alleged attempts to create political instability in the Union Territory, saying that any move to weaken the people's mandate would be a direct attack on democracy. The party demanded the immediate restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir along with special constitutional safeguards under Article 371. Addressing mediapersons in Jammu, J&K unit chief

Manish Sahni said recent political developments and statements from ruling circles indicate attempts to destabilise the elected government. Referring to a controversial remark allegedly made by a senior BJP leader after the West Bengal election results — "Now it is Jammu and Kashmir's turn" — Sahni said such statements raise serious questions about the BJP's political intentions. Sahni said, "What exactly does the BJP want in Jammu and Kashmir? Has destabilising elected governments become the new

political culture? He alleged that the Centre has failed to fulfil its promise of restoring full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and that the elected government is being deprived of its constitutional authority. Sahni further demanded that, considering Jammu and Kashmir's historical, geographical and cultural identity, special rights under Article 371 should be granted to safeguard the region's land, employment, natural resources and local identity. He reiterated that the government in Jammu and Kashmir would run on the strength of the people's mandate and not through "remote control from Delhi." He warned that any attempt to weaken the mandate or destabilise the elected government would be met with a strong democratic response from the people.

**SMVDU's School of Business Organizes Interactive Session on Community Engagement through Self-Help Groups**

Katra, May 8: The School of Business organized an insightful session by Ms. Neetu Dhar, Chairperson of Jammu Pariyatan Vikas Cooperative Ltd. and Director of Unati Agri and Allied Multistate Cooperative Ltd. Prof. Ashutosh Vashishtha and Prof. Suparn Kumar Sharma welcomed and felicitated the resource person. Addressing the participants, Ms. Dhar explained how SHGs function as a strong grassroots mechanism for poverty alleviation by encouraging savings, credit access, collective decision-making, and self-reliance among women. She emphasized the Government of India's commitment towards SHGs under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission and discussed key initiatives such as DAY-NRLM and the SHG-Bank Linkage Programme, which have significantly strengthened women-led development across rural India. The session also underlined the pioneering role of NABARD in promoting financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and SHG-bank linkages, along with

the contribution of the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission in empowering SHGs across the region. Sharing her own journey, Ms. Dhar elaborated on her efforts in integrating SHGs with tourism-linked livelihood opportunities and ecotourism initiatives, which have generated employment, enhanced incomes, and promoted local culture. Through inspiring case studies from different parts of the country, she demonstrated how SHGs have enabled women to emerge as successful entrepreneurs and financially independent individuals. She also discussed challenges such as limited awareness, financial constraints, and market access barriers, while emphasizing the need for stronger SHG networks, digital empowerment, improved market linkages, and greater youth participation. Highlighting the larger social impact of SHGs, Ms. Dhar remarked, "When you empower a woman through an SHG, you don't just change one life—you transform an entire community."

**MLA Arvind felicitates meritorious students at GGHSS Canal Road Empowered daughters are strength of progressive nation: Gupta**

Jammu, May 8: MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta today felicitated the meritorious students of Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Canal Road, Jammu, for their outstanding academic performance and achievements. The programme was held in the presence of Principal Anita Koul, faculty members, students, and several dignitaries. Among those present were BJP Mandal President Anil Angral, Kushant Prajapati, senior leader Keshav Chopra, IEL Finance GM Arun Sharma, along with district and mandal office bearers. Addressing the gathering, Arvind Gupta



congratulated the students for their dedication, hard work, and commitment towards excellence in academics. He appreciated the efforts of the teaching staff

and parents for guiding and motivating students towards success. He said that education is the key to building a strong and progressive society

and encouraged students to continue striving for excellence in every field. Arvind Gupta stated that girls are excelling in every field today and their achievements are inspiring the younger generation. He stressed that empowering daughters through quality education and equal opportunities is essential for the overall development of the nation. "The achievements of these young students are a matter of pride for Jammu West and an inspiration for others to work hard and achieve their goals," he stated. Principal Anita Koul thanked the chief guest and other dignitaries for encouraging the students and motivating them to perform better in future. The event concluded with the presentation of mementos and certificates to the meritorious students.

**BJP activists dedicated to public service 365 days a year: Sat Sharma**

**BJP reviews ULB organizational expansion, focuses on grassroots connectivity**

Jammu, 08 May 2026: J&K BJP Urban Local Body Cell held an important meeting of its Urban Local Body Cell, at the party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, to discuss organizational strengthening, expansion of grassroots outreach, and enhancement of public connectivity through local body units across the Union Territory. J&K BJP President and Member Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Sat Sharma accompanied by General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, General Secretary Baldev Singh Billawarta, All Cells In-Charge Ved Sharma, All Cells Co-In-Charge Manish Khajuria, Urban Local Body Cell Convener Pawan Singh, and Co-Convener Ajay Gupta, addressed the meeting. Sat Sharma, while addressing the meeting, emphasized the vital role of Urban Local Body units in strengthening the party at the grassroots level and serving the



people effectively. He said that BJP activists are committed to public service 365 days a year and remain fully prepared to face elections whenever they are announced. He stressed that party workers must intensify their outreach at the grassroots and expose the failures, anti-development policies, and negative governance

model of the NC government before the public. Sat Sharma highlighted the BJP's remarkable performance in the previous Urban Local Body elections, stating that the party had emerged as a dominant force by securing the maximum representation across 36 Urban Local Bodies and one Corporation in Jammu & Kashmir.

He said this massive public support reflects the trust people have in BJP's development-oriented governance and nationalist ideology. Ashok Koul spoke in detail about the organizational framework of the party and announced the convenors and co-convenors for newly constituted units at various existing local body levels to enhance efficiency and public outreach. He said that strengthening both-level and local body structures remains a priority for the organization to ensure better implementation of party programmes and policies at the grassroots. Baldev Singh Billawarta said that the Urban Local Body Cell provides one of the best platforms for public service and direct interaction with the people. He stressed that BJP workers must remain proactive ensuring that welfare initiatives reach every section of society.

**MLA Bahu Ch. Vikram Randhawa Launches Development Works Worth Rs.57 Lakhs in ward no. 50 Channi Himmat**

Jammu, May 8: Continuing his commitment towards strengthening civic infrastructure and improving public amenities across the Bahu constituency, MLA Bahu Ch. Vikram Randhawa today inaugurated the construction and upgradation of various lanes and drains in Ward No. 50, Channi Himmat, being undertaken under the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) at an estimated cost of ₹57 lakhs. The programme was attended by District General Secretary Kulveer Charak, Mandal President Nitish Mahajan along with his team, senior party workers, including Ex-Corporator Nena Gupta and a large number of local residents, officials from JMC including the concerned JE, and the con-



tractor executing the work. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that strengthening basic infrastructure and ensuring better civic amenities for the people remains his top priority. He stated that the upgradation of lanes and drains will provide major relief to residents and further enhance the overall development of the area. MLA Vikram Randhawa

instructed the concerned JE and contractor to ensure high-quality work, proper use of material, and timely completion of the project so that the public gets long-term benefits without inconvenience. Local residents expressed gratitude to the MLA for continuously taking up developmental works and addressing public issues on priority basis under JMC.



## Cong stands firmly with Kashmiri migrants, flays NSFA integration move : Bhalla

Jammu, May 08: Working President of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) and former minister Raman Bhalla on Friday assured displaced Kashmiri migrants that the Congress party would continue to stand firmly with the community and fight for their just and genuine demands. Interacting with a delegation of Kashmiri migrants who called on him, Mr Bhalla strongly opposed the government's reported decision to merge the relief ration benefits of displaced migrants with the provisions of the National Food Security Act (NSFA). He termed the move "unjustified" and warned that such a decision could weaken and dilute the distinct identity and status of the displaced migrant community, which has suffered immense hardships over the past several decades. The delegation of Kashmiri migrants comprised Hira Lal Pandita, Rajeev Kaoul Saraf, Chuni Lal Raina (Kand) General Secretary Migrant Cell., Raj



Kumar Dhar- Secretary, R.L Bhat, Anil Jee, Shubam Jee Raina, Viender Ganjoo- General Secretary, Sameer Raina, Dalip Kumar Pandita, Kuldeep Kumar Raina, Vinod Kumar Raina, Vinod Fotedar, Kiran Raina- General Secretary, Vinod Bhat, Rakesh Amberdar, Rajvi Ji and others. The delegation headed by Mr. Hira Lal Pandita, Chairman Migrant Cell of JKPCC, said that the Displaced Kashmiri Pandits were provided with ration cards in 1990 that are "temporary" in nature.

These cards recognize their status as a conflict-displaced community, distinct from ordinary economic beneficiaries. The Govt's action of forcibly enrolling these ration cards into NSFA structure is a ploy to somehow relieve the pressure on the Govt. regarding the absence of any practical plans on their long pending permanent rehabilitation back within Kashmir. Every such ration card holder has only one specific category - a category of displaced survivor. By classifying them into priority &

non - priority, etc. categories, a fraud is being committed against them. Attaching welfare schemes is only a tool-kit to somehow get these people to accept the new enrollment under NSFA. Not extending these schemes openly thus far is only another awkward point for BJP led Govt. Former minister Yogesh Sawhney, Ved Mahajan, Iqbal Dar, Gurdarshan Singh, Viender Manhas, and other senior leaders also interacted with the delegation and assured full support to the displaced community. Expressing concern over the issue, Mr Bhalla said that the migrant community had already endured years of pain, displacement, and uncertainty, and any move that undermines their special relief structure would only add to their grievances. He maintained that the relief and rehabilitation measures extended to Kashmiri migrants were not ordinary welfare schemes, but humanitarian support provided in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances that forced thousands of families.

## Mahant Rohit Shastri Paid a Courtesy Visit to Vice Chancellor Prof. B. N. Tripathi

Jammu, May 8: Mahant Rohit Shastri, State Awardee and President of Shri Kailash Jyotish avim Vedic Sansthan Trust, today paid a courtesy visit to the Vice Chancellor of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Jammu (S K U A S T - J a m m u), respected Prof. B. N. Tripathi. On the occasion, Mahant Rohit Shastri appreciated the leadership of Prof. Tripathi and his contribution towards the development of the university. He stated that under his able guidance, the university has achieved remarkable progress in the fields of education, research, agricultural innovation, and socially-oriented activities. He further said that the efforts of Prof. Tripathi have strengthened the university's distinct identity at both national and international levels



and opened new avenues in agriculture and allied sectors. Mahant Rohit Shastri also said that Prof. Tripathi has consistently encouraged young scientists, researchers, and students, while making significant contributions towards modern agricultural technologies, research, and sustainable development. These efforts, he added, have proved highly beneficial for society and the farming community. His dedication, work ethic, and positive vision continue to

inspire everyone. During the meeting, meaningful discussions were also held on various subjects related to academic activities of the university, agricultural research, Indian culture, Vedic knowledge traditions, and social welfare. Mahant Rohit Shastri expressed confidence that under the leadership of Prof. Tripathi, the university will continue to achieve new heights and set new benchmarks of excellence in the fields of education and research in the future.

## SSB 7th Battalion Donates Blood to Blood Centre Doda on World Red Cross Day

Doda, May 08:- On the eve of World Red Cross Day, a voluntary blood donation programme was organised by the District Administration Doda in collaboration with the Health Department at Blood Centre, Government Medical College (GMC) Doda. During the programme, SSB 7th Battalion, B Coy Khellani, under the guidance of Sh. Achyut Singh, Comdt, SSB 7th Bn, voluntarily donated blood to support patients in need and strengthen the blood reserves at Blood Centre Doda. The initiative was organised as part of the World Red Cross Day celebrations being observed across Jammu and Kashmir under the theme "United in Humanity." The



programme aimed to promote the spirit of humanity, social responsibility and awareness regarding the importance of voluntary blood donation. Officers and jawans of the SSB enthusiastically participated in the camp and extended their support to this noble humanitarian cause. Medical teams from the Health Department and

Blood Centre GMC Doda facilitated the blood donation process while ensuring proper medical care and safety protocols. Health officials appreciated the contribution of the SSB personnel and described blood donation as a life-saving act that can help patients during emergencies, surgeries, and critical treatments.

## 'Jashan-e-Bahar' Art workshop concludes on colourful note; students shine in cultural events and art showcase

Kishtwar, May 8: The National Art Workshop "Jashan-e-Bahar," organised by the Master Sansar Chand Barn Memorial Charitable Trust (MSCBMC Trust) in collaboration with 11 Rashtriya Rifles at TRC Chattroo, concluded today on a vibrant and celebratory note with enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, artists, and locals. The concluding day witnessed a series of colourful cultural performances presented by students from various schools, including patriotic songs, traditional performances, martial arts demonstrations, and other artistic presentations that captivated the audience and reflected the rich cul-



tural spirit and talent of the region. Students who participated in the workshop and cultural activities were honoured and encouraged by the Army and organisers. The 11 Rashtriya Rifles appreciated the enthusiasm and

creativity of the children and felicitated students during the concluding ceremony. The MSCBMC Trust also distributed gifts and mementos among the participants as a token of encouragement and appreciation.

Prominent artists including Shalender Singh from Delhi, Aditya Shankar Prasad from Noida, P. Devaraj from Tamil Nadu, Sharmila Sharma from Delhi, Govind Vishwas from Gujarat, and Apurba Karati from West Bengal encouraged them to explore creativity through art and cultural expression. The role of the Army, especially 11 Rashtriya Rifles, was widely appreciated for actively supporting and

encouraging such constructive initiatives in remote areas like Chattroo. Their efforts not only motivated young students but also strengthened trust and coordination between local communities and security forces. President of MSCBMC Trust, Anuradha Rishi, expressed gratitude to the Army, participating artists, schools, and local administration for making the workshop a success. She said the overwhelming response from students clearly reflects the immense hidden talent present in remote regions and stressed the need for more such initiatives to provide children with opportunities for learning, exposure, and creative growth.

She further appealed to social organisations and institutions to organise similar educational and cultural programmes in far-flung areas to encourage youth participation and promote positive engagement through art, culture, and creativity.

## Swami Ram Swarup stresses importance of Vedic Guru-Shishya tradition at Yagya in Yol

Warns that abandoning Vedic teachings and disciplined spiritual learning has led to growing unrest and suffering in society

Kathua: On the 27th day of the ongoing 78-day Yagyanushthan dedicated to all four Vedas at Ved Mandir, Yol, Swami Ram Swarup Ji, Yogacharya, explained the essence of Rigveda Mantra 1/22/3 and emphasized that true knowledge can only be attained through proper guidance from a learned teacher. Addressing devotees and disciples, Swami Ji said that knowledge can't arise on its own without a knowledgeable guide and a sincere seeker willing to learn. He stressed that human beings should



continuously listen to and learn Vedic wisdom from the Almighty Himself imparted to learned scholars and saints. Explaining the origin of Vedic knowledge, he said that at the beginning of creation, when no guru or

learned sage existed, the Almighty Himself imparted the knowledge of the four Vedas to the four ancient Rishis — Agni, Vayu, Aditya, and Angira. Referring to Yog Shashtra

into the hearts of the four Rishis through His supreme power. Swami Ji further stated that Brahma Ji later became the disciple of these four Rishis and acquired the knowledge of the Vedas from them, thereby initiating the Guru-Shishya tradition that continues to this day. He urged people to continue following this sacred tradition by learning Vedic knowledge from enlightened and disciplined scholars and applying it in daily life for peace and happiness. He expressed concern that modern society has aban-

doned the Vedic Guru-Shishya tradition and adopted arbitrary forms of worship, which, according to him, has angered the Almighty. Citing Rigveda Mantra 10/125/4, he said that the consequences of deviating from Vedic teachings are visible in the form of wars, violence, theft, injustice against women, hunger, natural disasters, storms, earthquakes, and widespread suffering across the world. Swami Ram Swarup Ji appealed to humanity to once again embrace Vedic wisdom.

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
EXTENDER NOTICE	
<p>SE. DISTENDER putting for and on behalf of The President of India invite E-Tenders on <a href="http://www.rweps.gov.in">http://www.rweps.gov.in</a> against Tender Notice No. 433-Sg-T-09-2027. Closing Date: 11.05.2026 15:00 hrs. Bidders will be able to access their original tender bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender. Inquiry must be made after 10:00 hrs and before 12:00 hrs.</p> <p>Contractors are allowed to make progress against the tender amounts tender (including cost and approval money only) through online payment modes available on RWEPSC portal till last banking day. Credit card, credit payee, Manual payments through Demand Draft, Banker's cheque, Demand receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.</p> <p>INT. HEADER</p>	
Contract Type	Works
Name of Work	Provision of GRCC Banding Ring Construction along with inter-connection works against Tender Notice No. 433-Sg-T-09-2027
Tender Closing Date/Time	10.05.2026 15:00 hrs.
Advertisement Value (Rs.)	2,48,95,000.00
Estimated Money (Rs.)	8,38,000.00
Date Time of Uploading Tender	25.04.2026 12:00 hrs.
Bidding Start Date	04.05.2026
Period of Completion	0 Month
<p>NOTE: Tenderers should keep their FDR updated about the tender amendments. Compliances are to be verified regularly with the website.</p> <p>Tender Notice No: 433-Sg-T-09-2027. Date: 08.05.2026</p> <p>SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE. 18371000</p>	

## JU Organises Guest Lecture on Role of Mathematics in Hollywood Films

JAMMU, MAY 8: The Department of Mathematics, University of Jammu, today organised an engaging guest lecture by Michael Dorff on the thought-provoking topic, "How Mathematics is Making Hollywood Movies Better." During the lecture, Prof. Dorff highlighted how mathematical concepts contribute significantly to modern filmmaking, particularly in animation, special effects, and visual storytelling. He explained that the beauty and creativity of Hollywood films lies in a strong mathematical foundation that helps create realistic images, smooth



motion, and compelling visual experiences. The lecture was widely appreciated for demonstrating how mathematics extends beyond classrooms and research laboratories into the fields of entertainment and technology. The lecture witnessed enthusiastic participation from faculty members,

researchers, and students, who gathered to explore the fascinating role of mathematics in cinema. The event reflected the Department's continued commitment towards promoting academic excellence and exposing students to the wider applications of mathematics in contemporary life.

## 3-Month Certificate Programme on Accounting Concludes Successfully at Jammu University

JAMMU, MAY 8: The Skill, Incubation, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (SIIEDC), University of Jammu, successfully concluded a three-month certificate course on "Basics of Accounting," organised under its Skill Development and Career Planning vertical. The programme had commenced on January 19, 2026. A valedictory function was organised to mark the successful completion of the programme, which equipped students with practical knowledge and fundamental accounting skills relevant to industry and professional requirements. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Alka Sharma appreciated the efforts of the coordinators and participants and high-



lighted the significance of skill-based education in enhancing employability and professional competence among students. She emphasised that such initiatives play an important role in bridging the gap between academic learning

and industry expectations. She further stated that the University regularly conducts skill-based courses, open to all, which are delivered by renowned experts from academia and industry. Prof. Garima Gupta also congratulated the par-

ticipants on the successful completion of the programme and encouraged students to continuously upgrade their practical and professional skills to meet the evolving demands of the corporate and professional world. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students throughout the duration of the course. Resource persons from within and outside the University were invited to deliver expert sessions, providing students with practical exposure and hands-on understanding of accounting concepts and applications. Students appreciated the course and expressed their desire to participate in more such skill-oriented programmes offered by the University in future.

## NMBA activities continue across Pulwama with Awareness, Sports Programmes

PULWAMA, MAY 08: As part of the ongoing 100-day campaign under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, a series of awareness and outreach activities were conducted today across District Pulwama to spread awareness against drug abuse and promote a healthy and drug-free society. A mega awareness programme was organised at Panchayat Halqa Machama Tral with enthusiastic participation from various sections of society including youth, social organisations, educational institutions and local residents. During the programme, speakers highlighted the harmful effects of substance abuse and stressed the importance of collective efforts in eliminating the menace



from society. The participants also took Nasha Mukht pledge during the programme pledging to work towards building a healthy and drug-free society. On the occasion, a signature campaign was organised wherein officers and participants marked their collective resolve against drug abuse. The programme later culminated with a padyatra aimed at spreading the message of a drug-free lifestyle in society. Similarly, awareness sessions were organised at Ladhoo Pampore and Malikpora Pulwama, where officers and

resource persons interacted with participants and highlighted the ill effects of drug abuse. The programme witnessed participation from local residents, youth and students and included pledge-taking ceremonies and awareness activities. Further, Self Help Group (SHG) members organised an awareness session and padyatra at Parigam Newa to sensitise the public regarding the harmful consequences of drug abuse and encourage community participation in the anti-drug campaign. Besides, continuing its enforcement measures under the campaign, the Drug Control Department, in coordination with Jammu and Kashmir Police, seized a substantial

quantity of Pregabalin 300 mg capsules amounting to around Rs. 2.53 Lakh, from an unlicensed individual at Old Bus Stand Pulwama. Initial investigation revealed that the stock had been procured illegally with the intention of sale through unregulated channels. Furthermore, one retail and one wholesale medical establishment were closed on the spot during inspections, for non-maintenance of mandatory records. Meanwhile, as part of its action plan under the campaign, the Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Pulwama continued a series of sports events, awareness drives, pledge ceremonies, quiz competitions and padyatras across the district.

## ADC Shopian reviews preparedness for Census 2027

SHOPIAN, MAY 08: A meeting regarding preparations for Census 2027 was today held under the chairmanship of ADC Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faz. During the meeting, a detailed review of various agenda points related to the upcoming Census exercise was carried out. Discussions were held regarding teshil wise appointment and registration status of Enumerators and Supervisors on the CMMS portal, besides preparations for the training programmes of field functionaries. It was informed during the meeting that the training schedule for Supervisors and Enumerators has been scheduled from May 14 to May 23, 2026. The ADC directed all concerned officers to ensure timely completion of the training process and proper



coordination for smooth conduct of the Census activities. The meeting also discussed issues related to completion of formation of House Listing Blocks (HLBs) and implementation of self-enumeration targets in the district. Emphasising the importance of public participation, ADC Shopian directed all officers to intensify publicity and awareness activities at the grassroots level so that people are adequately informed about the Census process and

self-enumeration facilities. He also instructed concerned departments to maintain close coordination and ensure timely completion of all preparatory activities well before commencement of the Census operations. Among others, the meeting was attended by ACR Shopian, Shakoor Ahmad Dar, DSEO Shopian, Bilkeesha Zahoor, DIO Shopian, Showkat Hussain Ganie, Tehsil Dar, CEO MC Shopian and other officials.

## Director JKEDI chairs maiden review meeting with DNOs, ROs, In-charge officers

SRINAGAR, MAY 08: Director, Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Mohammad Younis Malik, chaired his maiden comprehensive review meeting at the Sempora campus of the institute to assess the progress of various entrepreneurship and youth engagement initiatives being implemented across the Union Territory. The meeting witnessed participation of all District Nodal Officers (DNOs), Range Officers (ROs) and In-charge officers of various sections of JKEDI, who joined both physically and through virtual mode from different districts of Jammu & Kashmir. During the review, detailed deliberations were

held on the implementation and progress achieved under key government initiatives, including the RAMP Scheme, Mission YUVA, and various self-employment programmes. The meeting also reviewed the status of loan repayments and recoveries under different employment generation schemes, besides discussing other operational matters. Addressing the officers, the Director emphasized the need to intensify efforts towards achieving JKEDI's core objective of empowering youth through entrepreneurship and self-employment. He called upon the District Nodal Officers to further strengthen grassroots outreach and ensure greater

mobilisation of aspiring entrepreneurs from all regions of the Union Territory in order to foster a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. An extensive action plan for the financial year 2026-27 was also discussed during the meeting, with inputs sought from all program verticals of the institute for effective implementation in the upcoming quarters. Highlighting the importance of institutional synergy and collective responsibility, the Director stressed that teamwork, accountability, transparency and result-oriented functioning would remain central to JKEDI's mission of guiding and mentoring youth towards sustainable entrepreneurial success.

## International Red Cross Day celebrated in Budgam ADDC lauds Red Cross Society for exemplary services during COVID-19 pandemic, natural calamities

BUDGAM, MAY 08: International Red Cross Day was today celebrated at Sheikh-ul-Atam Hall Budgam by District Administration Budgam in collaboration with District Red Cross Society and Chief Medical Officer Budgam. The day-long programme was inaugurated by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Budgam, Vivek Agarwal, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion. A blood donation camp was organised during the programme in which scores of voluntary donors participated enthusiastically. Students from various educational institutions also attended the event and were sensitised about the importance of voluntary blood donation and the humanitarian significance of World Red Cross Day. Speaking on the occasion,



ADDC Budgam highlighted the importance of the day and appreciated the role of Red Cross Societies for rendering exemplary services during the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural calamities. He emphasised that

service to society and the nation requires a healthy body and urged students to prioritise their physical and mental well-being. He also spoke about the harmful effects of drug abuse and advised students to stay away from

such social evils and adopt a healthy lifestyle. Chief Medical Officer Budgam, Dr. Gulzar Ahmad, along with other speakers, deliberated on the importance of voluntary blood donation and community participation in humanitarian activities. Notably, a dedicated blood donor Shabir Ahmad Khan who has donated 193 units of blood and Bilkeesha Ara, who has donated 43 units, shared their experiences and motivated participants to contribute towards saving lives. Various students also deliberated upon the importance and relevance of celebrating World Red Cross Day and highlighted the role of humanitarian values in society. Among others present on the occasion were ADC Budgam, representatives of SDRF, health officials, volunteers and members of civil society.

## Massive public participation marks intensified Nasha Mukht J&K campaign across Shopian

SHOPIAN, MAY 08: A wide range of awareness and outreach activities were today conducted across district Shopian under the ongoing 100 Day Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, witnessing enthusiastic participation from students, youth, teachers, religious leaders, transporters, government departments, educational institutions and members of civil society. The day-long campaign featured pledge ceremonies, awareness rallies, sports activities, yoga sessions, poster display campaigns, counselling sessions, seminars, debates and public interaction programmes aimed at spreading awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and promoting a healthy, disciplined and drug-free society. Educational institutions across the district actively participated by



organizing anti-drug awareness programmes, storytelling sessions, sports activities and yoga sessions to encourage students towards positive and healthy lifestyles. Students and staff members pledged to remain away from drugs and to act as ambassadors of awareness in society. Special awareness drives and outreach programmes were also carried out by various government departments including Health, Education, RDD, AYUSH, ICDS, Co-operative, Labour, Transport, Jal Shakti, MC, Agri allied depart-

ments, and other departments as part of the intensified campaign. Religious institutions also played an important role in the movement, as special sermons and awareness messages against drug abuse were delivered during Friday congregational prayers in mosques across different villages and tehsils of the district. Religious scholars emphasized moral responsibility, social harmony and collective efforts to safeguard youth from the menace of substance abuse. Transporters, farmers, traders, youth groups and local communities joined hands in spreading the message of 'Say No to Drugs, Say Yes to Life' through public pledges, poster displays and community awareness activities held at various locations.

## Drug Control Department Shopian leads major crackdown; 6000 Pregabalin capsules seized in joint operation

SHOPIAN, MAY 08: In continuation to the leads received during the recent operation at Batpora Shopian, wherein 200 capsules of Pregabalin 300 mg were seized, another major consignment comprising 6000 capsules of Pregabalin 300 mg worth approximately Rs 2.53,000 were seized by joint teams of Drug Control department, Shopian and Pulwama. The consignment was being transported through illegal means for unlawful sale and distribution in the district. Acting swiftly on specific inputs developed by the Drug Control Office Shopian, a joint team of the Drug Control Department



Shopian and Drug Control Department Pulwama, in close coordination with Police counterparts, conducted the operation and successfully intercepted the persons and seized the consignment. Pregabalin is increasingly

being misused by abusers, leading to serious public health and social concerns. The authorities have intensified surveillance and enforcement measures against the illegal trade, transportation and misuse of drugs.

## Ayush Department Srinagar holds Yoga, Counselling Session on Healthy Lifestyle

SRINAGAR, MAY 08: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, a Yoga and Counselling Session was organized at Delhi Public School Srinagar under the directions of District Ayush Officer Srinagar, Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Parry. The programme was aimed at promoting the benefits of a healthy daily lifestyle among students and creating awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse. The session was jointly conducted by trained Yoga Instructors from the Directorate of

AYUSH Srinagar, Mohammad Younis and Shahida Fayaz. During the session, students were introduced to various yoga practices, breathing techniques and simple exercises that help improve physical fitness, mental well-being, concentration and emotional balance. The students actively participated in the yoga demonstrations and counselling interaction. The programme concluded with a pledge to work collectively towards building a healthy, drug-free society through awareness, discipline and wellness-oriented activities.

## District Red Cross Committee Srinagar organizes programme at GGHS Nawa Kadal DC Srinagar highlights significance of Red Cross teams, volunteers supporting needy during emergencies and everyday life through acts of kindness

SRINAGAR MAY 08: To mark the celebrations of World Red Cross Day-2026, an impressive function was organized by District Red Cross Committee Srinagar at Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GGHS) Nawa Kadal here today. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, who is also the Chairman District Red Cross Committee was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Besides, Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab Qureshi, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Adil Faraed, IAS Probationer, Alfred



Thomas, SDM, East, Zubair Ahmad, Chief Education Officer, Ghulam Mohi-Ud-Din, District Social Welfare Officer, Mohammad Yousuf, Tehsil Dar, Yousuf, Eidgab, Mohammad Iqbal Zargar, DC MO, Dr. Farhana, Principal GGHS Nawa Kadal School, Dr. Be Nazir Chalku, Dy CEO, Anjum Raja, Staff and large number of students were present in the event. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the vital role played by Red Cross teams and volunteers in providing timely assistance to the needy during emergencies, disasters and other humanitarian situations. He said the spirit of humanity, compassion and voluntary service reflected by Red Cross volunteers serves as an inspiration for society. The DC emphasized that Red Cross volunteers continue to extend support to vulnerable sections of society not only during emergencies but also in everyday life through various acts of kindness and humanitarian

service. He appreciated the dedication and commitment of Red Cross workers and urged students to actively participate in humanitarian and social welfare activities for the betterment of society, particularly during any calamity or exigent situation. The DC further emphasized that focusing on the mental health and well-being of students is equally important to properly channelize their talent and potential. He advised students not to come under pressure or indulge in overthinking and instead continue their studies in a positive and healthy atmosphere.

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## North in News

## EDITORIAL

**Assam and Bengal results will have a strong impact on UP elections scheduled next year**

Assam and Bengal results will definitely have a strong impact on Uttar Pradesh elections scheduled next year. Indian electoral politics functions as an interconnected ecosystem where narratives, momentum, and organizational lessons travel across state boundaries. Most importantly when for the first time since independence BJP has come to power in West Bengal, the results have clear message of Hindu vote consolidation. Bengal and Assam definitely has different conditions and challenges compared to UP, but there are few factors which are common in both the states. The politics of Hindu-Muslim divide. This factor will definitely impact UP assembly elections much like Bengal and also Assam. Opposition parties does not have much to oppose the ruling BJP in UP and the only card they will play is Muslim appeasement just to bet on Muslim votes and this will most likely lead to consolidation of Hindu votes, which definitely will help BJP which is also the ruling party in UP. And Uttar Pradesh is not just another state but the political center of gravity that sends 85 MPs to the Lok Sabha and often determines who forms the government at the Centre also. Therefore, most likely the impact will last long possibly till 2029 Lok Sabha elections. Now when the BJP has retained power in Assam and also won the toughest battle of West Bengal assembly elections, the party will enter Uttar Pradesh with a validated story that its model of double engine government, welfare saturation, infrastructure delivery, and cultural assertion works in a complex, multi ethnic society, and that story will be used to counter anti incumbency. The Assam and Bengal result gives the BJP a tested template to talk about infiltration, land rights, and demographic change, which also resonates in some districts of Uttar Pradesh also. Also BJP will showcase how welfare and Hindutva can coexist, and a strong central leadership reduces internal dissent and signals that the current social coalition of upper castes, non Yadav OBCs, and non Jatav Dalits remains intact. Also these victories would energize the Uttar Pradesh cadre by demonstrating that the mix of central schemes, booth management, social media dominance, and anti corruption messaging can ease their path of victory in UP assembly elections for third time in a row. Samajwadi Party and Congress, who will argue that Uttar Pradesh is not about nationalism but about caste arithmetic, local issues, and the protection of minority rights would validate the strategy of consolidating Muslim votes which actually might prove wrong.

RAJNI SHARMA, EDITOR

## Grand Repudiator bites the dust

BY MIHIR BHOLEY

Among all the Assembly elections held in 2026, it was the results from Bengal that generated the greatest national curiosity. From media to menfolk, the focus had gravitated to the Bengal results. In the eyes of the media, it was an impregnable fortress – one that seemed impossible to breach. In the eyes of people it was a battle of now or never. Yet, as the saying goes, those who sow the wind, reap the whirlwind. Indian politics has seen many such examples be it Lalu Prasad Yadav and his RJD government, or Arvind Kejriwal and his Aam Aadmi Party government. Mamata Banerjee, too, rose in Bengal's politics in a similar fashion, and now she faces the biggest debacle of her political career.

Her invincibility and larger-than-life image have been cut to size by the same voters who once created it. It will also have a deep impact on coalition politics and the political bonhomie of the fragile INDI alliance. When she became the Chief Minister of Bengal, people believed she would find a resonance in the matriarchal society of Bengal and expected compassion, empathy, and generosity from its woman leader. However, what followed, was quite the opposite. She cultivated the image of a combative, irritable, and confrontational leader – one unwilling to listen or respond to concerns over deteriorating law and order, economic distress, illegal immigration from Bangladesh, extortion rackets, syndicate culture, and minority appeasement etc.

Surely, there is a vast difference between being an effective "street fighter" and a capable administrator which she was



reluctant to accept. Perhaps she grew too comfortable with the "street fighter" image crafted for her by sections of the media and political circles – an image that thrived on confrontation rather than governance. Whether it was her political opponents, ordinary citizens seeking justice, constitutional authorities, the Election Commission, the ED, the CBI, or even the judiciary – none were spared by her defiance, anger, or resistance. Bengal is known for its emotional depth and intellectual sensitivity, represented by its bhadralok. When those in power chose to ignore these traits, the electorate responded through the ballot.

An extraordinary voter turnout of 90-92 per cent spoke volumes. The visible unease of Ms Banerjee and the heightened aggression of the TMC after the polls only reinforced this sentiment. The country was merely awaiting the results – which are now before us. An example from international politics helps illuminate this further. Winston Churchill once described Lenin as a "grand repudiator" – a man who repudiated God, King, Country, morals, treaties, debts,

rents, interest, the laws and customs of centuries, all contracts written or implied, the whole structure – such as it is – of human society.

In the end he repudiated himself. Leaders driven by raw passion of confrontation rather than a constructive agenda will always remind us of this statement. In a democracy, if a leader doesn't reinvent and revise himself or herself and continues to reject all established norms, expectations, values, and institutions, he or she will be eventually rejected by the people. Had Ms Banerjee and her party focused less on constant confrontation and attacks on the Centre, and more on aligning with broader public sentiment and fostering cooperative federalism in the state's interest, the outcome might have been different.

Bengal, as a border state, plays a crucial role in India's geopolitical landscape. Political instability in Bangladesh during the tenure of Muhammad Yunus, along with communal violence against Hindus, had implications for India's internal security. The influx of Rohingya and Bangladeshi

Muslims into Bengal had become a matter of concern across the country – except for the state leadership, which dismissed these concerns as conspiracies against itself and minority communities. Leaders often forget that while they are given 1,825 days in office, the public settles accounts in just one day. On a personal level, Ms Banerjee may have maintained a life of simplicity and remained free from corruption, but she failed to keep her government and party insulated from it. She repeatedly shielded wrongdoing and continued with the politics of appeasement.

She became the first Chief Minister in the country to stage a sit-in protest to protect a tainted police officer, and even stormed an ED office, allegedly threatening officials and taking away files. The nation watched in disbelief. Such actions dealt a severe blow to the credibility of governance. In a democracy, mandates are not permanent, accountability is. The voters of Bengal assessed power on this very yardstick and chose change.

This verdict is not merely the defeat of a leader, but a clear expression of dissatisfaction with an insensitive style of governance. The leadership that emerges in the future will have to prioritize cooperation over confrontation, solutions over accusations, and good governance over emotional rhetoric – this is the essence of the mandate. Alongside the BJP's political victory, this outcome is also a triumph of the aspirations and resolve of the people of Bengal. Surely, it's a negative mandate for Mamata for a positive purpose.

## Mythos moment is a wake-up call

BY AMANDEEP SINGH GILL

WHEN Anthropic, the San Francisco-based artificial intelligence (AI) company, announced its new frontier model on April 7, the news started governments and corporations around the world. In pre-release testing, Claude Mythos had autonomously identified thousands of previously unknown software flaws – so-called zero-day vulnerabilities – across every major operating system and major web browser. More striking still, Anthropic chose not to release the model publicly. Mythos was instead made available to roughly 50 partners, including Amazon Web Services, Apple, Google, Microsoft, JPMorgan Chase and the Linux Foundation, under an initiative called Project Glasswing. A week later, OpenAI followed with a similarly restricted release of GPT-5.4-Cyber, a variant of its flagship model trained for defensive cybersecurity work and limited to vetted users.

The decision by two of the world's leading AI companies to withhold their most powerful tools from the public marks an inflection point. For most of the past three years, AI laboratories have competed to put new models in the hands of as many users as possible, as fast as possible. Now, the same firms are acknowledging that some capabilities are too dangerous to release without controls. It is not hard to see why. Large language models have advanced remarkably over the past 18

months. They can draft polished prose, complete in hours research that once took consultants weeks, identify candidates for drug discovery, write code and build production-grade websites and applications. They can operate autonomously for extended periods. On many benchmarks, they now approach the performance of trained professionals.

The benefits are real. AI has the potential to lift productivity in agriculture, broaden the reach of public health and education, and transform whole sectors. But the technology is dual-use by design. The same capabilities that help defenders find and patch software flaws can help attackers exploit them. According to Anthropic's own published assessment, engineers with no formal security training were able to ask Mythos to find remote-code-execution vulnerabilities overnight, and wake up to a complete working exploit. The cost of one such chain was under \$2,000. This matters because cybercrime is no longer a fringe concern. Cybersecurity Ventures, an industry research firm, estimates that global cybercrime damages reached \$10.5 trillion in 2025 – a figure that, were cybercrime a country, would make it the world's third-largest economy after the United States and China. More conservative estimates from outlets such as Cyber Defense Magazine put direct losses in the \$1.2-1.5 trillion range. Either way, AI-driven phishing campaigns, deepfake fraud and adaptive malware are

already widespread. SoSafe's 2025 Cybercrime Trends report found that 87 per cent of global organisations had experienced an AI-powered cyberattack in the previous 12 months. The euphoria around 'vibe coding' – the recent explosion in amateur software development enabled by AI – was always going to be tempered by concerns over its mirror image: vibe hacking. If cyberattack tools that once required state-level resources become available at the price of an API (Application Programming Interface) call, the asymmetry between attackers and defenders could shift abruptly. Whether models such as Mythos will ultimately help defenders more than attackers is unsettled. Anthropic argues that controlled access gives defenders a head start.

Independent researchers at AISLE (an AI-native cybersecurity company) have shown that smaller, openly available models can already replicate much of Mythos' analysis. A more difficult question is whether the world is comfortable with frontier AI capabilities being held by a handful of firms – fewer than half a dozen in the US, with a comparable group in China – and parcelled out to chosen partners. Open-source AI has helped diffuse the technology's benefits globally. Restrictions, however well-intentioned, risk entrenching a tech oligopoly, dulling competition and tempting those in possession of the most powerful models to use them against perceived adversaries. The history of managing

dual-use technologies is not reassuring on this front. A second lesson is that AI readiness must become a top-tier priority for governments. That means three capacities at once: to deploy AI productively across the economy; to research and develop it domestically; and to govern against misuse. The mood in some capitals has turned against regulation, but the global picture is more nuanced. The European Union is implementing risk-based guardrails through its AI Act. China has moved quickly to address harms to children, including emotional dependence on chatbots. The instruments – legislation, executive guidance or co-regulation with industry – are a sovereign choice. Stepping away from the responsibility is not. Finally, Mythos is a reminder that AI does not respect borders. Its impacts cross jurisdictions at the speed of light, and so must any credible response. The release of DeepSeek R1, a powerful open-source model, from China in January 2025, made it clear that breakthroughs can come from anywhere. Common standards for safety, interoperability and responsible use will not emerge from any country acting alone. This is the backdrop for the first Global Dialogue on AI Governance, which convenes in Geneva on July 6-7. The Dialogue, established by a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly in August 2025, is paired with a new Independent International Scientific Panel on AI.

**Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan**

**Community participation key to drug-free society: Sheetal Nanda**

REASI, MAY 08: In an effort to spread awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse and make Reasi a drug-free district, the district administration today organised a mega awareness programme under the Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan at the Deputy Commissioner's Office Complex. Commissioner Secretary, Forest, Ecology and Environment, Sheetal Nanda, was the chief guest on the occasion. The programme aimed at sensitising and strengthening the role of Mahila Nigrani Samitis in combating the menace of drug abuse and promoting a drug-free society. Addressing the gathering, Sheetal Nanda expressed concern over the growing menace of drug abuse and underscored the need for sustained community participation to effectively tackle the issue. She said that a collective and coordinated approach involving families, educational institutions, civil society and government agencies is essential to build a drug-free society.



Appreciating the role of women in grassroots awareness and social reform, she observed that Mahila Nigrani Samitis can play a pivotal role in identifying the vulnerable cases, counselling affected families and guiding youth towards constructive and positive activities. She also stressed the importance of parental involvement and urged the parents to maintain close engagement with their children and encourage them to adopt a healthy and disciplined lifestyle. The Commissioner Secretary appealed the participants to actively support the individuals affected by substance abuse and contribute towards creating a socially responsible and aware society. She also highlighted the importance of mental health support and informed the participants about the Tele MANAS helpline service, encouraging the people facing stress, anxiety, addiction or emotional distress to avail counselling and healthcare support through the 24x7 toll-free helpline number 14416.

Sheetal Nanda further called upon the public to extend full cooperation to the district administration Reasi in its ongoing efforts to eradicate the drug menace and make Reasi a drug-free district. Deputy Commissioner Kumar Abhishek, while speaking on the occasion, said that the special 100-day campaign under the Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan aims to curb the menace of drug abuse through coordinated community participation. To achieve this objective, ASHA Workers, Anganwadi Workers and retired teachers have been included as members of the Mahila Nigrani Samitis to strengthen the campaign at the grassroots level, he informed.

**DC Reasi reviews building permission process in rural areas**

*Stresses transparency, timely clearances*



REASI, MAY 08: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today chaired a meeting to review the process for issuance of permissions for construction and reconstruction of commercial and residential structures in rural areas of the district. The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for proper scrutiny and transparency in granting permissions for building construction. He directed the concerned officers to conduct joint verification of the proposed construction sites to ensure adherence to prescribed norms and regulations. To streamline the process and ensure uniformity, the Deputy Commissioner directed the officers to prepare and adopt a common format for issuance of building permissions across all the departments. He further instructed the officers to verify whether constructions in rural areas are being undertaken with proper permissions and to take appropriate action in case of violations. He emphasized strict monitoring to ensure planned and regulated development in the district.

**Nasha Mukt Udhampur Abhiyan**

**DC solicit civil society support to eradicate Drug menace**

UDHAMPUR, MAY 08: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Mingsha Sheela today chaired a meeting with representatives of social organisations, civil society members and religious heads to seek their active support in mobilising community participation and strengthening the implementation of the three-month-long Nasha Mukt Udhampur Abhiyan launched by the Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police

Amrit Pal Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh and other officers. While interacting with the participants, the Deputy Commissioner briefed them about the three-month schedule of activities planned under the campaign. He emphasised the importance of engaging youth in constructive and positive initiatives, stating that their active participation would play a crucial role in ensuring the effective implementation of the campaign at the grassroots level. He informed that a

series of awareness programmes, outreach activities and camps would be organised across the district during the campaign period to educate the public about the harmful effects of substance abuse and to promote a healthy, drug-free society. The DC appealed to all participants to join hands with the district administration for the successful execution of the campaign. He urged them to contribute actively and share valuable suggestions to make the initiative more impactful and result-oriented. Highlighting the

importance of collective responsibility, the DC underscored the vital role of social organisations, religious leaders and respected members of society in spreading awareness and guiding the youth away from the menace of drug abuse. The civil society members and prominent citizens present in the meeting assured full cooperation and extended their wholehearted support to the District Administration in making the Nasha Mukt Udhampur Abhiyan a grand success.

**University of Jammu Organises Extension Lecture on "Sampling Techniques in Research"**

JAMMU, MAY 8: The Department of Library and Information Science, University of Jammu organised an extension lecture on the topic "Sampling Techniques in Research" today at the department. Dr. Shiv Kumar, Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS), Panjab University, Chandigarh, delivered the lecture as the resource person.

and emphasised their relevance in contemporary quantitative and qualitative research. Earlier, Prof. Sangita Gupta, Head, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Jammu, delivered the welcome address and formally introduced the guest speaker. Dr. Shiv Kumar. An interactive session was also held in which participants deliberated upon the application of sampling principles in present-day research methodologies.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE**

OPEN FOR BIDDING FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA (IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA) AGAINST BELOW NOTIFIED TENDERS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE [www.mre.gov.in](http://www.mre.gov.in) WITH EFFECT FROM 01.05.2026 UP TO 18.05.2026. BIDDERS WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS THEIR ONLINE BIDDING SITES UP TO CLOSING DATE AND TIME ONLY. MANUAL BIDDERS ARE NOT ALLOWED AGAINST THESE TENDERS, AND ANY SUCH MANUAL OFFER RECEIVED SHALL BE IGNORED. CONTRACTORS ARE ALLOWED TO MAKE PAYMENTS AGAINST THIS TENDER THROUGH BANKING CHANNELS ONLY THROUGH ONLINE PORTAL AVAILABLE ON [www.mre.gov.in](http://www.mre.gov.in) PORTAL FOR BIDDING SITES, CREDIT CARD AND BANK DEBIT THROUGH ONLINE PORTAL WITH BANKER CHARGE. BIDDERS RECEIVING, FOR ETC ARE NOT ALLOWED. FOR MORE INFORMATION LOGON TO [www.mre.gov.in](http://www.mre.gov.in)

Tender No.	Quantity of Work	Estimate Value (Rs. Lakhs)	Period of Completion
1. 21-2026-27	Subj. Liquidation of Non-Asset Railway Station on DHR (MDR) 14721	1.28	12 Months

**NOTE:** Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. Tender No: 21-2026-27-ADEN-1-F2R, Date: 08.05.2026

**Sustained efforts being made to ensure inclusive, equitable development across J&K: Sakeena Itoo**

SRINAGAR, MAY 08: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of various ongoing developmental projects being executed by the Education, Health and Social Welfare departments across Jammu and Kashmir. During the meeting, the Minister conducted a detailed department-wise review and assessed project monitoring mechanisms, fund utilization and inter-departmental coordination to ensure effective execution of developmental initiatives across Jammu and Kashmir.

She stressed on the importance of providing accessible and affordable healthcare services to the people, especially those residing in remote and underserved areas. She directed officers to ensure quality infrastructure in schools and colleges so that students receive a better and more conducive learning environment. The Minister also highlighted the importance of modern educational facilities in rural and far-flung areas and instructed officials to expedite pending works on priority. "Special focus should be laid on enhancing digital learning infrastructure and ensuring adequate basic facilities in education institutions", she stated. While reviewing the Health Department initiatives, the Minister took stock of ongoing works related to hospital infrastructure, upgradation of medical facilities and strengthening of healthcare delivery systems.

**NOTICE**  
I Irshad Ahmed Naik S/o Ab Rashid Naik have applied for correction of my name and father name which has been wrongly written as Irshad Ahmed Naik S/o Ab Rashid Naik instead of correct name Irshad Ahmed S/o Abdul Rashid in my driving licence bearing No. JK192010007263. Objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

**NOTICE**  
I MUDASAR AHMED S/O BASHAR AHMED KATOCH R/O BATLI TEHSIL & DISTT. RAMBAN, has applied for the registration of "DEE" class contractor card in the Office of Superintending Engineer PWD R&B Udhampur-Ramban Circle HQ Udhampur objection if any may be conveyed to the above said office within 07 days.

**NOTICE**  
I Paras Ram S/O Lachho Ram R/O Ward No.1 near GHS Bamber Tehsil Mahapur Distt. Kathua J&K 184302 Change my name to Paras Ram. Objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority within 7 days, from the date of publication of this notice

**UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION KISHTWAR**

**SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
e-NIT No.09of 2026-27 Dated:07-05-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders are invited on Percentage Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S. No.	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. Lakhs)	Est. of Time (in Approx)	Interest Share (in % of Advertised Cost)	Time of Completion	Class of Contractor
1	CONSTRUCTION OF GIRLS TOILET BY WAY OF PREPABRICATED AT PRIMARY SCHOOL DUNADIEDU ZONE DRABGHALLA DISTRICT KISHTWAR UNDER SAMAGRA HEAD-(4th time). (Location at Bakran).	1.75	600.00	3500.00	25 Days	"D"

**Position of AAA - Accorded**  
**Position of Technical Sanction - Accorded**

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website: <http://tenders.gov.in> as per below schedule:

S. No.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	07-05-2026
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	07-05-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 07-05-2026 to 13-05-2026, 1400 Hrs.
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting.	11-05-2026
4	Bid submission Start Date	07-05-2026 from 1400 Hrs.
5	Bid Submission End Date	13-05-2026 upto 1600 Hrs.
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	13-05-2026 on or after 1700 Hrs. in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar.
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, Name of work, Or e-NIT No. with S.No. of the work for which tender fee was deposited duly crediting to 40692 (Revenue) favouring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar and affixing a copy of Treasury Challan in the shape of CDRFR (The date of Treasury Challan & Affidavit (in correctness of information) between date of start of bid submission and bid submission end date) duly pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar as mentioned in the bid documents. The earnest money of the unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of Treasury Challan.
- The electronic bid system will be available for submission of bids from 07:00 hrs. to 16:00 hrs. Bidders may modify their bids by uploading their request for modification before the deadline for submission of bids. For this, the bidder need not make any additional payment towards the cost of tender document. For bid modification and consequential re-submission, the bidder is not required to withdraw his bid submitted earlier. The last modified bid submitted by the bidder within the bid submission time shall be considered as the bid. For this purpose, modification/withdrawal by other means will not be accepted. In online system of bid submission, the modification and consequential submission of bids is allowed any number of times. The bidders may withdraw his bid by uploading their request before the deadline for submission of bids; however, if the bid is withdrawn, the re-submission of the bid is not allowed. No bid shall be modified or withdrawn after the deadline of submission of bids.
- The date and time of opening of Financial Bids shall be notified on Web Site: [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial Bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar. The date for same shall be intimated separately.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
- The bidder shall be disqualified from bidding for any contract with this office for a period of 03 Years from the date of notification, if:
  - Any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
  - Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within specified time period after issue of letter of acceptance.
- Restriction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website: [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) accurate bid submission process.
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act-2008. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No financial bid will be accepted in physical form.
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents mentioned in NIT and SBD with technical bid online.

**Notes - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.**

- The department will not be responsible for the delay in online submissions due to any reasons.
- Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, Name of work, Or e-NIT No. with S.No. of the work for which tender fee was deposited duly crediting to 40692 (Revenue) favouring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar and affixing a copy of Treasury Challan and F2M in the shape of CDRFR (The date of Treasury Challan & Affidavit (in correctness of information) between date of start of bid submission and bid submission end date) duly pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar.
- Bidders may contact office of the Chief Engineer PWD (R&B) Department, Jammu or concerned Executive Engineer for any guidance for getting DSC or any other relevant details in respect of e-tendering process.

No. of copies: 100  
Date: 07-05-2026

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
PWD (R&B) Division  
Kishtwar

**DIPIJ-1765/26**

## J&K's Four Cricketing Gems Light Up India: Mithun Manhas' Timeless Legacy for Delhi and Home

JAMMU, May 8: Jammu and Kashmir has produced cricketing talents who transcended regional boundaries, achieving remarkable success with elite teams across India. These stars from J&K flourished far beyond their home state, donning colours for powerhouses like Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and the national side, often captaining or starring in high-stakes triumphs. Setting a benchmark, Mithun Manhas has left an indelible mark on Indian cricket through his leadership for Delhi and transformative work in his home state of Jammu and Kashmir. Mithun Manhas: Hailing from the rugged hills of Bhalesha in Baderwah, Jammu and Kashmir, Mithun Manhas rose from humble beginnings to forge a stellar domestic career, primarily



powering Delhi with 9,714 first-class runs, including 27 centuries, at an imposing average of 45.82. A true all-round warrior, his right-handed batting blended grit and grace, complemented by sharp occasional off-spin. Manhas etched his name in history by captaining Delhi to the coveted 2007-08 Ranji Trophy title, shattering their 17-year drought in dramatic

fashion. His leadership extended to triumphs in the Deodhar and Duleep Trophies for North Zone, showcasing his tactical acumen on the biggest stages. In the glitzy IPL, he dazzled for Delhi Daredevils, Pune Warriors India, and Chennai Super Kings, blending domestic steel with T20 flair. Ever loyal to his roots, Manhas returned to lead Jammu &

Kashmir, inspiring a new generation amid the region's challenging terrain. His unparalleled resilience—epitomized by comebacks from career-threatening injuries—crowned a journey that culminated in his appointment as BCCI President, a fitting tribute to a man who turned adversity into cricketing legend. Suresh Raina: With family roots deeply anchored in Srinagar's vibrant Rainawari neighbourhood, Suresh Raina stands as Jammu & Kashmir's thunderous contribution to Indian cricket—a dynamic left-hand batter who lit up Uttar Pradesh colors and became an unbreakable pillar in ODIs and T20is. His explosive strokeplay and ice-cool temperament carved cricketing immortality: the only Indian to smash centuries in all three

formats, the trailblazer who first blazed past 3,000 IPL runs, and a World Cup 2011 legend whose clutch knocks—think that match-winning 34-ball 57 against Australia—drew rave praise from coach Gary Kirsten, who hailed him as "a game-changer under pressure." Raina's domestic dominance shines in 109 Ranji Trophy matches, where he amassed 6,871 runs at an imposing average of 42.15, including 14 centuries, 45 fifties, and a highest score of 204 not out. From Rainawari's bustling lanes to global stadiums, Raina embodied J&K's unyielding spirit, inspiring a new generation of cricketers in the region. Vivek Razdan: Hailing from the cricket-crazy streets of Srinagar, Vivek Razdan erupted onto the national stage as Jammu & Kashmir's,

## Shreyas Iyer Likely To Replace Suryakumar Yadav As India's T20I Captain, BCCI Hints At Big Changes: Sources

New Delhi, May 8: Despite leading India to the T20 World Cup 2026 title, Suryakumar Yadav is set to be asked as captain of the T20I side. BCCI sources have affirmed to NDTV that the selection committee, led by Ajit Agarkar, are looking at Shreyas Iyer to take over as India's new T20I captain, having been impressed by his captaincy of Punjab Kings (PBKS) in IPL 2026. The BCCI is also looking to introduce young talent to India's T20I side, as it sets of for a tour of Ireland and England after the IPL.



Earlier, according to a report by the Times of India, the BCCI selection committee, led by Ajit Agarkar, has "run out of patience" regarding Suryakumar's lack of form with the bat. Shreyas is the frontrunner to become the new captain unless there is a late change in the decision. On the other hand, there is a massive question mark on whether Suryakumar even makes the squad as a batter, given his poor form of late. Despite India's excellent record in T20is, Suryakumar Yadav has struggled for runs in recent months, and his miseries have been compounded by an IPL 2026 season where he has managed just 195 runs in 10 games for

Mumbai Indians (MI). The report also stated that well-placed BCCI and Team India sources revealed that Suryakumar has been suffering from a wrist issue for a while, playing even with pain and discomfort. Meanwhile, Shreyas Iyer led Punjab Kings (PBKS) to six wins from their first seven games, also slamming 333 runs in nine innings. It is important to remember that Suryakumar is yet to lose a single T20I series since taking over as India captain after Rohit Sharma's retirement. On the other hand, Shreyas has not played a T20I in over two years. His last appearance came in December 2023.

## In-form Gujarat Titans eye top-four spot against Rajasthan Royals



New Delhi, May 8: High on confidence, Gujarat Titans will look to continue their winning momentum and move into the top four, when they take on Rajasthan Royals in a crucial weekend IPL 2026 clash at the Saiwamingsh Stadium in Jaipur on Saturday. The two teams are level on points with six wins and four defeats each from 10 matches, with only net run rate separating them on the table. Rajasthan currently sit fourth with a better net run rate, while Gujarat are just behind them. Gujarat head into the game with confidence after winning their last three matches in a row. In contrast, Rajasthan have struggled for consistency and have lost three of their last five games. The Royals are

coming into the contest after another disappointing defeat despite posting a massive total. Captain Riyan Parag scored 90 as Rajasthan posted 225 for six against Delhi Capitals, but the bowlers failed to defend the target as DC chased it down comfortably. It was the second straight game in which Rajasthan could not defend a score of more than 220. Rajasthan's batting has largely depended on a few key players this season. Vaishav Sooryavanshi has been their leading run-scorer with 404 runs, while Yashasvi Jaiswal and Dhruv Jurel have also contributed heavily at the top. However, the Royals need support from the middle and lower order. Apart from Donovan Ferreira, who has scored

quickly at a strike rate above 150, the lower order has not made enough impact. Jurel has played important knocks this season but has also faced criticism for not accelerating enough at No. 3. In his last three innings, he has scored 42 off 30 balls, 16 off 20 balls and 42 off 30 balls, which has increased pressure on the rest of the batting unit. Bowling remains a major concern for Rajasthan, especially in the middle overs. With high-scoring matches becoming common this season, the Royals will need quick answers to their bowling woes if they want to stay in the play-off race. Gujarat, meanwhile, seem to be peaking form at the right time. Captain Shubman Gill has been consistent with 378 runs and will look to convert his starts into a bigger innings. Sai Sudharsan has also been in excellent form with 385 runs, including two fifties and a century in his last four matches. Jos Butler has also returned to form, giving Gujarat a dangerous top order. The Titans also have enough batting depth and finishers capable of handling pressure situations. However, Gujarat.

New Delhi, May 8: Hours after BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia warned IPL franchises and players that the board is "sitting tight" over repeated protocol breaches during IPL 2026, the BCCI issued a strict advisory to all 10 franchises regarding multiple violations related to discipline, conduct and security during the ongoing season. In a seven-page document sent to all teams, Saikia warned that repeated violations could damage the reputation of the IPL, the franchises and the board itself. While the advisory did not mention any franchise, player or official by name, it highlighted several serious issues that have come to the board's notice. These included unauthorised visitors entering hotel rooms, franchise owners interacting with players during matches, vaping at venues and players or officials leaving team hotels without approval. "It has come to the attention of the BCCI that certain incidents of misconduct and protocol

## BCCI cracks down on IPL franchises over protocol breaches



violations have occurred involving players, support staff, and team officials during the course of the current IPL season," Saikia said in the advisory. "These incidents, if left unaddressed, carry the potential to cause significant reputational harm to the tournament, the franchise concerned, and the BCCI as the governing body. They may further expose individuals and franchises to legal liability and security risks of a serious nature." The advisory comes shortly after Saikia and IPL Governing Council

chairman Arun Dhimal publicly raised concerns over the presence of unauthorised people within team environments. Written approval from Team manager to meet players in hotel rooms. One of the major concerns highlighted by the BCCI was the issue of visitors entering hotel rooms of players and support staff without proper approval. According to the advisory, several incidents were reported where team managers were unaware that outsiders had been allowed access

to restricted hotel areas. As per IPL protocol, all visitor requests must first be cleared through the team manager, who also has to inform the Anti-Corruption Unit official attached to the franchise. "In a number of instances, the Team Manager was entirely unaware of the presence of such visitors," the advisory stated. The BCCI has now made it mandatory for anyone visiting a player or support staff member's room, including family members and friends, to receive written approval from the team manager. The board added that visitors should ideally meet players in the hotel lobby instead of private rooms. Risks of honey-trapping. The advisory also warned franchises about the risks of corruption and "honey-trapping" in high-profile sporting events. "BCCI draws the attention of all franchises to the well-documented risks of targeted corruption and honey-trapping that pervade high-profile sporting environments. The possibility of incidents giving rise to serious legal allegations, including those under applicable laws on sexual misconduct, cannot be discounted. IPL franchise management must remain vigilant and proactive in mitigating such risks at all times," it said. Note for franchise owners. Another issue raised by the board was franchise owners attempting to interact with players and team officials during live matches. According to IPL rules, owners are only allowed to meet players after the game ends. "Specifically, instances have been observed of IPL franchise owners attempting to communicate with, approach, hug, or otherwise physically interact with players and team members during live match situations," the advisory said. "Such conduct, however well-intentioned, directly contravenes established protocol and may constitute interference with team dynamics and match proceedings."

## Not playing as defending champions this season: Patidar after RCB's loss

New Delhi, May 8: Despite suffering their fourth defeat of IPL 2026 after losing to Lucknow SuperGiants in a rain-affected clash in Lucknow on Thursday, Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) captain Rajat Patidar insisted his team is not carrying the pressure of defending their IPL 2025 title and is instead focused on winning the trophy again with an attacking approach. The defeat left RCB in third place on the points table with six wins so far this season. Interestingly, the side had lost only four matches during their title-winning campaign last year, but Patidar made it clear that the team's mindset remains positive. "We are not playing as defending champions this season," he said after the match. "We have the opportunity to become champions once again. We have to play an attacking game. We are not playing with a defensive mindset. This is a new season. What we did was in 2025." Patidar also praised LSG pacer Prince Yadav for his impact with the new ball,



especially after dismissing Virat Kohli early in the chase. "I have seen him from the start. He has a lot of variations. He has pace. He has a swing. He is a proper fast bowler," Patidar said. The RCB skipper called Prince's opening spell a turning point in the game, of his qualities is that he trusts his skills," Patidar said. "That is commendable. I have seen him for a long time. He has given his team [an important early] breakthrough - he is an expert in that. Spot out! I have never seen him give a lot of runs. I think it was a game-changing spell," he explained. Chasing 210 in a rain-hit 19-overs-a-side

contest, RCB lost Kohli early and managed only 45 for 2 in the powerplay. A slowdown in the middle overs further hurt their chase as they eventually fell short by nine runs despite fighting till the end. Prince, who finished with figures of 3 for 33, downplayed his personal performance after the win. "I felt good after the [Kohli] wicket. But I am most happy that we won the match. If I had taken the wicket and we had lost, it wouldn't have been so [good]," he said. Patidar admitted Mitchell Marsh's century gave LSG the perfect platform after their post-209 for 3. "I will start with Mitchell Marsh.

He batted well on this wicket, which was a good batting track. The way he started in the powerplay, I think he put pressure on us," Patidar said. "[But] after that, the way our bowlers controlled it - there was a break in between and it rained - so we got time to think. "Overall, the way they started and the way we finished, I think I am very satisfied; the way we bowled, the way we controlled the game. We were two shots behind [in the end]. We lost the match by just nine runs." Patidar himself kept RCB in the contest with a quickfire 61 off 31 balls and shared a 95-run partnership with Devdutt Padikkal. Late in the chase, Patidar played 40 off just 17 balls to keep the chase alive, but RCB still needed 20 runs off the final over. Digvishu Rathi held his nerve and conceded only 10. RCB have enjoyed strong support throughout the season and Patidar said the team never feels like it is playing away from home, even though their remaining two home games will now.

New Delhi, May 8: India's top doubles shuttler and Khel Ratna awardee Satwiksairaj Rankireddy has clarified that his recent comments about the lack of reception for India's Thomas Cup bronze medal-winning team were not made for personal recognition or rewards, but to highlight the need for greater support and appreciation for Indian athletes across sports. India, who had won the Thomas Cup title in 2022, finished with a bronze medal in the 2026 edition of the tournament. However, when the team returned home after the campaign in Horsens, there was no major reception or celebration for the players. Satwik had earlier posted two pictures on social media one from the team's departure and another after returning home, along with the caption, "How it started, how it's going," pointing towards the muted response to the achievement. After his post drew widespread attention, the Khel Ratna awardee took to social media again to explain the intention



behind his remarks. "The last few days have brought a lot of attention to my recent comments regarding the lack of a reception for our Thomas Cup bronze medal. While I am grateful for the overwhelming support and encouragement, I want to clarify my intent because I see many people deviating from the original point. My words did not come from a place of wanting personal fame or taking credit away from anyone else's achievements. I have the utmost respect for every athlete who brings glory to India, regardless of the sport," Satwik wrote. He said the message was about creating a sporting

culture where every achievement is acknowledged and celebrated. "My message was simple: we need to foster a culture that encourages and celebrates every win, big or small. Whether it is a World Cup medal or a podium finish in a global championship like the Thomas Cup, these moments represent years of sacrifice and hard work. When such milestones are met with silence, it feels disheartening not just for us, but for the future generations of Indian athletes who are watching," he added. Satwik also stressed that athletes are not demanding money or grand celebrations, but simply recognition for their efforts while representing the country. "We don't want money or grand parades; we just want to know that our country is watching and that our efforts are seen. Let's come together to support all sports with the same passion and 'angle.' Next time, let it not be about who won more or less, but about celebrating everyone who wears the India jersey. Thank you for standing by me. Let's keep playing for India," he said. Earlier, Satwik's doubles partner Ching Shetty had also spoken about the issue during a felicitation event organised by Sports Authority of India (SAI). "I feel the way it should have been celebrated (India's Thomas Cup bronze), it didn't get celebrated as much. The fans who actually follow badminton and understand the sport know how big the tournament was, but the general public still didn't really know the magnitude of the result. That sometimes makes me sad," Ching had said.



# Kerala delivers verdict, Congress delivers delay: A long history of last-minute twists

Kochi, May 8: In Kerala politics, the Congress party has often followed a strange pattern. Just when victory seems close, something unexpected changes the direction. The current race for the Chief Minister's post is again becoming a story of uncertainty, last-minute shifts, and old memories returning. As the Congress-led UDF's strong win in the May 4 Assembly election sends leaders to Delhi, the final decision still looks far from settled. The mood inside the party is tense but familiar. Many senior leaders say they have seen this before, when expectations rise in Kerala, final decisions often get reshaped in Delhi.

UDF's big win sets the stage for a new power battle. The Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) delivered a major political result in the Kerala Assembly elections held on



May 4. The alliance won a massive 102 seats, marking a strong comeback.

The ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF), led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, suffered a major setback. It managed only 35 seats after hoping for a historic third consecutive term. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) also made a small return, winning 3 seats. This unexpected wave of support for the UDF has now opened the race for the top post in the state. Attention has quickly shifted from election celebration to internal competition. The decision now rests with the Congress high command in Delhi.

Three leaders are at the centre of this discussion: VD Satheesan, Ramesh Chennithala, and KC Venugopal. All three are strong contenders, and each has his own support base within the party. Delhi becomes the real battlefield for Kerala's CM decision. While Kerala celebrates the election result, the real political battle has moved to Delhi. The Congress leadership will decide who will become the next Chief Minister if the UDF forms the government. However, nothing is simple in this decision-making process. Congress insiders say that past experience shows that expectations often change at the last moment. The presence of three major contenders has made the situation more complex. Satheesan, Chennithala, and Venugopal all bring different strengths: electoral leadership, experience, and organisational control.

# 'Bharat's unconquerable spirit': PM Modi recalls Somnath's journey from 'ruin to revival'

New Delhi, May 8: Ahead of his visit to Gujarat's Somnath temple on May 11, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday paid tribute to generations who protected and rebuilt the shrine despite repeated destruction, describing Somnath as a symbol of "Bharat's unconquerable spirit". In an OpEd shared on social media platform X, the Prime Minister linked the temple's history to India's civilisational continuity, saying Somnath's journey reflected the country's ability to rise "from ruin to renewal". The visit will mark 75 years since the restored temple was inaugurated by India's first President, Rajendra Prasad, in 1951. "Somnath gives us a civilisational message," PM Modi wrote, adding that the temple stood as a



reminder that "the spirit of the people can never be subdued for long". The Prime Minister said his upcoming visit carried personal and historical significance, coming just months after he attended the Somnath Swabhiman Parv earlier this year to mark 1,000 years since the first attack on the temple. "At the start of 2026, I had gone to Somnath for the Somnath Swabhiman Parv... Now, I will be back

in Somnath on 11th May to mark 75 years since the inauguration of the restored Temple," he wrote. PM Modi recalls leaders who rebuilt and defended Somnath. In the article titled Somnath and Bharat's unconquerable spirit, PM Modi remembered rulers, saints and warriors associated with protecting and restoring the temple across centuries.

# Delhi Police bust ISI-linked terror module targeting historic temple, military camp, popular highway dhaba: Reports



New Delhi, May 8: A terror module linked to Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI had allegedly drawn up plans to target a historic temple in the national capital, a military installation in neighbouring Haryana, and a popular dhaba along the Delhi-Sonapat highway, investigators have revealed,

pointing to a coordinated plot with cross-border links. The disclosures surfaced during the interrogation of nine suspects arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell as part of its ongoing "Gang Bust Operation 2.0," officials said on Friday. The accused are believed to be associated with a network

linked to alleged handler Shahbaz Bhatti, with investigators probing suspected ties to Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI. According to sources, one of the arrested operatives had conducted reconnaissance of a prominent temple in Delhi, capturing images and sharing them with handlers based in Pakistan via social media platforms. The exchange of visual inputs is being treated as a key piece of evidence suggesting pre-operational planning. Investigators are examining digital devices seized from the accused to trace communication patterns, funding routes and the broader network behind the module.

# Protests, pressure and power talks: Tamil Nadu's post-poll drama intensifies

New Delhi, May 8: Tamil Nadu's fractured mandate has triggered hectic backroom negotiations, protests outside Raj Bhavan, and fresh accusations of political interference, as actor-politician Vijay's Banga Vetrar Kazhagam (TVK) pushes to gather the numbers needed to form the next government. With the Governor yet to invite Vijay to take the oath despite TVK emerging as the single-largest party, Friday saw a flurry of events involving the Left parties, Viduthalaithiruthigal Katchi (VCK), Congress and AIADMK, all of whom now hold the key in a sharply divided Assembly. TVK won 108 seats in the 234-member Assembly, dramatically disrupting Tamil Nadu's decades-old DMK-AIADMK dominance. Congress has already extended



support with its five MLAs, taking the tally to 112. The coalition, however, still remains short of the halfway mark of 118. Left parties hold crucial meetings on backing TVK. Separate executive committee meetings of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Communist Party of India were

held in Chennai on Friday to discuss Vijay's appeal for support. Both CPI and CPI(M) have two MLAs each, while the VCK also holds two seats. If all three parties back TVK, Vijay's alliance could move past the majority mark. Earlier, TVK Joint General Secretary CTR Nirmal Kumar met CPI leaders in Chennai to seek

support for government formation. CPI(M) leader P Shanmugam confirmed that the party had received a letter from Vijay. "TVK Chief sent a letter to our party. Our State Committee meeting will be held tomorrow morning, we will take our decision in it," Shanmugam said. Backing TVK's claim, he added, "According to the Constitution, it is TVK that should be allowed to form the government. We have never seen a situation like this in the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, and now we have a hung Assembly. It is the Governor who should invite Vijay to form the government because he is leading." The CPI too questioned Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar's stand, saying it was "inappropriate" to insist that TVK prove its majority before swearing in.

# Big crackdown on online gaming firms as Gamekraft founders land in ED custody

New Delhi, May 8: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday arrested the three founders of Gamekraft Technologies Ltd in connection with a money laundering investigation linked to alleged cheating and fraud through online real money gaming platforms. Deepak Singh and Prithvi Raj Singh were arrested from the National Capital Region, while another founder, Vikash Taneja, was taken into custody in Bengaluru. The action comes at a time when the Centre has moved to tighten its grip on online money gaming through a new law aimed at banning such platforms and their financial ecosystem. According to officials, the arrests followed extensive searches conducted by the ED on May 7 across 17 locations in Karnataka and the NCR region linked to the Gamekraft group, its founders, and employees. Investigators claimed to have



recovered documents and other materials during the raids that allegedly point towards offences under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). After the arrests, the agency secured transit remand for Deepak Singh and Prithvi Raj Singh to produce them before a Bengaluru court. Taneja was produced before the jurisdictional court in Bengaluru. Multiple FIRs linked to online

gaming platforms. The ED case against Gamekraft Technologies Ltd and associated entities stems from several FIRs registered against the company and its founders in alleged cheating and fraud cases linked to online money gaming applications, including platforms such as 'RummyCulture' and the rummy-time app. Officials said multiple FIRs were also connected to alleged suicides by victims linked to the gaming platforms. The agency said the founders were allegedly involved in laundering proceeds generated through the operation of online real money gaming services.

New online gaming law tightens crackdown. The arrests also come shortly after President Droupadi Murmu gave assent to the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, which was recently cleared by Parliament.

The legislation seeks to promote e-sports and online social gaming while prohibiting online money gaming services, related advertisements, and financial transactions associated with such platforms. The Bill proposes a complete ban on offering, operating, or facilitating online money games, irrespective of whether the games are based on skill, chance, or a combination of both. Sources had earlier indicated that players participating in online money games would not face punishment. Instead, action would primarily target service providers, promoters, advertisers, and those financially backing such gaming operations. The proposed framework also empowers authorised officers to investigate offences, conduct searches and seizures, and, in certain cases, make arrests without a warrant.

# Maiden flight-trial of Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation weapon conducted: Govt

New Delhi, May 8: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Air Force (IAF) have successfully conducted the maiden flight-trial of Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA) weapon off the coast of Odisha, it was announced on Friday. TARA, the modular range extension kit, is India's first indigenous glide weapon system to convert unguided warheads into precision guided weapons, according to a Defence Ministry statement. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO, IAF, DcPP, and the industry for the maiden flight-trial, describing it as a significant development in advancing India's indigenous defence capabilities.



TARA has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad along with other DRDO laboratories to enhance the lethality and accuracy of a low-cost weapon to neutralise ground-based targets. It is the first glide weapon to utilise state-of-the-art low-cost systems. The development of the kit has been undertaken with cum Production Partners (DcPP) and other Indian industries, which have already started the production activity. Dr Samir V Kanat, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman of DRDO, also congratulated the teams associated with the successful flight-trial. Meanwhile, Rajnath Singh said this week that the government has placed defence.

# Punjab land scam: ED searches linked firms and mentions AAP leader Aman Arora, minister hits back over 'false propaganda'



New Delhi, May 8: A fresh political controversy erupted in Punjab on Thursday after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) claimed that a businessman linked to an ongoing land scam and money laundering investigation was allegedly associated with Aam Admi Party's Punjab chief and state minister Aman Arora. The development came after the central agency carried out raids at multi-

ple places in Chandigarh and Mohali. According to officials, the searches were connected to a probe into alleged irregularities in real estate projects and suspected money laundering activities linked to land deals. The ED said the searches were conducted under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The action focused on properties and offices connected to the Suncite City

housing project and several real estate firms operating in Punjab. Builders and real estate firms under investigation. The agency said the Suncite City project was developed by the Indian Cooperative Housing Building Society. Raids were also conducted at premises linked to promoter Ajay Sehgal, ABS Townships, Altus Space Builders, Dhir Constructions and people connected with these firms. Among those named by the ED was builder Gaurav Dhir of Dhir Constructions. The agency alleged that Dhir was a "close associate" of Aman Arora. The minister, however, has not been accused of any direct financial wrongdoing in the case so far. Investigators are examining how Change of Land Use permissions were allegedly obtained by the real estate groups.

# Kalaram Temple flag hoisting event ignored Maha's inclusive legacy: Shiv Sena(UBT) in 'Saamana'

New Delhi, May 8: The Shiv Sena Uddhav Balashebh Thackeray (UBT) on Friday criticised the Maharashtra government for not inviting the opposition and others to the 'Dharmadhvaj' (religious flag) hoisting event at the historic Shri Kalaram Temple in Nashik. The party said that a grand ceremony to hoist the 'Dharmadhvaj' (religious flag) was held at the historic Shri Kalaram Temple in Maharashtra's Nashik on Wednesday, marking a precursor to next year's Simhashta Kumbh Mela. However, it felt less like a religious festival and more like a political showcase for the BJP and was seen as a partisan event rather than a collective celebration of faith. The Thackeray camp in the party's mouthpiece, 'Saamana', editorial said that the Kalaram Temple is a cornerstone of Indian social history. It was here, on March 2, 1930, that Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar led a historic Satyagraha to secure temple entry for Dalits — a fight not just



for access, but against untouchability and social inequality. While that struggle successfully established the temple as a symbol of national unity, it reiterated that Wednesday's ceremony reduced that inclusive pride to a partisan affair. The editorial said that the event was attended by high-profile figures, including former President Ram Nath Kovind, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra

Fadnis, and other cabinet ministers. However, no invitations were extended to the current generations of the families of Dr Ambedkar, Mahatma Phule, or Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. Despite their role in awakening Hindutva in Maharashtra, the family of late Balashebh Thackeray was reportedly not invited. Involving leaders from the Congress, NCP and other parties would have better reflected the 'Sakal Hindu Samaj' (entire

Hindu community) and national spirit, added the editorial. According to the editorial, the ceremony took place against a backdrop of significant state investment and social unrest. "While Rs 35,000 crore has been allocated for the Kumbh Mela, fears persist that a large portion of these funds may be diverted to contractors from outside the state rather than serving the holy cause." The BJP has become a "gathering of corruption under the guise of religion. The irony of celebrating a flag symbolising protection and restraint while Maharashtra faces a rise in farmer suicides and heinous crimes against women and children," claimed the editorial. The Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena said the newly hoisted Dharmadhvaj features the image of Lord Hanuman and the 'Om' symbol. Historically, the religious flag has inspired bravery and sacrifice against invaders, remaining steadfast even when temples were destroyed during the era of Aurangzeb.

# Sensex, Nifty slip in early trade amid renewed US-Iran tensions

New Delhi, May 8: Indian stock markets traded on a cautious note Friday, with benchmark indices declining 0.7 per cent each in the morning session as renewed hostilities between the United States and Iran strained a fragile ceasefire and rattled investor sentiment globally. Sensex fell as much as 0.71 per cent or over 500 points to hit an intraday low of 77,291.72 in early trade, while Nifty slipped by 168 points or 0.69 per cent to 24,158.15. Among sectoral indices, Nifty Private Bank, Nifty PSU Bank, Nifty Auto, and Nifty Oil & Gas were the top losers. Key laggards in the Nifty pack included HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors, Maruti Suzuki, Eicher Motors, Shriram Finance, and Eternal. However, Nifty IT, Nifty Chemicals, Nifty Pharma, and Nifty Healthcare bucked the trend and posted gains. A market expert noted that the "escalation-de-escalation drama" in West Asia continues to drive volatility in crude oil prices. The expert also highlighted a notable divergence in global market performance. "Despite this geopolitical tension, some markets are doing extremely well while others are performing poorly. An important trend in India is the out-performance of the broader market, the Nifty Midcap index is now at a record high, despite elevated valuations," the expert said. On the geopolitical front, Iran accused Washington of violating the month-long ceasefire, while the



US maintained that its strikes were retaliatory, triggered by Iranian forces firing on American naval vessels transiting the Strait on Thursday. Iran's military said US forces targeted an Iranian oil tanker, a second ship, and civilian areas in the strait and on the mainland. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump told reporters that the ceasefire remained in effect, as Washington awaited Tehran's response to its latest peace proposal. Oil prices surged on the back of the renewed tensions. International benchmark Brent crude jumped 2.82 per cent to \$102.89 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) advanced 4 per cent to \$98.64 per barrel. Asian equities were broadly under pressure, with the Nikkei, Hang Seng, and KOSPI each trading up to 1 per cent lower. Overnight on Wall Street, the S&P 500 closed 0.38 per cent lower, while the Nasdaq ended down 0.13 per cent.

# Odisha Secures Rs 48,330 Crore Investment Commitments During CM Majhi's Gujarat Visit

New Delhi, May 8:

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Thursday returned to Odisha after his three-day visit to Gujarat, securing investment commitments worth Rs 48,330 crore that are expected to generate more than 67,838 employment opportunities across multiple sectors in the state. Addressing the Odisha Investors' Meet Roadshow in Vadodara on Thursday, CM Majhi said, "Western India has already led India's industrial rise. Now, for Viksit Bharat, Eastern India must rise, and Odisha is ready to lead that transformation." Presenting Odisha as the growth engine of Eastern India under the "Purvodaya" vision, the Chief Minister invited leading industrialists from Gujarat to expand their industrial footprint in



Odisha and become partners in the next phase of the state's industrial growth. The Gujarat outreach witnessed strong investor participation and high-level engagements across sectors such as metal downstream, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, green energy equipment, infrastructure, logistics, food processing, apparel and textiles, information technology and information technology-enabled services, semiconductors, tourism, aerospace and defence, plastics, and power. Notably, the Odisha delegation was led by the Chief Minister and included Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain, Chief Secretary Anu Garg, and Additional Chief Secretary Hemant Sharma, along with other senior government officials. Highlighting Odisha's industrial ecosystem, Majhi said the state offers abundant raw materials, modern infrastructure, port-led logistics, policy stability, and fast project execution systems.

# 19 Members Of The WTO, Including US, Agree Among Themselves Not To Impose Duties On E-Commerce

New Delhi, May 8:

The U.S. and more than a dozen other countries including Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Australia on Thursday launched their own pact to not impose duties on e-commerce after no agreement was reached to end deadlock with Brazil, a document showed. Brazil upheld its opposition to a four-year extension of a global deal at World Trade Organization talks in Geneva which concluded on Thursday. However, Turkey, which had previously been against it, dropped its opposition, a WTO spokesperson said. Failure at a high-level WTO meeting in Yaounde, Cameroon, in March to renew the long-standing



moratorium on duties for cross-border streaming and downloads marked another setback for the WTO, as business groups said it raised serious concerns about the ability of the organisation to set global trade rules. The moratorium, agreed in 1998 and regularly renewed since, bars duties on cross-border electronic transmissions such as streaming music or films and downloading software. WTO members with large digital economies—including the U.S., the European Union, Canada and Japan—argue it provides predictability for global digital trade and want it made permanent.

# Cloudflare to cut over 1,100 jobs amid AI-led restructuring

New Delhi, May 8:

US-based connectivity cloud company Cloudflare has announced that it plans to cut more than 1,100 jobs globally as the company restructures its operations around the growing adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), according to an internal memo sent to employees by the company. The company said that its internal use of AI has surged by more than 600 per cent over the last three months, with employees across engineering, finance, human resources and marketing increasingly relying on AI agents to carry out day-to-day tasks. Cloudflare described the move as part of a broader organisational overhaul aimed at adapting to the "agentic AI era," rather than



a conventional cost-cutting exercise or a performance-driven layoff programme. "This decision is not a reflection of the individual work or talent of those leaving us," the company said in the memo. "We are reimaging every internal

impacted workers. Cloudflare said the severance packages for departing employees would include full base pay through the end of 2026, continued healthcare support in the US through the end of the year and additional equity vesting benefits through August 15. The company noted that employees who had not yet completed their one-year vesting cliff would receive prorated equity vesting as part of the separation package. According to the memo, the company intends to complete the restructuring exercise in a single phase to avoid prolonged uncertainty and repeated rounds of layoffs. Cloudflare said it was reshaping its organisational structure to remain competitive as AI rapidly transforms.

# RBI okays Kotak stake acquisitions in Federal Bank, AU Bank, J&K Bank

New Delhi, May 8:

The Federal Bank as well as the AU Small Finance Bank informed the stock exchange in separate filings here on Thursday that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cleared the acquisition of 9.99% stakes each in both banks by Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. The Federal Bank stated in its filing that it received formal approval from the RBI allowing Kotak Mahindra Bank to acquire an aggregate holding of up to 9.99% of the bank's paid-up share capital or voting rights, on May 6, 2026. The acquisition is capped at 9.99% of the bank's total paid-up share capital or voting rights, according to the Federal Bank filing. According to the filing, the RBI approval is not unconditional and requires adherence to a broad



framework of financial regulations. This would include compliance with the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, as well as specific Reserve Bank of India (Commercial Banks - Acquisition and Holding of Shares or Voting Rights) Directions, 2025. Also, the transaction must align with provisions set forth by the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999, ensuring all aspects of the acquisition meet current statutory requirements and guidelines set by the governing authorities,

according to the Federal Bank regulatory filing with the stock exchange.

In a separate regulatory filing on Thursday, AU Small Finance Bank also officially informed the stock exchange that it received a letter from the RBI on May 6 approving Kotak Mahindra Bank's acquisition of a 9.99% stake in the bank. According to the AU Small Finance Bank's stock exchange regulatory filing, "The RBI has accorded its approval to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, along with its subsidiaries, the funds/schemes managed by KMBL's subsidiaries, collectively referred to as 'Kotak Mahindra Group', to acquire 'aggregate holding' of up to 9.99 per cent of the paid-up share capital or voting rights in AU Small Finance Bank".

# US Trade Court Rules Trump Tariffs Illegal, But Issues Narrow Block

New Delhi, May 8:

A U.S. trade court dealt another blow to President Donald Trump's tariff strategy, ruling that his latest 10% temporary global duties are unjustified under a 1970s trade law, but blocked the levies only for two private importers and the State of Washington.

The U.S. Court of International Trade's 2-1 decision leaves the temporary tariffs in place for all other importers while any appeal by the Trump administration plays out. They are expected to expire in July.

The court ruled that Trump's imposition of the tariffs under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 was misguided. One of the



judges said it was premature to grant victory to the plaintiffs.

While the ruling applies to a set of levies due to expire in about two months, it marks another major setback for Trump's global tariff ambitions and comes a week before he is due to discuss trade tensions with Chinese

President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

It sets the stage for another protracted legal battle over billions of dollars' worth of tariff refunds three months after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Trump's sweeping global tariffs imposed under a national emergency law.

# Gold, Silver Rally Up To 1 Per Cent As West Asia Tensions Escalate

Mumbai, May 8:

Gold and silver prices traded higher on Friday amid renewed geopolitical tensions between the US and Iran, with precious metals surging up to 1 per cent. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (June 5) opened at Rs 1,52,672 per 10 grams, up Rs 411 from the previous close of Rs 1,52,261. At around 12:20 pm, the yellow metal was trading Rs 592 or 0.38 per cent higher at Rs 1,52,853 per 10 grams. During the session so far, it touched an intraday high of Rs 1,53,103, rising Rs 842 or 0.55 per cent. Meanwhile, silver futures (July 3)



opened at Rs 2,59,999 per kg against the previous close of Rs 2,58,540, a gain of Rs 1,459 or 0.56 per cent. The white metal was trading Rs 3,126 or 1.21 per cent higher at Rs 2,61,666 per kg. Silver touched an intraday high of Rs 2,62,723, up Rs 4,183 or 1.61 per cent. The commodity market experts said

# Piyush Goyal Chairs Meeting To Strengthen India's Position In Global Agriculture Sector

New Delhi, May 8:

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Thursday chaired a meeting to discuss initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life of farmers, strengthening India's position in the global agriculture sector, and enhancing agricultural cooperation with African nations. In a post on X, Goyal said that during his meeting with MJ Khan, Chairman of the Indian Chamber of Food & Agriculture, they discussed measures to improve farmers' welfare, expand India's global agricultural footprint, and explore new avenues for long-term food security and agricultural cooperation. The post read, "Held a meeting with Dr. MJ



Khan, Chairman of the Indian Chamber of Food & Agriculture (@ICFAGri). Discussed initiatives to further enhance the quality of life of our farmers, strengthen India's position in the global agri-

culture landscape, deepen collaboration with the African region, and share India's expertise in the sector. Also, deliberated on new pathways to enhance agricultural cooperation for long-term food securi-

ty." Goyal also chaired a separate meeting on Thursday to prepare a roadmap for obtaining Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) approvals for Indian agricultural and fisheries products in global markets, with the aim of boosting exports and improving income opportunities for farmers and the fishing community. Sharing an update on X, the minister said he "chaired a meeting to prepare a roadmap for obtaining SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) approvals for Indian agricultural and fisheries products across global markets." Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures are international safety and quality standards related to food, animals and plants. These

# DC Poonch Chairs District Level NCORD Meeting to Intensify Anti-Drug Campaign

Poonch, May 08: The Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma today chaired a District Level NCORD (Narco Coordination) meeting to review the measures being undertaken for prevention of the drug menace in the district. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner discussed various steps for the successful implementation of the 100-Day Nasha Mukh Abhiyan. All concerned officers briefed the chair regarding the status of drug-related activities and enforcement measures being carried out in their respective jurisdictions. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned Tehsildars, Drug



Inspector and Police personnel to conduct thorough inspections of all medical shops and take strict action against those found involved in the illegal sale

of drug-related medical supplements. He further instructed that licences of such establishments be cancelled as per rules. Emphasizing the importance of public participation and awareness, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to organize weekly programmes under the Nasha Mukh Abhiyan to educate the public about the ill effects of drugs and preventive measures. He also instructed officers to submit reports to the district headquarters regarding any suspicious drug-related activities or involvement of drug peddlers and ensure regular uploading of Nasha Mukh activities on the designated portal. The Deputy

Commissioner warned that strict action would be taken against anyone found involved in drug-related activities or drug peddling, including seizure of property under the law. He further directed the concerned departments to prepare awareness reels on the Nasha Mukh campaign and share them with the Information Department for wider publicity and outreach. The meeting was attended by SSP Poonch, Shaftak Hussain Bhat, ADC Poonch, Tahir Mustafa, ACR Muhammad Sayeed, DFO (T), CMO Poonch, SDMs of Mendhar and Surankote, College Principals, Tehsildars, Drug Inspector and other concerned officers and officials.

# Government Polytechnic College Reasi organises poster making competition under NMBA

REASI, MAY 08: As a part of 100 Day Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, the Government Polytechnic College Reasi today organized a poster making competition, encouraging the students to express their mind on the highly important issue. As many as 40 students actively participated in the competition and showcased their creativity through meaningful and informative posters. The event was conducted under the guidance of Principal Dr. Arun Bangotra and coordinated by faculty members Er. Himanshu Bakshi and Parshotam Lal. They encouraged students to take part in such awareness activities. The Principal emphasized crucial role of educational institutions in the "Nasha



Mukh' campaign, noting that the awareness is the strongest shield against the menace of drug addiction. "Such activities play an important role in spreading awareness and motivating students to contribute towards a drug-free society," he stressed. The posters made by students reflected strong messages "Say No to Drugs" and highlighted the importance of a healthy and disciplined lifestyle. The 1st prize was won by Vikram from Mechanical Department, while 2nd prize went to Ajay Singh of Electrical Department and 3rd to Aman Lal of Electrical Department. The event concluded successfully with appreciation for all participants. Er. Veena Thapa, Er. Ayushi Magotra and Er. Parshotam Singh acted as Jury for the competition.

# Kishtwar: 6 families provided compensation under Road Accident Victim Fund

KISHTWAR, MAY 08: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today disbursed Rs. 5 lakh as compensation under the J&K Road Accident Victim Fund, based on the cases submitted by Assistant Road Transport Officer (ARTO). An amount of Rs. 1 lakh each was disbursed among the legal heirs of four persons died in road accidents, while Rs 50 thousand each was provided to two grievously injured persons. This government initiative aims to extend timely financial support to those affected by tragic road accidents and reflects its continued commitment towards assisting bereaved and distressed families. The families who received compensation included Makhni Begum, W/o Salu Gujjar, R/o Sarawan Thakraie (case of Ab Majeed); Asha Devi, W/o Late Mast Ram, R/o Pallali Paddar (case of Mast Ram); Hajera Begum, W/o Ali Mohammad



Zargar, R/o Sarthal Karool (case of Shagufta Ara); Gh. Hussain, S/o Mohammad Akbar, R/o Patnazi Bunjwah (case of Saif Ali); Sohail Bashir, S/o Bashir Ahmed Mattoo, R/o Mulchhitar and Shamima Akhtar Banoo, Do Akhtar Hussain, R/o Patnazi Bunjwah. The Deputy Commissioner reiterated the administration's resolve to ensure prompt assistance to Road Accident victims and their families under welfare schemes meant for public support and relief.

# DAJ reviews seed distribution status in Jammu Division

JAMMU, MAY 08: A ministry review meeting in the office of the Joint Development Officers and District Officers was convened today under the chairmanship of Director Agriculture Jammu (DAJ) Anil Gupta here at the Directorate Agriculture (Inputs) Krishi Bhawan. The meeting discussed financial reconciliation, recovery and seed distribution activities in detail. Stress was laid on the timely recovery of pending seed dues of previous seasons and submission of treasury challans along with revenue realization statements for the month of



April 2026. The Director also reviewed the status of deposits made in the official accounts and directed the concerned officers to ensure submission of pending reconciliation statements pertaining to Rabi 2025-26 and Kharif 2025. Officers were instructed to furnish complete details regarding seed distribution under various departmental schemes in a time-bound manner. The Director emphasized the

need to promote oilseed crops, pulses and mungbean farming practices across all districts of Jammu Division. He directed the officers to prepare a comprehensive district-wise action plan for boosting the cultivation of these crops and farming systems in line with the priorities of the Government of India. He stated that several schemes have been launched by the Government of India for promotion of oilseeds, pulses and sustainable agriculture and instructed the field officers to ensure effective implementation at the grassroots level. The Director also proposed the promotion of Seed

Village Programme in all districts of Jammu Division to strengthen quality seed production, improve seed replacement rates and encourage farmer participation in certified seed multiplication activities. The meeting was attended by Joint Director Agriculture (SLUB/Farms) Aman Jyoti Sharma, Agronomist (VIS) Vikas Padha, Potato Development Officer (PDO) Jammu Ravi Sharma, District Agriculture Officers, Area Development Officers, Store Officers and other concerned officials of the department.

# Anti-Drug Campaign in J&K Gets Strong Public Support, Campaign Must Reach Panchayat Level: Naveen Choudhary

Ramgarh: The ongoing 'Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan' in Jammu & Kashmir is receiving widespread support from social and social-political organizations across the Union Territory. Welcoming the initiative, All Jammu & Kashmir Jat Sabha District Sabha Youth President and Senior Vice President of Hindu Shiv Sena J&K, Naveen Choudhary, termed the anti-drug drive a "necessary and timely step" towards safeguarding the future of the youth. Reacting to the recently launched 100-day intensive anti-drug campaign being conducted under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Naveen Choudhary said the administration's initiative



reflects a serious commitment to making Jammu & Kashmir drug-free and building a healthier society. He stressed that strict action against drug peddlers and narcotics networks is equally important to

curb the growing menace of substance abuse among the youth. "Action against those involved in the drug trade is essential, as they are destroying the future of young generations," he said. Highlighting the need for grassroots participation, Choudhary stated that the campaign should not remain limited to rallies and formal programs alone. Instead, it must be expanded to the Panchayat level so that awareness reaches every village and locality. He further suggested that awareness camps and counseling programs should be organized in schools and educational institutions to educate students about the harmful effects of drug addiction at an early

stage. According to him, awareness among children and youth is the most effective way to prevent drug abuse in society. Naveen Choudhary also urged the administration and police authorities to create a people-friendly atmosphere where citizens feel comfortable cooperating with law enforcement agencies. "People should support the police without fear so that the chain of drug trafficking can be effectively broken," he added. The anti-drug campaign launched by the Jammu & Kashmir administration is being seen as a major step towards transforming the fight against narcotics into a mass public movement across the Union Territory.

# Mock Drill on Fire & Safety organised at SDH Baderwah

BHADERWAH, MAY 08: A mock drill on fire and safety along with an awareness programme was organised today at Sub District Hospital Baderwah by Fire and Emergency Services department. Assistant Director Fire and Emergency service and hospital administration coordinated the event attended by ADC Sunil Kumar Bhutyal; CEO BMO Sanjeev Sharma; BDO Dr. Varsha Sharma, besides officials and staff members of the hospital and Fire & Emergency Department. The participants were



briefed about fire safety measures, emergency response techniques and the proper use of fire safety equipment during crisis situations. The mock drill witnessed active participation from hospital staff and fire service personnel, who demonstrated rescue operations and evacuation procedures in case of fire emergencies. The programme also highlighted the importance of Basic Life Support (BLS), which refers to the immediate medical care provided by first responders, healthcare professionals and public safety personnel to individuals experiencing cardiac arrest or other life-threatening emergencies.

# Entrepreneurial Awareness Programme organised at GDC Basohli

BASOHLI, MAY 08: An entrepreneurial awareness programme was organized today at Government Degree College Basohli under Udyam Jagriti 4.0. The College Principal Prof. Raj Kram Sharma provided the guidance. The session was attended by nearly 70 students and Yuva team members of the College. The program was conducted to motivate young learners to explore self-employment opportunities and to equip them with knowledge about startups, innovation and government-supported schemes. It served as a platform to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical business exposure. The programme commenced with a formal welcome address by Dr. Neha Bandral, Convenor/ Nodal Officer Udyam Jagriti under Mission Yuva. She

emphasized the growing importance of entrepreneurship in today's competitive and rapidly changing economic environment. She also highlighted how initiatives like Udyam Jagriti can empower students to become job creators rather than job seekers. The inaugural session set a positive tone for the rest of the event and encouraged active participation from the students. Speaking on the occasion, the Principal covered various aspects such as the fundamentals of starting a business, financial planning, funding opportunities, and the role of digital platforms in business growth. She emphasized on the government initiatives and schemes that support budding entrepreneurs, helping students understand the available resources and support systems.

# DC Kathua highlights crucial role of public in anti-drug campaign

KATHUA, MAY 08: Giving a major push to the district-wide campaign against drug abuse, Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today flagged off a massive awareness rally under the ongoing 'Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan (NMJKA)' from the Block Development Office Marheeh-Hiranagar. The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, former PRI members, officers, health workers, volunteers and local residents, all united in their resolve to eradicate the menace of drug abuse from society and promote a healthy, drug-free environment. Carrying placards and raising impactful slogans, the participants highlighted the harmful effect of drugs on individuals and society as a whole. They appealed to youth to stay away from drugs and adopt a positive and healthy lifestyle. Addressing the gathering, the DC underscored the importance of community participation in mak-



ing the anti-drug campaign successful. He said that the district administration is committed to building a drug-free society through sustained awareness drives, counselling initiatives and coordinated efforts involving all stakeholders. He urged parents, teachers and community leaders to remain vigilant and actively guide the younger generation towards constructive and productive pursuits. He emphasized that awareness and

intervention at the grassroots level are crucial to curb the growing threat of narcotics and ensure a safe, secure and healthy future for society. The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the active involvement of students and local residents in the rally and called upon everyone to become ambassadors of the 'Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan' by spreading awareness and supporting the mission in their respective communities. The rally concluded with all participants taking a solemn pledge to work actively towards the vision of a 'Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir' and to contribute in every possible way towards eliminating the scourge of drug abuse from society. Among others present on the occasion included ADC Vishayjeet Singh; SDM Phulail Singh; Tehsildar Lekh Raj; BDO Javed Iqbal and other officers from civil, police and paramilitary besides PRI members and prominent citizens of the area.



## J&K to roll out long-term rehabilitation plan for drug abuse victims CS reviews the framework for treatment reintegration and livelihood support



**SRINAGAR, MAY 8:** Chief Secretary, Atal Duloo today chaired a meeting of the concerned Administrative Secretaries to deliberate upon the comprehensive rehabilitation plan for victims of drug abuse prepared by the Social Welfare Department in consultation with various government departments and stakeholders. The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Principal Secretary, Home; Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department; Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department; Commissioner Secretary, School Education Department; Director Colleges; State Informatics Officer, NIC; besides other senior officers. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the need for devising a highly effective and

practical rehabilitation strategy capable of yielding tangible outcomes on the ground. He stressed that the plan should be further fine-tuned through detailed consultations with all concerned departments and civil society stakeholders, particularly professionals from the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS) and Psychiatry Departments of Government Medical Colleges. Highlighting the critical role of patient mentors in the rehabilitation process, the Chief Secretary observed that such mentors should possess some basic qualifications and undergo specialized training modules at IMHANS. He called for creation of a dedicated pool of trained resource persons, with at least 30 to 40 mentors identified in each district, to support the long-term rehabilitation initiative.

He maintained that a cadre of committed and professionally trained mentors would form the bedrock of the rehabilitation programme. He emphasized that the responsibilities of mentors should be clearly defined in accordance with the individual needs of patients so that they are able to effectively engage with them and play a pivotal role in their sustained rehabilitation and reintegration into society. He also directed that an appropriate incentive mechanism be devised to motivate and encourage these mentors. The Chief Secretary further stressed the importance of dovetailing government schemes and resources for providing livelihood opportunities to rehabilitated individuals, including skill development for self-employment and facilitating their return to schools and colleges to continue their education. He also

asked NIC to develop a dedicated digital portal for sustainable monitoring of the rehabilitation process and long-term stabilization of affected individuals within the social milieu. Calling for a comprehensive framework with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for every associated department and stakeholder, the Chief Secretary directed that all financial implications and expected outcomes over a specified period be worked out in detail to ensure effective implementation of the programme. Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shaileendra Kumar, emphasized categorization of patients on the basis of severity of addiction so that mentorship and rehabilitation interventions are tailored accordingly. He also suggested exploring financial support through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives as well as government funding mechanisms for successful execution of the programme. He further advised identification and utilization of psychologists available across different departments, including the Higher Education and Health Departments, to strengthen counseling and rehabilitation services.

## Satish Sharma reaffirms commitment towards balanced, efficient public transport system in J&K

**SRINAGAR, MAY 8:** Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Information Technology, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today chaired a comprehensive meeting with the representatives of transport associations and unions of Kashmir Division to discuss a wide range of issues concerning the transport sector and deliberate on measures aimed at ensuring a balanced, sustainable and people-centric transportation system across Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was attended by senior officers including Secretary, Transport; Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation; Transport Commissioner; Director Finance, Transport Department; Additional Secretary, Transport Department; Regional Transport Officer Kashmir; Joint Director Planning & Statistics, Transport Department besides representatives of various transport associations and unions from Kashmir Division. During the meeting, the representatives of transport bodies projected several demands, grievances and operational concerns being faced by the private transport sector. Detailed deliberations were held on issues relating to public



transport operations, Smart City bus services, J&K RTC operations, traffic management, transport regulations and livelihood concerns of private transport operators. The representatives expressed concern over the proposed procurement of buses for free public transport services in Jammu & Kashmir. They said that any large-scale expansion of government-operated free transport facilities should be undertaken in a balanced manner so that the livelihood and functioning of private transport operators are not adversely affected. They also highlighted the adverse impact of the free travel facility for women in Smart City buses on the sustainability and financial viability of private transport services operating across the region. Another major issue highlighted during the meeting was the operation of transport vehicles registered outside Jammu & Kashmir. The representatives demanded that strict

regulations should be enforced to restrict unauthorized operation of outside-registered vehicles within the region in accordance with the existing laws and regulations, so as to safeguard the interests of local transport operators. The transporters further demanded that Smart City buses should operate strictly within the notified municipal limits of Srinagar city and should not be allowed to operate beyond designated areas in a manner that affects the functioning of private transport services. Taking note of the concerns raised, the Minister directed that a Committee headed by the Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Corporation Limited, shall examine the issue relating to the extension of routes beyond the municipal limits of Srinagar city and submit appropriate recommendations. To streamline transport operations and avoid route conflicts, the representa-

tives also called for framing and implementation of a proper and coordinated timetable mechanism involving Smart City buses, J&K RTC buses and private transport vehicles operating in the twin cities. A detailed discussion was also held on the increasing number of e-rickshaws operating in Jammu & Kashmir. The representatives urged the Government to formulate a comprehensive policy for regulated and limited registration of e-rickshaws to ensure organized growth of the sector. They suggested adoption of the principle of "one person, one registration" and demanded that multiple registrations in the name of a single individual should not be permitted. The issue regarding enhancement of Green Tax by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) also came up for discussion during the meeting. It was decided that the matter would be examined in detail by the concerned authorities. While discussing the concerns and demands raised by the transporters, the Minister assured the participants that the Government is committed to address the genuine concerns of all stakeholders through a transparent, practical and consultative approach.

# TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan (Phase-II)

(Jammu Division)

## Cough is not the only symptom of TB

**Look out for:**

Cough with mucus

Blood in sputum

Persistent fever

Feeling weak or tired

Constant chest pain

Chronic illness

Swelling in the neck or armpits

Night sweats

Sudden physical changes

Sudden weight loss

Spot the signs Stop TB early!

## Jan-Jan Ka Rakhe Dhyaan, TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan

**Early detection is the key to a complete cure for TB**

**Healthy and nutritious diet helps in cure and prevention**

**Ensure treatment completion**

**Ensure special care for high-risk groups**

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All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Jammu City

