

# North in News

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## Rajnath warns Pak against terrorism; says India would strike back decisively if provoked again

JAIPUR, MAY 14: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday warned Pakistan against terrorism and said India would strike back decisively if provoked again. Addressing a public gathering at Nagaur's Merla town after unveiling a statue of Rajput ruler Rao Duda, Singh said Operation Sindoor had sent a strong message to Pakistan. "Perhaps Pakistan will not dare to look at India with hostility again. But I want to say that if it does, what has not happened till now will happen," he said. "From the beginning, our policy was not to provoke anyone. But



if anyone provokes us, we do not spare them either," Singh said. Referring to the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22 last year, he said the terrorists had fired at

people based on their religion. "Indian culture says there should be no division based on caste or religion. We believe in justice and humanity. But terrorists

from Pakistan shot at people after asking their religion," he said. "The entire country was angry. We gave such a strong reply that the enemy was stunned. We proved that India is no longer a country that silently suffers. If anyone attacks our citizens, we will enter their homes and respond. No border can stop us," Singh added. India has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy against terrorism, the defence minister said, citing the surgical strikes in 2016 and Balakot airstrikes in 2019 as examples of India's changing response strategy. Speaking at the event, Singh said

politics should guide society towards the right path. Politics in India had "lost its meaning and spirit" over the years, but the Narendra Modi-led government is working to restore it, he said, adding that the country's politics now is driven by values and is focused on both development and heritage. On women's empowerment, the minister said the Centre is committed to the idea, and campaigns like "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" and stricter women's safety laws are indicative of this. He reiterated the government's

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## 'We will hunt and hound you': DGP's warning to ISI-backed gangster, narco-terror networks

SRINAGAR, MAY 14: Jammu and Kashmir Police chief Nalin Prabhat on Thursday issued a stern warning to Pakistan-based gangster Shahzad Bhatti for "pumping narcotics" into India, saying he, along with his associates, will be hunted and hounded, and his civil infrastructure will be decimated. "A warning to Pakistan-based Shahzad Bhatti who is ISI's acolyte and partner in pumping narcotics into India; we will hunt and hound you and your associates, and decimate your civil infrastructure," the Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) said at a press conference here.



He said while firmly focusing on combating Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, Jammu and Kashmir Police has paid equal attention to the menace of narco-terrorism during the intensive anti-drug campaign — 'Nasha Mukti Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan' — launched by Lt

Governor Manoj Sinha on April 11. "Jammu and Kashmir Police has shown consistent performance in all parameters since 2023. In terms of attachment of property, there has been a 12-fold increase between 2023 and 2026," he said. Highlighting

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## Red Fort area blast case: NIA files 7,500 page chargesheet against 10 accused



NEW DELHI, MAY 14: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed a 7,500-page chargesheet against ten accused in the Red Fort area car bomb explosion case in which 11 people were killed, offi-

cials said on Thursday. The high-intensity Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) blast that rocked the national capital on November 10 last year had also left several injured

and caused extensive damage to property. All 10 accused, including the main perpetrator, Dr Umer Un Nabi (deceased), were linked to Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind (AGuH), an offshoot of the Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), as per the chargesheet filed before the NIA special court at Patiala House Courts here, a statement issued by the NIA said. AQIS and all its manifestations were notified as terrorist organisation by the Ministry of Home Affairs

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## LG Manoj Sinha inaugurates 'Shaurya Gatha' complex in Tangdhar, boosts battlefield tourism

SRINAGAR, MAY 14: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday inaugurated the 'Shaurya Gatha' Complex at SM Hill in the Tangdhar area of Karnah in Kupwara district, marking a major initiative towards promotion of battlefield tourism, heritage preservation and border area development in Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor said the complex stands as a tribute to the courage and supreme sacrifice of Indian soldiers who laid down their lives for the nation. He said their valour should inspire every



citizen and serve as a source of pride for future generations. The Lieutenant Governor appreciated the efforts of the Northern Command, Chinara Corps, Army

officers, soldiers, engineers, work force and local residents for completing the prestigious project within a short span of time. Highlighting the significance of

the project, Manoj Sinha said the Shaurya Gatha Complex would open new opportunities for battlefield tourism in the border region and help generate employment through homestays, local handicrafts and youth entrepreneurship. He said Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing peace, prosperity and rapid development, while illegally Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir continues to suffer from neglect and misgovernance. Reaffirming that Jammu and Kashmir was, is and will always remain an integral part of India, he said the people are experiencing a

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### BRIEF NEWS

9 Delhi Police Spl Commissioners Transferred  
**Vijay Kumar Gets Additional Charge**

JAMMU, MAY 14: Delhi Lieutenant Governor Tarunjit Singh Sandhu has ordered a major reshuffle of senior IPS officers in Delhi Police, transferring 9 Special Commissioners of Police across key operational divisions including Law and Order, Crime, Intelligence, Traffic, Vigilance and Protective Security with immediate effect. The transfers were ordered on the recommendations of the Police Establishment Board through an order issued by Principal Secretary (Home) Santosh D Vaidya. The reshuffle involves IPS officers of AGMUT cadre belonging to

(Contd on Pg 2)

Govt Orders Promotion, Confirmation, Regularization Of JMC Engineers

JAMMU, MAY 14 : The Jammu and Kashmir Government has ordered the promotion, confirmation and regularization of engineers serving in the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), officials said on Tuesday. According to an order issued by the Housing and Urban Development Department, sanction has been accorded to the promotion/confirmation/regularization of engineers following recommendations made by the UT-Level Departmental Promotion Committee of Jammu Municipal Corporation.

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## NEET paper leak: 5 remanded in CBI custody 2 more arrested

NEW DELHI, MAY 14: The CBI on Thursday secured the custody of five persons arrested in the NEET-UG exam leak case and apprehended two more suspects as officials said the agency is also looking into possible role of any insider in the National Testing Agency (NTA) in the irregularities. The court which granted CBI the custody of the five accused for seven days said the allegations revealed the role of an "organised gang" involved in leaking and circulating confidential

examination papers for monetary gain. In Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri district, a 21-year-old NEET aspirant hanged himself in his house in Gangotrinagar locality over the cancellation of the exam, his father claimed. This was Mishra's third NEET attempt, and he was highly confident of clearing the exam this time, his father said. Police said no suicide note was recovered from the room where Kritik's body was found hanging. During the

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## Xi warns Trump on Taiwan during talks on trade and Iran war

BEIJING, MAY 14: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday warned his US counterpart Donald Trump that mishandling the Taiwan issue could trigger "clashes and even conflicts" between the two countries, as the two leaders held wide-ranging talks on the Iran war, energy security and trade. After concluding the first round of talks, which lasted for around two hours, Trump invited Xi and his wife to the White House on September 24, as both leaders agreed that the Strait of Hormuz must remain open to support the free flow of energy, according to a readout of their meeting issued by the White House. "I have agreed with President Trump on a new vision of building a constructive China-US relationship of strategic stability," Xi said. Xi said the "new vision"

would provide strategic guidance for bilateral relations over the next three years and beyond, and should be welcomed by the people of both countries as well as the international community, official media reported. He, however, stressed that the Taiwan question remained the most important issue in China-US relations. If it is handled properly, the bilateral relationship "will enjoy overall stability," Xi said. Otherwise, the two countries could face "clashes and even conflicts," putting bilateral ties in great jeopardy, the Chinese leader was quoted as saying by the state-run Xinhua news agency. Later in his address at a lavish banquet hosted in honour of Trump, Xi said both sides should make relations

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## India will ensure zero casualty during heatwaves: Amit Shah

GHAZIABAD, MAY 14: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said his ministry has prepared a plan to ensure zero human casualty during heat waves in the country in the next few years with the underlying principle of being "proactive" rather than "reactive" towards disasters. The minister spoke after he presented the President's Colour to the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) at the campus of its 8th battalion here. The President's Colour flag is awarded to a military or police unit for

rendering exceptional service. The honour came to the force in the 20th year of its establishment after it was raised in 2006 as a federal contingency force to undertake relief and rescue operations during natural and man-made disasters. The President's Colour is not just a "recognition" for the excellent services of the NDRF, but also of all the state disaster response forces, the state machinery, the NCC (National Cadet Corps), NSS (National Service Scheme), 'Apda

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## 'Peace cannot be piecemeal': India flags serious concerns over West Asia crisis, unilateral sanctions



NEW DELHI, MAY 14: India on Thursday flagged grave concerns over the West Asia crisis and its impact on energy supplies and maritime stability in the Strait of Hormuz and urged BRICS nations to develop "practical ways" to navigate geopolitical upheavals as well as "unilateral coercive" sanctions. In his address at the opening day of a two-day BRICS conclave here, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar asserted, without nam-

ing specific nations, that respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity must anchor international relations, maintaining that "dialogue and diplomacy" offer the only sustainable path to conflict resolution. Jaishankar said India stands ready to contribute constructively towards de-escalation efforts and to support initiatives aimed at restoring stability while noting that "peace cannot be piecemeal" and "it is essential to uphold

international law, protect civilians, and avoid targeting public infrastructure." The external affairs minister also strongly pitched for ensuring safe and unimpeded maritime flows through the Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea, and voiced concerns over the "grave humanitarian implications" of the conflict in Gaza. The India-hosted meet assumed greater significance as the influential bloc grapples with the economic consequences of the West Asia crisis, particularly the severe energy supply disruptions, and Washington's policy on trade and tariffs. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Brazil's Mauro Vieira, Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono and South Africa's Minister for International Relations Ronald Lamola are among the senior leaders attending the meeting. "The conflict in West Asia merits particular attention. Continuing tensions,

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## HP Governor meets Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 14 MAY: The Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Kavinder Gupta, today called on the globally renowned spiritual leader and founder of the Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj, at Bengaluru. During the meeting, the Governor had a warm and cordial interaction with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj. The Governor and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj exchanged views on spiritual values, human welfare, and the promotion of peace and harmony in society. The Governor appreciated the invaluable contribution of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj in spreading the message of peace, compassion, and spirituality not only across India but throughout the world. He also discussed



the potential for the Art of Living Foundation to further extend its humanitarian, educational, and wellness initiatives in Himachal Pradesh for the benefit of the people of the state. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj expressed his

commitment to the welfare of society and the nation at large. Notably, the Governor visited the Art of Living International Centre, Bengaluru in connection with the 70th birthday celebrations of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj.

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## Rajnath...

resolve for women's reservation in the legislature. "We brought a Bill to provide 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament and state legislatures. Unfortunately, the opposition did not allow it to pass. But we remain fully committed to this resolve," he said. "There may be some delay, but we will fulfil this commitment. This Bill is not merely legislation, but a reflection of our collective willpower," he added. Praising Rajasthan's contribution to the armed forces, the minister said youths from the state shared a deep connection with the military. "Soldiers emerge from every household in Rajasthan. Just as our jawans protect the nation's borders, our government is also walking shoulder to shoulder with them through various welfare initiatives," he said. Singh said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly spoken about bringing in development but preserving heritage alongside. "Remembering our great leaders, taking pride in them, and carrying their teachings to the new generation - our government is working rapidly in this direction," he said. Singh said the unveiling of Rao Dada's statue symbolised a larger commitment to honour the forgotten heroes from history. "This unveiling is also a pledge that countless brave warriors like Rao Dada will be brought out from the pages of history and presented proudly before the people," he said, adding that the Rajput king had taught society that respect for women was not merely a slogan but "the soul of civilisation". Chief Minister Bhupendra Kumar Patel and Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat also addressed the programme.

## 'We will...'

achievements, Prabhat said Jammu and Kashmir Police has been ranked third nationally in 2025 with regard to property attachments. "There have been 240 PIT-NDPS detentions, for which Jammu and Kashmir Police has been ranked number one in the country in 2025," he added. On the anti-narcotics drive, the DGP said there has been nearly a seven-fold increase in the number of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act cases registered by the police. "As many as 806 persons have been arrested in 724 cases. The significant arrests made in this regard are Gulzar Ahmad alias Lau Gujjar, who was wanted in 28 cases. He has been recently arrested by Jammu Police. Similarly, Avneet Singh, alias Nagi, who was wanted in 17 cases in Jammu province, has also been apprehended recently," Prabhat said.

## Red Fort...

in June 2018. NIA, which has unraveled a major Jehadi conspiracy through detailed scientific and forensic investigation, had found the accused, some of whom were radicalised medical professionals, to have been inspired by AQIS/AGuH ideology to carry out the deadly attack, an official statement said. The chargesheet has been filed under relevant sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Explosive Substances Act 1908, Arms Act 1959, and Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act 1984, it said. Charges against Pulwama-based Dr Umer Un Nabi (deceased), an ex Assistant Professor of Medicine at Al-Falahi University in Fardabad (Haryana), have been proposed to be abated, the statement said.

Apart from Dr Nabi, others named in the chargesheet are Aamir Rashid Mir, Jasr Bilal Wani, Dr Muzamil Shakkeel, Dr Adeel Ahmed Rather, Dr Shaheen Saeed, Mufti Irfan Ahmad Wagay, Soyab, Dr Bilal Naseer Malla and Yasir Ahmad Dar, the probe agency said.

## LG Manoj...

renewed sense of confidence and progress. The Lieutenant Governor reiterated the administration's commitment towards the development of border areas and said initiatives under the Bharat Rannbhoomi Darshan programme would strengthen economic growth in Tangdhar-Karnah and showcase the defence heritage and culture of the region. He further informed that seven villages in Tangdhar-Karnah have been included under the Vibrant Village Programme to ensure improved infrastructure, better livelihood opportunities and enhanced quality of life for the local population. Speaking on connectivity projects, Manoj Sinha said the proposed Sadhna Tunnel would significantly improve security, connectivity and economic activity in the region by ensuring all-weather access and facilitating trade, healthcare, education and disaster response. Among those present on the occasion were Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma, Lieutenant General Balbir Singh, Ashish Chandra Verma, Anshul Garg, senior Army officers, civil administration officials, police and security personnel.

## NEET...

day, protests continued at several parts of the country demanding immediate scrapping of the NTA and the dismissal of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. In Ahmedabad, Pradhan was greeted with black flags by members of the Congress-affiliated National Students Union of India (NSUI) when he arrived at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) to chair a coordination forum meeting of IIMs. The protesters also demanded his resignation over the NEET-UG 2026 examination paper leak case. The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA) wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding strict action against those involved in the paper leak and seeking a shift to a computer-based format for the medical entrance test. The NEET UG 2026 exam for admissions in undergraduate medical courses held on May 3 was cancelled by the NTA

on Tuesday amid allegations of paper leak. The cancellation of the exam has left over 22 lakh medical aspirants in uncertainty. Addressing reporters here, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra said the government has taken up the NEET paper leak case with "great seriousness and sensitivity" and assured students and parents of strict action against all those involved. "No one will be spared, especially this exam mafia that is attempting to toy with the future of our children. Absolutely no one will be spared," he asserted. Calling the issue "sensitive and distressing", Patra said it concerns not only 22 lakh students, but also the sentiments of their parents. The CBI, which is probing the case, has arrested two more persons in connection with the paper leak. Dhananjay Lokhande was arrested from Ahilyanagar and Manisha Wahgmare from Pune. The role of several officers of the NTA and other organisations having access to the printing press where NEET UG papers were printed have come under the scanner, officials said. The CBI is focussing on identifying the source of the leak, they said. According to the CBI investigation so far, the involvement of public servants in the leak could not be ruled out. During the day, Special CBI Judge Ajay Gupta sent the five persons arrested earlier to seven days' CBI custody. Gupta was hearing a CBI plea to interrogate all the five accused for seven more days in the case to unearth the whole conspiracy. The five arrested - Shubham Khairnar from Nashik, Mangilal Biwal, Vikas Biwal and Dinesh Biwal from Jaipur, and Yash Yadav from Gungram - were taken into custody by the agency after a transit remand was secured from different states. In a remand plea, the agency alleged that the exam was compromised after questions were circulated in PDF format through WhatsApp and Telegram before the exam. An FIR was registered on May 12 on a complaint by Department of Higher Education (NTA Division) director Varun Bhardwaj. Special Public Prosecutor VK Pathak and Special Public Prosecutor Neetu Singh informed the court that an inquiry by Rajasthan's Special Operations Group (SOG) had reportedly confirmed the authenticity of some leaked questions, following which the government cancelled the exam. In April 2026, one Shubham of Nashik informed Yash Yadav that Mangilal had approached him for arranging leaked NEET UG 2026 question papers before the examination for his younger son for 10-12 lakhs, Pathak said. The agency claimed that on April 29, Yash Yadav shared the leaked Physics, Chemistry and Biology question papers in PDF format through Telegram. According to the CBI, Mangilal allegedly received the leaked papers from Yadav as part of a Rs 10 lakh deal and distributed printed copies to NEET aspirants, including his son Aman Biwal, and his relatives and acquaintances. The agency also alleged that Vikash Biwal contacted several candidates and shared their details with Yadav through WhatsApp and Instagram for the circulation of leaked papers. On April 29, 2026, Shubham allegedly informed Yash Yadav that he would provide leaked question papers of Physics, Chemistry and Biology papers, which will have approximately 500-600 questions capable of securing around very good marks, which can ensure admission in reputed medical colleges, it said. The CBI said incriminating chats, leaked question papers, and other digital evidence were recovered from the mobile phones of the accused, while some deleted data would require forensic examination. Seeking custodial interrogation, the agency told the court that police custody was necessary to identify other accused, trace the source of the leak, analyse digital and financial trails, recover evidence and probe the possible involvement of NTA officials. "The purpose of conducting investigation, the arrested accused persons are required to be taken under police custody for custodial interrogation to prevent further commission of similar offences involving leakage of question papers, to identify and apprehend other co-accused persons involved in the offence," the CBI said in a remand copy.

## Xi warns...

work. "We must make it work, and never mess it up," Xi said, adding that both China and the US stand to gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation. "Our two countries should be partners rather than rivals," he added. China regards Taiwan as a renegade province that must be reunified with the mainland. It opposes formal diplomatic ties between Taipei and countries that recognise Beijing. The US, however, has maintained ties with Taiwan and continues supplying arms to the island. In his remarks at the banquet, Trump said the two sides had positive and constructive conversations. Noting that the US-China relationship is the most consequential bilateral relationship in the world, Trump said the two countries should strengthen cooperation to create a better future for the world, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The building of a constructive China-US relationship of strategic stability should not be a mere slogan, but concrete action taken by both sides toward the same goal, he added. China-US economic ties are mutually beneficial and win-win in nature, Xi said. "Where disagreements and frictions exist, equal-footed consultation is the only right choice," he said. On the trade talks, Xi said that the economic and trade teams of the two countries produced "generally balanced and positive outcomes" in the latest round of bilateral trade talks. Ahead of Trump's arrival, Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng and US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent completed the final round of trade negotiations in South Korea on Wednesday, details of which are not known. "This is good news for the people of the two countries and the world," Xi said, calling on the two sides to sustain the good momentum that they have worked hard to create. Noting that China will only open its door wider, Xi said American companies are deeply involved in China's reform and opening up, and the US side is welcome to enhance mutually beneficial cooperation. "The two sides should implement the important consensus we have reached, and make better use of communication

channels in the political, diplomatic and military-to-military fields," Xi said. The two countries should also expand exchanges and cooperation in areas such as the economy and trade, health, agriculture, tourism, people-to-people ties and law enforcement, he added. Trump termed his meeting with Xi as the "biggest summit ever" to discuss a wide range of issues, including the Iran war and bilateral trade frictions. This is the first visit to China by a US president in nine years. Trump himself was the last US president to visit China in 2017. "When there were difficulties, we worked it out. We're going to have a fantastic future together," Trump said. Trump, who is on a three-day state visit to China, repeatedly called Xi a great leader. Xi said that they should help each other succeed and prosper together, and find the right way for major countries to get along well. Accompanying Trump on his trip to China are some of America's top business leaders, such as Nvidia's Jensen Huang, Tim Cook of Apple, Elon Musk of Tesla and SpaceX, and Larry Fink of BlackRock. Xi, who earlier welcomed Trump with a ceremonial guard of honour, said he expects 2026 to be a "historic, landmark year" that opens up a new chapter in China-US relations. China and the US have more common interests than differences, Xi said in his opening remarks. About China-US trade frictions, he said, "There is no winner in a trade war." Trump's visit comes amid growing economic and geopolitical uncertainties arising from conflicts in West Asia and the subsequent global energy shock that has taken a toll, particularly in Asia. According to a White House statement, Trump and Xi discussed expanding economic cooperation, keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. The two sides also discussed ways to enhance economic cooperation, including expanding market access for American businesses in China and increasing Chinese investment in US industries, it said. "The two sides agreed that the Strait of Hormuz must remain open to support the free flow of energy," the White House said. However, Beijing has not made any comment to back the US claims. Xi also "made clear China's opposition to the militarisation of the Strait and any effort to charge a toll for its use," it said. Xi expressed interest in purchasing more American oil to reduce China's dependence on the Strait in the future, according to the report. Iran shut down the Strait of Hormuz, a waterway between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, following the launch of the US-Israeli attacks on February 28. Iran has occasionally allowed ships of China, its strategic ally, which has been buying 90 per cent of Iranian oil, disregarding the US sanctions. China has not imported US oil since May 2025 after imposing 20% tariffs during the trade war. "Both countries agreed that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon," the White House said. In an interview with NBC News, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Trump had raised the Iran issue during talks with Xi but had not sought Beijing's assistance. "We're not asking for China's help. We don't need their help." Rubio said China agreed that Iran should not possess nuclear weapons. He also said that China using force in Taiwan would be "very disruptive for the world". After talks, Xi accompanied Trump on a tour of the Temple of Heaven.

## India will...

Seva Mitras' (volunteers) among others, Shah said. He added that the NDRF has earned the "admiration and trust" of the people of the country and even abroad through its operations. The minister said the aim of the Modi government was to ensure "zero casualty and minimum property damage" during tragedies and calamities, including cyclones, earthquakes and floods. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has prepared a plan to better combat the "serious challenge" of heat waves in the country and we will be able to ensure "zero casualty" in this context over the next few years, Shah said. Our approach and policy has been "proactive" against disasters rather than being just "reactive", he said. Shah said India has made its name as a "global leader" in disaster management and being the "first responder" during calamities as he asked the NDRF to prepare itself in the face of global warming and climate change. The NDRF has 16 operational battalions deployed across the country with an overall strength of about 18,000 personnel. Speaking during the event, NDRF Director General (DG) Piyush Anand said the force has undertaken more than 12,000 operations since its creation.

## 'Peace cannot...'

risks to maritime traffic, and disruptions to energy infrastructure highlight the fragility of the situation," Jaishankar said. The external affairs minister said safe and unimpeded maritime flows through international waterways, including the Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea, remain vital for global economic well-being. "The wider region also gives rise to serious concern. The conflict in Gaza has grave humanitarian implications. A sustained ceasefire, humanitarian access, and a credible pathway towards a durable and peaceful resolution remain essential. India supports a two-state solution where the Palestine issue is concerned," he said. Jaishankar also made a mention of challenges facing Lebanon and Syria as well as prevailing situation in Sudan, Yemen and Libya while calling for sustained international engagement and coordinated diplomatic efforts to address them. "Taken together, they underline a clear reality: stability cannot be selective, and peace cannot be piecemeal. It is essential to uphold international law, protect civilians, and avoid targeting public infrastructure." "India stands ready to contribute constructively to de-escalation efforts and to

support initiatives aimed at restoring stability," Jaishankar said.

Without naming any country, he also underlined the need for addressing what he called "the increasing resort to unilateral coercive measures and sanctions inconsistent with international law and the UN Charter." "Such measures disproportionately affect developing countries. These unjustifiable measures cannot substitute dialogue, nor can pressure replace diplomacy," he said. "The external affairs minister also described terrorism as a "continuing threat" and that there can be no justification for terrorism in any form.

"Cross-border terrorism violates the basic principles of international relations. Zero tolerance must remain an uncompromising and universal norm," he said. Jaishankar noted that technological advancements are reshaping the global landscape and there is a need to bridge the digital divide.

"While they offer opportunities, they also raise concerns relating to trust, transparency, and equitable access," he said.

"Climate change continues to be a defining challenge. Climate action must go hand in hand with climate justice, with credible commitments, adequate financing, and accessible support," he said.

The external affairs minister also pitched for reform of the UN Security Council. "Even as challenges mount, the multilateral system unfortunately weakens. The state of the United Nations, which is at its core, is particularly worrisome. With each passing day, the case for reformed multilateralism only gets stronger."

"This includes the reform of the UN Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. Continued delay comes at a high cost," he said. "The message from our times is clear: cooperation is essential, dialogue is necessary, and reform is overdue. We must work together to shape a more stable, equitable, and inclusive international order," he said.

Jaishankar said India remains committed to engaging constructively with all partners in advancing these objectives. India, as the chair of the BRICS, is hosting the conclave of the foreign ministers ahead of the annual summit of the grouping in September.

BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, with Indonesia joining in 2025.

It has emerged as an influential grouping as it brings together 11 major emerging economies of the world, representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population, around 40 per cent of the global GDP and around 26 per cent of the global trade.

The BRICS meeting will be chaired by Jaishankar.

## 9 Delhi...

the 1994 to 1998 batches. According to the order, Neeraj Thakur, a 1994 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer serving as Special Commissioner of Police, Traffic Division, has been transferred and posted as Special Commissioner of Police, Law and Order Zone-II. Devesh Chandra Srivastava, a 1995 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer who was heading the Crime Division with additional charge of Perception Management and Media Cell Division, has been posted as Special Commissioner of Police, Law and Order Zone-I. Hargobinder Singh Dhaliwal, a 1997 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer, has been posted as Special Commissioner of Police, Crime Division, with additional charge of Perception Management, Media Cell and Legal Division. Manish Kumar Agarwal, a 1996 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer serving in the Intelligence Division with additional charge of Public Transport Safety Division, has been shifted as Special Commissioner of Police, Traffic Division. K Jagadeesan, a 1998 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer who was serving in the Protective Security Division with additional charge of Managing Director, Delhi Police Housing Corporation Limited (DPHCL), has been posted as Special Commissioner of Police, Intelligence Division. He will continue to hold additional charge of MD/DPHC. Ajay Chaudhry, a 1996 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer serving in the Vigilance Division with additional charge of SPUWAC, has been transferred as Special Commissioner of Police, Protective Security Division. David Lalrinsanga, a 1995 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer serving in the Operations Division handling PCR and Communication, has been given additional charge of SPUWAC along with SPUNER. Atul Katiyar, a 1997 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer serving in the Welfare Division with additional charge of Licensing and Legal Division, has been posted as Special Commissioner of Police, Vigilance Division while retaining additional charge of Welfare and Licensing. Vijay Kumar, also a 1997 batch AGMUT cadre IPS officer serving in the Armed Police Division, has been assigned additional charge of the Public Transport Safety Division. Vijay Kumar had earlier served as Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Govt Orders...

As per the order, Er. Firdous Ahmad Qazi has been promoted as Executive Engineer with effect from June 30, 2010, and further confirmed/promoted as Superintending Engineer/Joint Commissioner (Works) with effect from July 12, 2024. Similarly, Er. Janak Singh has been promoted as Executive Engineer with effect from July 12, 2024. The order was issued by Commissioner/Secretary to Government, Housing and Urban Development Department, Mandep Kaur (IAS).



## DC Kishtwar chairs introductory meeting of DVOs with SSP ACB DKR

'Integrity, Transparency & Accountability: Three Pillars of Good Governance'

KISHTWAR, MAY 14: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired an introductory meeting of nominated District Vigilance Officers (DVOs) (DDOs) with the new SSP Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Doda-Kishtwar Range Vipan Chandran at the DC Office Complex. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized that the primary objective of the interaction was to strengthen accessibility, coordination and cooperation between the district administration and the Anti-Corruption Bureau. He urged the District Vigilance Officers, including DDOs, District and Sectoral Officers to



actively raise and report field-level issues and governance-related concerns for timely redressal. Highlighting the importance of good governance, the DC stated that integrity, transparency and accountability are the three fundamental pillars of effective

administration. He said that the Vigilance Organisation has an important role in identifying gaps in governance, which can be effectively bridged through proactive vigilance by the DVOs. The DC stressed the need for preventive vigilance

through awareness and timely reporting of any irregularities, unnecessary demands, procedural violations, or lapses in governance. He directed all officers to strictly adhere to the General Financial Rules (GFRs) and ensure transparency in official func-

tioning. He further stated that any matter involving lack of adherence to rules, criminal intent, misuse of official position, or other suspicious activities should be immediately brought to the notice of the SSP ACB DKR. He emphasized that strict and exemplary punishment must be ensured in proven cases so as to deter others from indulging in corrupt practices. SSP ACB interacted with the officers and assured full cooperation from the Anti-Corruption Bureau in addressing complaints and strengthening vigilance mechanisms in the district.

## MVD Reasi imposes Rs 1.47 crore fine for Traffic Violations in 1 year

REASI, MAY 14: In a major enforcement action aimed at strengthening road safety and curbing traffic violations, the Motor Vehicles Department Reasi has taken strict action against violators across the district over the past year. Addressing a press conference, ARTO Nasir Khan shared detailed figures related to enforcement activities carried out from April 1, 2025 to the end of April 2026. According to the data released by the department, as many as 328 Driving Licences (DLs), 641 Registration Certificates

(RCs) and 22 Route Permits (RPs) were suspended for various violations under the Motor Vehicles Act. During the same period, the department issued 3,519 e-challans and imposed fines amounting to nearly Rs 1.47 crore. Highlighting the administration's intensified action against drug abuse and illegal activities, the ARTO informed that 36 Driving Licences and 33 Registration Certificates were also suspended for involvement in NDPS cases. The ARTO said the enforcement drive is part

of the government's broader initiative to ensure safer roads, disciplined driving and zero tolerance towards violations linked to public safety and drug abuse. He emphasized that the department will continue its strict monitoring and enforcement measures in coordination with other agencies to maintain law and order on roads. He also appealed to the public, especially motorists and transport operators, to strictly adhere to traffic regulations and contribute towards building a safer and responsible transport system in the district.

## Tailoring course for Women commences at SBI RSETI Ramban; DC inaugurates

RAMBAN, MAY 14: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan today inaugurated the Women's Tailor Training Programme here at SBI RSETI. The event was attended by Director RSETI S. Harvinder Singh, Tehsildar Deep Kumar, RSETI staff members, trainees and others. The training course has been designed to equip women trainees with modern tailoring skills, enabling them to become self-reliant and financially independent through self-employment opportunities. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated SBI RSETI for promoting entrepreneurship among rural youth and women. He emphasised the importance of skill-based training programmes in



strengthening the economic condition of women and encouraging them to start their own ventures. He further motivated the trainees to take maximum benefit from the training and effectively utilise the acquired skills for sustainable income generation. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the training facilities being provided at the institute. He assured full support from the dis-

trict administration for the initiatives aimed at the socio-economic uplift of the younger generation. He highlighted that empowering women through skill development is essential for building a self-reliant society. Speaking on the occasion, Director SBI RSETI S. Harvinder Singh highlighted the role of the institute in providing free skill development training programmes.

## Historic MSP revision will empower "Annadatas" across nation: Baldev

Jammu, May 14:

Jammu and Kashmir BJP General Secretary & former Deputy Mayor Baldev Singh Billawaria has described the decision of the Union Cabinet to enhance the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for 14 Kharif crops for the 2026-27 marketing season, as a historic and visionary move of the Modi government that will economically empower the "Annadatas" across nation. In a statement issued here today, Baldev said that the Narendra Modi-led government has once again reaffirmed its unwavering commitment towards the welfare and prosperity of farmers by announcing substantial increases in MSPs for major Kharif crops. He said the decision reflects the government's farmer-centric policies and its determination to ensure better returns for agricultural produce.



Baldev Singh Billawaria said that the enhancement in MSPs will provide much-needed financial security to farmers and strengthen the rural economy. He particularly appreciated the government's focus on

pulses and oilseeds, saying that it will encourage crop diversification and reduce dependence on imports while promoting self-reliance in agriculture. He noted that the government has ensured MSPs at least 1.5 times the average cost of production, which demonstrates its sensitivity towards the rising input costs faced by farmers. He added that the estimated payout of nearly Rs 2,60 lakh crore to farmers will serve as a major economic boost for the agriculture sector and rural households. Baldev highlighted that sunflower seed received the highest increase of Rs 622 per quintal, while cotton, sesamum and nigerseed also witnessed significant hikes. He further said that the increase in MSP for pulses would benefit a large number of farmers engaged in cultivation across different regions of the country. Praising

the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Baldev said that several revolutionary steps have been taken in recent years to strengthen the agriculture sector and improve the socio-economic condition of farmers. He added that schemes related to irrigation, crop insurance, direct benefit transfer and procurement support have already transformed the lives of millions of farmers. Baldev said that the latest MSP revision will boost farmers' confidence, increase agricultural productivity and contribute significantly towards achieving the goal of a prosperous and self-reliant India. He expressed hope that the farming community would greatly benefit from the decision and continue contributing towards strengthening the nation's economy and food security.

## Mission Shakti Jammu felicitates meritorious Girl students at PM Shri GHSS Khanna Chhargal

JAMMU, MAY 14: Mission Shakti District Hub for Empowerment of Women Jammu-Department of Social Welfare J&K, organised a felicitation programme to honour meritorious girl students of PM Shri Government Higher Secondary School- Khanna Chhargal. The felicitation was held under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao to celebrate the exemplary academic achievements of the students. The initiative aimed to motivate young minds and encourage students to strive for greater accomplishments while embracing social responsibility. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, who showcased their creativity, confidence and awareness through colourful cultural performances and thought-



provoking debates reflecting the spirit of empowerment and education. Speaking on the occasion, District Mission Coordinator Mission Shakti Jammu Shagun Manchanda sensitised students and staff mem-

bers about the vision and objectives of Mission Shakti. She highlighted the importance of women empowerment, safety, social awareness and equal opportunities, while urging students to become responsible citizens committed

towards building a progressive and inclusive society. The programme was conducted under the guidance of Principal Anita Sharma and Vice Principal Renu Sharma. Khushboo Kapte, Gender Specialist, Mission Shakti and staff members were also present on the occasion. Faculty members and students appreciated the initiative of Mission Shakti for recognising academic talent and encouraging students towards educational excellence. The programme concluded on an inspiring note with Mission Shakti felicitating meritorious girl students of Classes 10th, 11th and 12th with educational kits as a token of encouragement and motivation for their future aspirations.

## Reasi admin hosts training programme on Census 2027

REASI, MAY 14: District Administration Reasi today organised an awareness-cum-training programme on Census 2027 and the forthcoming self-enumeration process here at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex. The programme was aimed at sensitising officers and field functionaries regarding various aspects of Census 2027, with special focus on the online self-enumeration process, public outreach and coordinated implementation of census-related activities across the district. Deputy Commissioner Kumar Abhishek interacted with the trainers and participants and underscored the significance of ensuring comprehensive public awareness for the successful conduct of Census 2027. He emphasised that effective dissemination of information among the general public is essential for achieving maximum participation in the online self-enumeration process. The Deputy Commissioner directed the officers and trainers to ensure extensive awareness

generation at the grassroots level so that every household is properly informed about the self-enumeration facility and its procedures. He stressed to reach each and every household during the enumeration process. Highlighting the importance of inter-departmental coordination, the Deputy Commissioner instructed all departments and field-level functionaries to work in close coordination and maintain regular communication for timely and efficient implementation of Census 2027 activities in the district. During the programme, the Master Trainer delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation on various components of Census 2027 and provided comprehensive information regarding the online self-enumeration process, its objectives, operational framework and implementation procedures. The participants were also briefed about their roles and responsibilities in facilitating accurate data collection and ensuring effective execution of the census exercise.

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## DC reviews availability of essential drugs, diagnostics; assesses status of ATF facility at GMC Udhampur



UDHAMPUR, MAY 14: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Minga Sharma today convened a meeting with the district and block-level teams constituted for independent verification of the availability of essential drugs and diagnostic facilities across public health institutions, besides reviewing the status of the ATF facility at Government Medical College Udhampur.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh, Assistant Commissioner Development Om Parkash; Chief Medical Officer, Block Medical Officers and other concerned officers. The Chief Medical Officer briefed the Deputy Commissioner about the availability of essential medicines and diagnostic

services in public health facilities across the district, besides presenting the latest status of the ATF facility at GMC Udhampur. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to ensure effective counselling of drug addicts at the block level and intensify awareness campaigns highlighting the ill effects of substance abuse. He instructed the Block Medical Officers to identify drug addicts, sensitize them about treatment facilities and conduct regular counselling sessions to encourage rehabilitation and recovery. Emphasizing a coordinated approach to tackle drug abuse, the DC stressed the need for sustained public awareness and community participation to build a healthier and drug-free society.

## ADC chairs meeting to formulate roadmap for decongestion of Bhadrawah Town

BHADERWAH, MAY 14: Additional Deputy Commissioner Sunil Kumar Bhuiyal today chaired a meeting in his office chamber to formulate a comprehensive roadmap and suggest alternate measures for decongestion of Bhadrawah town. The meeting was attended by local Tehsildar, ARTO, SHO and Sector Officer Traffic. Representatives from transport and trade bodies also participated in the meeting, including President Bopar Mandal, President Bus Union, President Matador Union, President E-Rickshaw Union and President Sumo Association. The meeting held detailed discussions regarding traffic management, regulation of public transport and measures to reduce congestion in the main market areas of the town. The officers and stakeholders later conducted a joint inspection round from Seri Bazar to Gupt Ganga Road, Seri Bazar to Fire and Emergency Office besides Jamia Masjid Road and the Old Bus Stand area to assess traffic bottlenecks and identify suitable locations for smooth vehicular movement. The ADC directed the Municipal Committee to launch an awareness programme regarding decongestion measures and to ensure proper parking of vehicles within the town limits. The participants assured full cooperation with the administration in implementing the proposed measures for better traffic management and maintaining smooth movement in Bhadrawah town.

## DC Rajouri inspects Drug De-Addiction Centre, Interacts with patients

RAJOURI, MAY 14: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today visited the Drug De-Addiction Centre in Rajouri and interacted with the patients undergoing treatment and rehabilitation there. The Deputy Commissioner took stock of the facilities and services being provided at the centre. He held a detailed interaction with the patients to understand their experiences and progress. They shared their feedback and expressed satisfaction over the facilities, care and counselling being provided at the centre. He advised them to stay committed towards recovery and become active participants in nation-building activities. He also encouraged them to adopt a positive



lifestyle and work towards a brighter future. The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the creative items and decorative materials prepared by the clients at the centre and appreciated their talent, creativity and dedication. He said such activities play an important role in boosting confidence, promoting positivity and helping individuals channel their energy towards constructive and productive pursuits during the rehabilitation process. The concerned officials briefed the Deputy Commissioner about the activities and rehabilitation measures being undertaken for the recovery and reintegration of the affected individuals into society.

## Badrinath Sharma felicitated on appointment as JKAP Kissan Wing President for J&K UT

Jammu, May 14: Former Sarpanch Badrinath Sharma was today accorded a warm felicitation at the Gandhi Nagar office of Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party after being appointed President of the party's Kissan Wing for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The appointment was made on the directions of party President Altaf Ahmad Bukhari. The felicitation programme was led by Provincial President Manjit Singh in the presence of Senior Vice President Provincial and former MLA Faqir Nath along with several senior leaders and office bearers of the party.

Speaking on the occasion, Manjit Singh congratulated Badrinath Sharma on his new responsibility and expressed confidence that his long association with public service and grassroots leadership would greatly strengthen the party's outreach among farmers and rural communities across Jammu and Kashmir. He stated that the appointment reflects the party leadership's commitment towards empowering experienced

**Provincial President Manjit Singh praises Altaf Bukhari's politics of truth, honesty and public service; leaders reaffirm commitment to farmers' welfare and grassroots issues**



and dedicated workers who remain connected with the common masses and understand the real issues being faced by people in villages and border areas.

In his address, Manjit Singh particularly highlighted the leadership qualities and political vision of Altaf Ahmad Bukhari, stating that he has always stood for the politics of truth, honesty, sincerity and transparent public service. He said that unlike traditional politics

based on hollow promises, Altaf Bukhari has consistently raised public issues with seriousness and courage while working tirelessly for the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He added that the Apni Party leadership has continuously focused on addressing the concerns of farmers, unemployed youth, traders, daily wagers and other neglected sections of society, thereby earning the trust and respect of the common people.

Former MLA and Senior Vice President Provincial Faqir Nath also congratulated Badrinath Sharma, saying that strengthening the Kissan Wing would further enhance the party's efforts to highlight the problems of farmers and agriculturists. He stressed the need for collective efforts to ensure that the voices of rural communities are effectively represented and their genuine demands are taken up before the government. He also appreciated the dedication of party workers who continue to work at the grassroots level for public welfare.

Expressing gratitude to the party leadership, Badrinath Sharma thanked Altaf Ahmad Bukhari, Manjit Singh and other senior leaders for reposing faith in him and assigning him this important responsibility. He assured that he would work with full dedication and sincerity to strengthen the party at the grassroots level and raise the issues concerning farmers and rural populations across the Union Territory.

## Shiv Sena (UBT) Slams RSS Remarks on Pakistan Talks, Questions BJP's Silence

Jammu, May 14: The Jammu & Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) launched a sharp attack on the BJP-led Centre following RSS General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale's remarks advocating dialogue with Pakistan and the subsequent support extended by PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti. Party's J&K president Manish Sahni termed it an "ideological bonhomie" and said such statements mock national security, the sacrifices of martyrs, and the emotions of families affected by terrorism.

Sahni said the history of talks with Pakistan has repeatedly resulted in betrayal, terror, and bloodshed for India. "India extended the hand of friendship several times, but every time the response came in the form of bullets, terror attacks, and coffins



of martyrs. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee undertook the Lahore bus journey, but India got the Kargil War in return. Prime Minister Narendra Modi broke protocol to visit Pakistan in a gesture of goodwill, yet the country later witnessed terror attacks like Pathankot, Uri, and Pulwama," he said.

Calling Pakistan "a crooked tail that can never be straightened," Sahni said no amount of dialogue would change its policy

promoting terrorism and betraying India.

Sahni further said it was unfortunate that while the nation is remembering the victims of the Palgham attack and the brave martyrs of "Operation Sindoor," voices favouring talks with Pakistan are emerging from the top ranks of the RSS. He alleged that Mehbooba Mufti backing the statement shows alignment between RSS and PDP thinking.

## J&K Players at Risk Due to Unrecognised Sports Associations: Dr Shazad



Jammu, 14/May/2026: The Jammu & Kashmir Border Area Development Conference (JK-BADC), a registered organisation working for the welfare of border residents and tribal communities of J&K, has expressed serious concern over sports bodies in J&K that are functioning without recognition from the J&K Sports Council and the harm this is causing to players and sports persons.

Dr. Shazad Ahmed Malik, Chairman BADC and former Vice Chancellor, said that a number of sports associations in J&K are holding selection trials, issuing certificates and sending teams to state, inter-state and national competitions without holding elections or getting formal recognition from the J&K Sports Council. He said this is putting the careers of young players at serious risk. The BADC chairman said these certificates issued by unrecognised bodies are not more than a piece of paper - without approval, recognition by the J & K sports council. Dr Shazad gave the example of a swimming association in J&K which as of today either does not have recognition from the J&K Sports Council or whose recognition has been withheld. Despite this the association is holding player trials and taking swimmers to a national level event. He said the J&K Sports Council and the Secretary Sports Department should look into the matter without delay.

## Development should reach the last men standing in the queue : Jugal Kishore MP

SAMBA, MAY 14: Hon'ble Member of Parliament Jugalkishore Sharma today chaired the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meeting at the Conference Hall of District Administrative Complex, Nandani Hills, Samba to review the progress of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) being implemented in the district. The meeting was attended by MLA Samba Surjeet Singh Sialthia, MLA Ramgarh Dr. Desinder Kumar Manyal, MLA Vijaypur Chander Parkash Ganga, District Development Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan, IAS, Additional Deputy Commissioner Samba, nominated members of the DISHA Committee, besides district and sectoral officers of various departments. At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner gave a detailed

**MP Jugal Kishore Sharma Chairs DISHA Meeting at Samba, Reviews Progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes & other development & welfare schemes**



PowerPoint presentation highlighting the achievements and progress recorded under different Centrally Sponsored Schemes, besides updating the chair about the status of various iconic and developmental projects being executed by different departments and agencies in the district. The District Development

Commissioner also presented comprehensive details regarding the implementation of different schemes and responded to the observations and queries raised by the Hon'ble Members during the meeting. Detailed discussions were held on Rural Development Schemes including IWMP, Urban Development Schemes, Roads &

Buildings, PMGSY, Ayushman Bharat, Jal Jeevan Mission, Power Development Schemes, Social Security Schemes, PM-KISAN, Financial Inclusion Schemes and other flagship programmes being implemented in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner apprised the chair that a number of works taken up under different Centrally Sponsored Schemes have already been completed, while several others are at different stages of execution.

Speaking on the occasion, the Hon'ble Member Parliament stressed upon the officers to work with dedication, sincerity and coordination to ensure timely achievement of targets during the current financial year. He appreciated the efforts of the district administration in implementing various welfare and developmental schemes in the district.

## May Every Moment of Human Life Be Dedicated to Humanity and Devotion "Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj"

Nowshera 14 May 2026 Amidst a divine atmosphere imbued with faith, devotion, and spiritual consciousness, the Sant Nirankari Mission organized a soulful Sant Samagran (spiritual conflagration) at the Sant Nirankari Spiritual Centre, Samalkha. Held in loving remembrance of the visionary Baba Hardev Singh Ji, the event took place in the divine presence of the revered Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj and Nirankari Rajpita Ramit Ji. During this gathering, hundreds of thousands of devotees experienced spiritual peace, joy, and divine inspiration as they received the holy Darshan (sacred sight) of the Satguru and listened to her nectar-like discourses. On this auspicious occasion, in her words of blessing, Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj stated that Baba Ji's entire life served as a divine exemplar of humanity, selfless service, and loving devotion. She inspired everyone to ensure that every single moment of



human life becomes meaningful—that every instant bears witness to humanity, compassion, and human values. Baba Ji always taught that every individual should cultivate human virtues within themselves and, while taking refuge in the Formless One (Nirankar), lead a meaningful and purposeful life. Satguru Mata Ji remarked that if sorrow, pain, or struggle exists in anyone's life, our duty is not to exacerbate it, but rather to alleviate

it through love, sensitivity, and cooperation. Life should be lived in a manner that strengthens the spirit of love and dedication within relationships. This, she noted, constitutes the essence of Baba Ji's teachings and the true nature of humanity. Satguru Mata Ji explained that once Brahmyang (God-realization) is attained, life is no longer confined to personal boundaries; instead, it becomes a medium for the service, welfare,

and upliftment of all humanity. This service, she emphasized, transcends mere showmanship and is imbued with love, humility, and selflessness; conversely, true devotion moves beyond mere words to be reflected in one's conduct, thoughts, and actions.

Citing the dedicated life of the immortal Saint Avneet Ji, Satguru Mata Ji affirmed that true surrender is that in which the spirit of service is not merely a concept in one's thoughts, but is clearly evident in one's actual conduct and priorities. By prioritizing Sangat (holy congregation), Seva (selfless service), and Bhakti (devotion) alongside the responsibilities of domestic life, he inspired others to realize that a life of complete dedication and unwavering faith can indeed be lived while fully participating in family and social life. In conclusion, Satguru Mata Ji bestowed her blessings, wishing that every individual would make Seva Sumiran.

## AIBOC urges Prime Minister for immediate implementation of Five-Day Work Week in banking industry

Jammu, May 14: All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), the largest organisation representing bank officers across the country, has written to Prime Minister seeking his urgent intervention for immediate implementation of a Five-Day Work Week in the banking industry. In its letter AIBOC welcomed the Prime Minister's recent call for austerity, fuel conservation, reduction in avoidable travel and responsible use of national resources. The Confederation submitted that implementation of a Five-Day Work Week in banks would be a practical and nationally relevant measure in furtherance of these objectives. AIBOC stated that banking services today are no longer confined to branch counters. With UPI, internet banking, mobile banking, ATMs, cash deposit machines, business correspondents, call centres and other digital channels functioning on a 24x7 basis, most routine banking services remain available to citizens even on holidays. The Confederation emphasised that one additional weekly closure of physical branch operations would reduce commuting by lakhs of bank officers, employees and customers, thereby saving fuel, reducing traffic congestion, lowering electricity usage and decreasing the carbon footprint of the

banking sector. It further pointed out that thousands of bank branches, particularly in semi-urban, rural, remote and power-deficient areas, depend on generator sets, and one additional weekly closure would save significant quantities of diesel over time.

AIBOC also highlighted that several major institutions, including Central Government offices, Reserve Bank of India, LIC, GIC and financial markets, already function on a Five-Day Week. The banking industry, despite being highly digitalised, continues to follow a six-day physical attendance pattern, causing avoidable expenditure and stress. The Confederation submitted that the issue has already received broad acceptance in principle during the wage settlement process, with the assurance that daily working hours may be suitably adjusted to protect customer service, business needs and institutional responsibilities. AIBOC has urged the Prime Minister to ensure final policy approval and notification of Five-Day Work Week in the banking industry at the earliest, stating that such a decision would promote fuel conservation, energy savings, lower emissions, better productivity, improved work-life balance and efficient public service delivery.

## Indian Army organised a lecture on the "Role of women in society"

Poonch: 14 May 2026 The Indian Army organised a lecture on the "Role of Women in Society" at Bafliaz, Poonch, as part of its continued efforts to maintain cordial relations with the local population under the spirit of Jawan and Awam.

The lecture highlighted the diverse and vital role played by women in society, including their contribution as mothers, teachers, leaders and professionals in various fields. The gathering was also sensitised on the importance of girls' education, with emphasis on the fact that education is the key to women's empowerment



and social progress. It was further highlighted that women constitute nearly 48 percent of India's population and continue to make significant contributions across all sectors. A total of 101 locals, including 23 women, 19 men and 59 children, attended the event. The ini-

tiative was highly appreciated by the local populace. Such outreach efforts by the Indian Army in remote areas, where access to civil administration remains limited, play an important role in strengthening trust, goodwill and cooperation between the Army and the people.

## Kukhrian Charitable Trust felicitates meritorious students Students are real strength of nation, academic success reflects bright future for society: Yudhvir Sethi

JAMMU, May 14: A grand felicitation ceremony was organised by the Kukhrian Charitable Trust (Lala Buta Ram Market) to honour over 150 meritorious students who excelled in Class 10 and 12 examinations in 2026. The event was held at Jain Hall amid an enthusiastic gathering of students, parents, educationists and social representatives. MLA Jammu East Constituency, Yudhvir Sethi graced the event as the Chief Guest and former Minister and BJP State Vice President, Priya Sethi as Guest of Honour and congratulated the students for their hard work, discipline and dedication towards academics. Others prominent persons present on the occasion included Subash Chander Sethi,



Rajinder Sethi, Rajesh Gupta (BJP Jammu District President), Sunil Jain (President, Jain Sabha), Devkinand Jain (Vice President, Jain Sabha), Adarsh Jathiar (East

Mandal President), Swati Sharma (Amphalla Mandal President), Anuradha Sharma (President Jammu District Mahila Morcha), Arun Sethi (OBC Morcha

President), Anita Rajput (Bajalta Mandal President Mahila Morcha), Shivani Sharma (Amphalla Mandal President Mahila Morcha), Nidhi Magotra (Ex-Corporator Ward 16), Anil Masoom (Ex-Corporator Ward 10), Parveen Kermi (former East Mandal President), Suneet Raina (General Secretary Jammu District), Preeti Sharma (Mahila Morcha East Mandal President), Chakshu Kapoor (BJP Mahila Morcha State Publicity Incharge), Raman Sharma (former President Amphalla Mandal), Savita Anand, Sanjay Mahey, Rajinder Tikku, Asha Gupta, Sanjay Abrol, Harvinder Singh and Majid Khan. During the ceremony, students securing outstanding marks.

# 13th Annual Jyesth and Hari Chhadi Yatra reaches Bani Chandi Mata Temple

Grand Mata Ka Jagran to be held at Bani tonight: Mahant Bharat Priye

**BANI, MAY 14:** The 13th Annual Jyesth and Hari Chhadi Yatra, a revered spiritual pilgrimage deeply rooted in the traditions of Sanatan Dharma, commenced yesterday with immense religious enthusiasm, devotion, and traditional rituals as devotees from different parts of the region joined the sacred journey with unwavering faith and spiritual fervour. The holy yatra was ceremoniously flagged off by JKPCSS Kissan Congress Chairman and Mahant Bharat Priye from the historic premises of Sarv Shakti Chandi Dham, Bari. Mahant Bharat Priye also accompanied the devotees during the pilgrimage towards Bani, encouraging participants to uphold the spiritual and cultural values associated with the centuries-old tradition. This year marks the 13th edition of the sacred yatra, which is being conducted from May 13 to May 15, 2026. The three-day spiritual journey witnessed devotees walk-



ing alongside the ceremonial chhad (holy staff), continuously chanting bhajans and hymns in praise of Bani Chandi while participating in religious rituals and collective prayers throughout the route. The procession started from Jammu and passed through several important traditional halts including Hari Nagar, Kathua, and Basohli before today reaching its final destination at the revered Chandi Mata Temple in the Bani area. The arrival of the yatra at Bani was marked by an atmosphere of deep devotion as devotees gathered in large numbers to welcome the sacred procession. A Grand Mata Ka Jagran is scheduled to be organised tonight at the holy shrine, where renowned devotional singers and local artists will participate in bhajan and devotional programmes dedicated to Maa Chandi. The entire temple area has been beautifully decorated, creating a spiritually vibrant atmosphere for pilgrims and local devotees alike. At every halt along the route, the yatra received an overwhelming welcome from local residents, social organizations, and religious groups who greeted the devotees with flowers, traditional offerings, and distribution of prasad. Collective prayers and devotional gatherings were organised en route, reflecting the spirit of communal harmony, faith, and cultural unity that such yatras continue to promote in society. Special arrangements were made to ensure the smooth and peaceful conduct of the pilgrimage. Security personnel, volunteers, and local administration worked in coordination to provide sanitation facilities, drinking water, medical assistance, and proper traffic management for the convenience of the pilgrims. Community groups and local residents also extended wholehearted cooperation.

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# JKNC OBC Cell Udhampur Delegation Meets Chief Engineer Jal Shakti I&FC, Raises Key Public Issues

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** A delegation of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) OBC Cell, District Udhampur, led by its Provincial Chairman Abdul Gani Teli, today met the Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti Department and Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC), Jammu, and apprised him of several pressing public issues concerning different areas of District Udhampur.



During the meeting, the delegation highlighted various issues related to water supply, irrigation facilities, public welfare works, and other developmental concerns affecting the people of the district. The JKNC OBC Cell leaders urged the Chief Engineer to ensure timely redressal of public grievances and stressed the need to accelerate developmental projects aimed at

improving the quality of life of the people. Later, the delegation also called on JKNC Provincial President Rattan Lal Gupta and Provincial Secretary Sheikh Bashir Ahmad at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu, under the leadership of Provincial Chairman Abdul Gani Teli. During the interaction, various organizational matters and public concerns of District Udhampur were discussed in detail.

# Reduce Taxes on Gold to Support Poor Families During Wedding Season: Shahista Akhter

**JAMMU, 14TH MAY:** Shahista Akhter, State President Mahila Morcha, National Loktantrik Party, Jammu & Kashmir, on Thursday expressed serious concern over the continuously rising prices of gold and the heavy taxes imposed on it, which are creating difficulties for middle-class and poor families during the ongoing marriage season. In a statement issued here, Shahista Akhter appealed to the Prime Minister of India to consider reducing or removing taxes on gold so that economically weaker sections of society can afford to purchase gold ornaments for the marriages of their daughters.



She stated that in Indian society and culture, marriages are considered incomplete without gold ornaments, as they hold deep traditional and emotional value for families across the country. Shahista Akhter added that

many families are already struggling with inflation and unemployment, and the increasing cost of gold has added further financial burden on parents preparing for their daughters' weddings. She urged the Government of India to take immediate steps to provide relief to the common people by reviewing the taxation policy on gold and ensuring affordability during the wedding season. The National Loktantrik Party reiterated its commitment towards raising issues concerning the common people and protecting the interests of economically weaker sections of society.

# Rohiin Chandan Questions Rahul Gandhi's Rs.60-Crore Foreign Trips vs Rs.11-Crore Income

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) District Jammu South Media Secretary Rohiin Chandan today raised serious questions over the funding of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's extensive foreign trips, pointing out a massive mismatch between his declared income and the estimated expenditure on overseas trips. Issuing a press note, Chandan stated that in the last 22 years, Rahul Gandhi has undertaken at least 54 traceable foreign trips spanning Europe, the United States, the Middle East, and Asia. "Using a conservative bottom-up estimation model that accounts for business-class air travel, premium accommodations, ground transportation, security arrangements, and associated logistical costs, the total estimated expenditure on these trips alone comes to nearly



Rs.60 crore," Chandan revealed. He further highlighted that across 10 assessment years for which public data is available, Rahul Gandhi's declared cumulative income was only around ₹11 crore. "This glaring discrepancy raises one fundamental and straightforward question before the nation—Who funds Rahul Gandhi?"

Chandan asked. He emphasized that the issue is not merely about personal travel but concerns transparency, accountability, and potential foreign influence in Indian politics. "Indian taxpayers and voters have every right to know the sources of funds that enable such lavish and frequent international travel by a national political figure, especially when his declared personal income falls far short of meeting even a fraction of these expenses," he said. Chandan presented a detailed breakdown of the estimation model. "Even if we take modest assumptions—average round-trip business class fares, 5-star hotel stays for an average of 7-10 days per trip, local transportation, meals, and other incidental costs—the numbers add up significantly. When we factor in the actual destinations, duration of stays,

and the frequency of these visits, the conservative estimate reaches close to ₹60 crore. Many of these trips were to countries known for geopolitical interests, raising legitimate concerns about who is sponsoring such extensive foreign engagements," he asserted. The media secretary noted that Rahul Gandhi, as a prominent opposition leader and former president of the Indian National Congress, holds a position of significant public responsibility. "Public representatives must maintain the highest standards of financial transparency. When there is such a wide gap between declared income and actual expenditure patterns, it naturally invites scrutiny under laws governing foreign contributions, income tax, and electoral funding," Chandan remarked.

# Raman Bhalla Raises Burning Public Issues During Mass Contact Programme at Nanak Nagar

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** Continuing his extensive mass contact programme to reach out to the people and listen to their grievances, Raman Bhalla today visited Nanak Nagar in Ward-43 of Jammu Municipal Corporation and interacted with local residents, traders, youth and senior citizens. A large number of people apprised him of various civic and public issues confronting the area, including irregular water supply, damaged roads, poor sanitation, erratic power supply, unemployment among youth and rising inflation affecting common households. Prominent among those present on the occasion included Kulbushan Sharma, former



JKPCSS Working President Voices Concern Over Unemployment, Inflation, Civic Problems and Delay in Restoration of Full Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir

Corporator, Jasvinder Lucky, Sanjay Murlu, Avtar Singh, Ashwani Sethi, Babi Madam and Sanjeev Katal along with several local residents and Congress workers. Addressing the gathering, Raman Bhalla said that the people of Jammu and

Kashmir are facing numerous hardships on both local and larger political fronts. He expressed concern over the growing unemployment crisis among educated youth, rising prices of essential commodities, increasing financial burden on middle-class and economically weaker sections, and the lack of adequate employment opportunities in the Union Territory. He said inflation has badly affected household budgets, while small traders and daily wage earners are struggling to sustain themselves amid economic uncertainty. Bhalla further said that despite repeated promises, the people of Jammu and Kashmir are still awaiting restoration of full statehood and democratic empowerment. He stated that there is growing public disappointment over delays in fulfilling commitments related to safeguarding democratic rights and ensuring equitable development for all regions. He added that the absence of a fully empowered elected government has widened the gap between administration and the common people, resulting in several unresolved public grievances. Highlighting civic concerns in Jammu city, Bhalla said residents are facing serious issues related to inadequate drainage systems, traffic congestion, poor maintenance of lanes and drains, irregular sanitation services and shortage of basic amenities in several localities. He stressed that development should not remain confined to announcements alone and must be visible at the grassroots level through improved infrastructure and efficient public

# Vedic teachings on mind control and righteous living delivered at Ved Mandir, Jaina Swami Ram Swarup highlights importance of Vedic wisdom, Yajna and noble deeds for peace, prosperity and spiritual growth

**YOL (HIMACHAL PRADESH), MAY 14:** On the 33rd day of the ongoing 78-day Yajna dedicated to all four Vedas at Ved Mandir, renowned Vedic scholar Swami Ram Swarup delivered an enlightening discourse based on Rigveda Mantra 10/201. Explaining the mantra "Bhadram No Api Vastavya Manah," Swami Ji said that it means, "O Almighty! Inspire our minds to walk on the path of welfare and righteousness." He stated that while this is a prayer to God, the four Vedas clearly teach that God is not pleased merely by prayers; one must also perform virtuous deeds in accordance



with those prayers. He emphasized that practicing the Vedic way of life and disciplining the mind according to Vedic teachings enables an individual to bring the mind under the control of the soul. Referring to Atharvaveda Mantra 6/41/1, Swami Ji explained that one should

contemplate and reflect upon Vedic mantras through the mind, purify the consciousness for acquiring divine knowledge, and develop pure intellect to attain concentration and spiritual awareness. He further said that performing Agnihotra/Yajna with devotion and following only those actions prescribed in the Vedas while avoiding sinful and unrighteous deeds gradually purifies the mind. The Vedas also instruct human beings to abandon anger, avoid speaking harsh words, and remain engaged in noble actions. Such conduct, he said, helps the mind withdraw from nega-

# Youth Power Key to Better Future of J&K: Rattan Lal Gupta

Says "BJP Ignored Aspirations of J&K Youth" and thus losing ground in Jammu region.

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Provincial President Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta, on Thursday said that the Youth National Conference (YNC) District Jammu Rural "A" at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, the party's provincial headquarters in Jammu chaired by its District President Jammu Rural "A" Vikas

Choudhary. Addressing the gathering, Gupta underscored the vital role played by the YNC in shaping the political careers of many leaders in the region. "The YNC has not only been a launchpad for emerging leaders but has also provided a platform where youth can voice their concerns and contribute to the larger narrative of change and progress. Many of our current leaders have risen through the ranks of the YNC, and today they stand as pillars of strength for the party and the people. The future of the National Conference lies in the



hands of our youth, and we are proud of their commitment to the cause," he said. Gupta further described the Youth National Conference as the backbone of the party and stressed the importance of youth participation in strengthening democratic values and public welfare. "We look to our young leaders to continue the fight for justice, development, and the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The energy, enthusiasm, and dedication that our youth bring to the table will be instrumental in the party's growth and in realizing our vision for a better future for the region," he added. The meeting focused on enhancing youth engagement, strengthening the party structure at the grassroots level, and strategizing future initiatives aimed at the welfare and empowerment of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Discussions also highlighted the importance of proactive involvement in local issues and the need for

youth-driven change to ensure the region's future prosperity. Speakers at the occasion emphasized the need to build stronger networks and collaborations to ensure meaningful participation of party activities. The session also served as a platform for exchanging ideas, fostering collaboration, and encouraging innovation among young leaders who are expected to play a key role in shaping the political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. Gupta emphasized that this time most of the mandates will be given to youth in

the fourth coming elections of Panchayat and Urban Local bodies. Among others who were present in the meeting included Sheikh Bashir Ahmad Provincial Secretary Jammu, Pardeep Bali Provincial Secretary Jammu, S. Tejinder Pal Singh Aman Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Rajni Devi Working President Women Wing, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Subash Chander Bhagat District President Jammu Rural "A", Mohan Kaithi RSD, Sahil Kermi District President Jammu Urban YNC, Sushma Devi District President Samba

Women Wing, S. Gurnam Singh Vice President District Jammu Urban, Dharaminder Block President Jammu West, Bhadur Lal Block President Bahu, Nitish Gowsami Vice President Provincial YNC, Zamir Qureshi Adv, Muzamil Malik, Rahul Attri, Sahil Chib, Akkibir Singh, Rajinder Sharma, Tarsem Lal Shinda, Lalit Sharma, Mukesh Choudhary, Shubham Gouria, Dhan Vijay Singh, Vansh Bhan, Krish Choudhary, Dharaminder, Rohit Kumar, Rajat Singh, Aman Choudhary, Bhanu Partap, Ashwani Kumar.

## North in News

## EDITORIAL

## Agriculture not just can revive but can also redefine the economy

Agriculture has the potential to revive the Indian economy in the toughest of conditions. It is not a romantic assumption but a structural reality rooted in the sector's scale, counter-cyclical nature, and multiplier effects. History repeatedly shows that whenever global recessions, pandemics, wars, or financial crises have choked manufacturing and services, Indian agriculture has absorbed labor, stabilized GDP, ensured food security, and provided the base demand that later pulled industry out of slowdown. This resilience stems from the fact that agriculture still engages 45 percent of India's workforce, sustains 65 percent of the population directly or indirectly, and contributes 18 percent to GVA while feeding 1.4 billion people. In the toughest conditions when urban factories lay off workers, villages become the employer of last resort because farming, dairy, poultry, fisheries, and allied activities cannot be offshored and because food demand is inelastic, and during Covid-19 in 2020-21 when contact-intensive sectors contracted by 8 to 30 percent, agriculture alone grew at 3.3 percent and kept rural consumption alive. This enabled tractor sales, two-wheeler demand, and FMCG volumes to recover faster than expected. That recovery then transmitted to steel, cement, logistics, and banking, proving that the farm sector is not a drag but a shock absorber, and the potential to revive the economy lies in four levers that agriculture uniquely controls: employment, demand, exports, and capital formation. On employment the sector can instantly accommodate reverse migration because one additional hectare of irrigated diversified cropping creates 2 to 3 jobs and one dairy animal supports a household, and when urban joblessness spikes, MGNREGA plus agri-extension can convert surplus labor into assets like farm ponds, orchards, and micro-flood units that yield returns for years. On demand, rural India accounts for 57 percent of FMCG consumption and 50 percent of two-wheeler sales, and that demand is a function of monsoon and crop prices, so a good harvest backed by MSP, procurement, and PM-KISAN transfers immediately becomes purchasing power. On exports, agriculture is the one sector where India has a consistent trade surplus of 15 to 20 billion dollars. With 11 percent of global arable land and 180 million hectares gross cropped area, India can expand shipments without compromising food security. Agriculture not just can revive the economy in the toughest of conditions, it can also redefine toughness itself by making the economy monsoon-proof, import-proof, and unemployment-proof, and that is the national interest, because the next global shock will not wait, and the field that is sown today is the GDP that is saved tomorrow.

RAJNI SHARMA, EDITOR

## Why India's Children Need More Than Just Food



BY -DR. SARATH GOPALAN

A five-year-old girl was brought to my clinic not long ago. She seemed to be behind on her milestones, slower to speak, less engaged than children her age. Her developmental assessment placed her at the level of a three-year-old. Her mother was concerned. The child had not been ill. There was no diagnosis to point to. But when we spoke about the previous two years of COVID-19, the picture became clearer. Prolonged school closure due to lockdown resulting in spending most of her time at home, screens replacing playtime, and meals being simpler and less varied than before. Her brain, in those quiet years, had not received what it needed to grow. She was not an exception. Across clinics, paediatricians and developmental specialists were seeing the same pattern: healthy children, falling behind. Not because of the virus, but because of everything that came after it.

The World Health Organization tells us that 90% of brain development occurs before the age of five, making the early years the single greatest opportunity we have to shape a child's cognitive, emotional, and social future. The neural connections formed dur-

ing this window strengthen learning, language, memory, and resilience for life.

Getting nutrition right in this period is one of the most powerful investments we can make. Micronutrients such as iron, zinc, and selenium, often described as the neuro-nutrients, are essential for healthy brain development and function. Yet the data tells us a troubling story. Iron deficiency alone affects approximately 50% of children under five in India (NFHS-5). Anaemia was recorded in 67.1% of children aged under five, up from the previous survey. Recent evidence including nationally representative analysis of children aged 12-59 months found that over 60% had micronutrient deficiencies with or without anaemia. This points to a far wider nutritional gap than haemoglobin counts alone reveal.

Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), an omega-3 fatty acid, supports brain architecture, memory formation, and visual development. Choline, another essential nutrient, is now considered essential for brain development when mothers consume choline during pregnancy. It supports healthy gene activity and cell structure, and growth of key brain regions - including the areas responsible for memory and thinking. These nutrients are not optional additions to a child's diet; they are foundational to their potential.

The most important nutritional intervention in a child's life begins before birth. Brain development starts in the foetal stage, and a mother's nutritional status directly shapes the neural foundation her child carries into the world. DHA supports neural connectivity in

uterus; iron and folic acid supplementation during pregnancy reduces the risk of low birth weight and developmental delay. Yet only 44% of pregnant women in India consumed iron-folic acid supplements for the recommended 180 or more days (NFHS-5), a gap that represents an enormous and addressable opportunity.

This is why investing in adolescent girls is an investment in the next generation. A well-nourished girl becomes a well-nourished mother, and a well-nourished mother gives her child the best possible start. With 59% of adolescent girls in India anaemic (NFHS-5), prioritising this group through schools, community programmes, and targeted supplementation is one of the effective interventions in the entire continuum of care.

Although nutrition is important, brain development requires two parallel inputs: nutritional adequacy and emotional-social stimulation. The pandemic illustrated this powerfully. UNICEF estimates that one in seven children globally experienced significant developmental or learning loss during COVID-19, not primarily from illness, but from the withdrawal of peer interaction, conversation, and play. Screens replaced human connection, and language, motor, and social development suffered.

Responsive caregiving, verbal interaction, tactile engagement, and a stimulating environment are neurologically formative and are essential to healthy brain architecture. Early childhood programmes that integrate both nutritional support and developmental stimulation produce outcomes that neither can

achieve alone. India's programme architecture is well-placed to act on it.

Programmes like POSHAN Abhiyaan and PM POSHAN already reach millions of mothers and young children across the country. Initiatives like POSHAN Pakhwada demonstrate the power of sustained, community-level mobilisation around nutrition. The delivery architecture, which is the anganwadi network, the frontline workforce, and the community-level reach, is in place. The opportunity now is to deepen what that architecture delivers.

With the right training and support, they can expand their role from tracking physical growth to also guiding parents on early stimulation, responsive caregiving, and child development practices. Integrating the WHO and UNICEF Nurturing Care Framework, which connects nutrition, health, safety, early learning, and caregiving into a coherent whole, offers a clear and scientific roadmap for this evolution. It moves the goal from simply feeding children to helping them truly thrive.

Nutrition in early childhood is among the highest-return investments a nation can make. When children receive what their developing brains need: the right micronutrients, the right caregiving environment, and the right stimulation, the dividends are lifelong - stronger learners, more productive workers, and a more resilient society.

India has the ambition of Viksit Bharat. It has the systems. It has the science. What this moment calls for is a shared commitment to treating early childhood nutrition not as a welfare line item, but as the foundation on which everything else is built.

## The unravelling of Dravidian order

BY NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

Vijay has emerged as the face of generational anger and anti-establishment politics. But his rise also highlights a political vacuum: the old Dravidian order is losing credibility, while the new alternative remains inexperienced and organisationally weak.

Joseph Vijay Chandrasekhar, celebrated for decades as "Thalapathy" — the commander — is now confronting a truth far harsher than cinematic fiction: Tamil Nadu is not a theatre waiting for a hero's entrance. It is among India's most politically self-aware states, shaped by decades of ideological struggle, linguistic pride, welfare politics, caste negotiation, and a deeply emotional contract with social justice. Vijay may have conquered the electoral imagination, but the machinery of governance is proving far more unforgiving than fan adulation.

Tamil Nadu today stands at a historic crossroads. The Dravidian order that dominated the state for nearly sixty years is weakening, yet no alternative has fully established legitimacy. The DMK retains organisational strength and administrative continuity, while the AIADMK still survives through welfare-era loyalties and caste-based networks. But both parties increasingly appear ideologically exhausted. Their rhetoric continues to invoke social justice, federalism, and Tamil identity, yet their politics often resemble bureaucratic

rather than transformative mobilisation. Vijay's rise emerged precisely from this vacuum.

National commentary has often caricatured Tamil Nadu as a state addicted to "cinema politics", but that interpretation misses the deeper historical reality. MG Ramachandran and J Jayalalithaa succeeded not merely because they were film stars, but because they embedded themselves within the emotional and ideological framework created by the Dravidian movement. In Tamil Nadu, cinema became political pedagogy. Film dialogues carried ideological messages. Stardom mattered only when it resonated with the anxieties and aspirations of workers, backward castes, the poor, and Tamil linguistic identity. The foundations of this politics were laid by EV Ramasamy, whose Self-Respect Movement challenged Brahminical dominance in education, administration, and ritual hierarchy. His attack on caste oppression transformed Tamil politics permanently.

Later, CN Annadurai converted radical social critique into electoral politics through the DMK. The movement shifted political discourse away from elite nationalism towards dignity, representation, and linguistic self-respect. Tamil politics became inseparable from the question of social mobility. This ideological inheritance helped create one of India's most paradoxical yet successful states. Tamil Nadu remained fiercely regional while becoming deeply

integrated into global manufacturing networks.

Tamil Nadu built one of India's most effective welfare systems. Midday meal schemes pioneered under K. Kamaraj and expanded under MG Ramachandran reshaped nutrition and school attendance. Public healthcare, subsidised food distribution, maternal health programmes, and women-centric welfare schemes produced social indicators that consistently outperformed much of the country.

M Karunanidhi, a scriptwriter, ideologue, and political tactician, fused literary performance, welfare governance, and coalition negotiation into a durable political machine. His son, MK Stalin, inherited not just a party but an institutional ecosystem. Under Stalin, Tamil Nadu retained economic growth despite post-pandemic pressures. Welfare delivery expanded through programmes such as doorstep healthcare initiatives, while the state sharpened its resistance to centralisation on issues like NEET, language policy, and fiscal devolution.

Yet the DMK's central challenge was not administrative failure. It was emotional fatigue. Younger voters inherited the welfare state without inheriting the historical memory that once legitimised Dravidian politics. Anti-Brahmin rhetoric no longer electrifies an aspirational generation working in IT corridors or navigating precarious urban employment. Into this opening

stepped Vijay.

Unlike Kamal Haasan, who entered politics through technocratic idealism, Vijay projected emotional populism. He did not initially offer a fully coherent ideological programme. Instead, he offered rupture - a symbolic rebellion against dynastic politics, corruption fatigue, and political stagnation. His appeal rested on accessibility and generational impatience. Importantly, he avoided overt alignment with Hindutva while softening the rigid aesthetic tone historically associated with Dravidian discourse. This ambiguity broadened his social appeal.

But electoral momentum and governing capacity are entirely different realities. Cinema rewards singular charisma; parliamentary democracy rewards negotiation, compromise, organisational discipline, and patience. Vijay's transition from celebrity icon to political administrator has exposed the limitations of charisma-driven mobilisation. Triumphantist rhetoric, strategic inconsistency, and the inexperience of advisers intoxicated by spectacle have complicated his emergence as a credible governing force.

The deeper anxiety within Tamil Nadu's political establishment reflects fear of displacement. Reports of tactical accommodation between the DMK and AIADMK - once unimaginable rivals - indicate how survival instincts are overtaking ideological hostility.

### Mahant Rohit Shastri Installs Sanskrit Nameplate at Vishal Chopra's Residence, Gives Message of Cultural Preservation

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** A Sanskrit nameplate was installed at the residence of Vishal Chopra, National Chairman of NATF and Managing Director of Metro News Networks - India, by Mahant Rohit Shastri, President of Shri Kailakh Jyotish avim Vedic Sansthan Trust and State Awardee. The event witnessed the presence of several eminent personalities from social, cultural, and religious fields. The objective of the program was to promote and preserve Indian culture, the Sanskrit language, and Sanatan traditions. The installation of the Sanskrit nameplate was described as an inspiring initiative towards cultural awareness, national pride, and respect for India's ancient heritage. On this occasion, Mahant Rohit Shastri stated that Sanskrit is not merely a language but the original



stream of Indian civilization, culture, and spiritual knowledge. He emphasized the need for society to reconnect with its roots and familiarize future generations with Indian values and traditions. He further said that the purpose of installing Sanskrit nameplates is to create awareness and respect for India's ancient language in societies, homes, institutions, and establishments, it would certainly provide new energy to Indian culture. On the occasion, Vishal Chopra expressed gratitude to Mahant Rohit Shastri and the Trust, stating that Sanskrit is the soul of India and such initiatives spread a positive message in society. He said that preserving Indian culture and tradi-

tions is the responsibility of every citizen. A Sanskrit nameplate is not merely a symbol but a representation of India's pride and cultural identity. Vishal Chopra further stated that through media platforms, efforts would also be made to promote Indian culture, the Sanskrit language, and Sanatan values so that the younger generation can feel proud of their cultural heritage. At the conclusion of the event, the dignitaries present appreciated the initiative and described it as inspirational for society. They also emphasized the need for collective efforts to preserve Sanskrit and Indian culture. On occasion trust trustee RK Chhibber and lucky sharma, Abhishek Kapoor him Sabharwal. Anil Chopra, Deepak anand were also present.

### DWST organised an awareness and assistance camp

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust organised an awareness and assistance camp in the Gangyal area of Jammu city for the welfare of workers associated with the unorganised sector. The objective of the programme was to spread awareness about various welfare schemes launched by the Central Government and to encourage workers towards self-reliance. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Jammu & Kashmir General Secretary and former Deputy Mayor of Jammu, Baldev Singh Billawaria attended the event as the chief guest. A large number of unskilled workers and youth participated in the programme. On the occasion, Baldev Singh Billawaria distributed tool kits among trained youth and workers who had completed technical skill training. Addressing the gathering, he said that the primary aim of the government welfare schemes is to ensure that the benefits reach the last person in society and empower economically weaker sections to become self-reliant. He appreciated the initiative taken by Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust and said that such efforts not only create better



employment opportunities for workers but also motivate them to establish self-employment ventures based on their skills. Billawaria stated that in today's era, technical skills and self-reliance are the keys to success. He said that tool kits are not merely equipment but a strong foundation for a brighter future for the youth. Through these tools, trained individuals can start their own work and strengthen the financial condition of their families. He further said that the objective of the Trust is not only to pro-

vide assistance but also to empower workers to live with dignity and stand on their own feet. During his address, he also highlighted on the Central Government's ambitious "Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana" meant for workers in the unorganised sector. He informed that workers between the age group of 18 to 40 years can apply for the scheme, under which beneficiaries receive a monthly pension of Rs. 3000 after attaining the age of 60 years. He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the

Central Government has been continuously working for the welfare of workers, labourers and economically weaker sections through various schemes aimed at connecting every section of society with the mainstream of development. He appealed to workers to take maximum benefit of these welfare schemes and secure their future. Speaking on the occasion, Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust President Rajesh Sharma said that the Trust is continuously working for the welfare and service of the needy sections of society. He assured that the Trust will always stand with workers associated with the unorganised sector whenever they require any kind of assistance, guidance or support. He added that the aim of the Trust is to empower weaker sections of society and help them lead a self-reliant and dignified life. The workers and youth present in the programme appreciated the social service initiatives undertaken by Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust and said that such awareness camps are highly beneficial for the needy and underprivileged sections of society.

### Rather reviews development scenario in Budgam

Emphasizes people-first' approach to governance, prioritised public service delivery

**SRINAGAR, MAY 14:** Speaker Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today chaired an extensive review meeting to assess the overall development scenario in Budgam district, with special focus on his constituency Charar-i-Sharif. During the meeting, the Speaker conducted a comprehensive review of various departments including Rural Development Department (RDD), Roads & Buildings (R&B), Jal Shakti, Health, Education under District Capex and other sectors. Detailed discussion was held regarding the performance and achievements of the departments during the previous financial year as



well as finalization of plan for the current financial year. Reviewing the sector-wise progress, the Speaker sought updates on the ongoing works, utilization of allocated funds, status of pending projects and implementation of various government schemes in Budgam district, particularly in Charar-i-Sharif constituency. While providing the abstract of works during 2025-26 and 2026-27 (ongoing) under different sectors, the CPO Budgam apprised that in total 730 works were approved during the previous financial year in Charar-i-Sharif constituency, of which, 665 have been completed. Regarding CDF, it was informed that 172 identified works had been identified by the MLAs, of which, 160 have been approved and 67 completed. Similarly, in RDD, out of 1628 approved works 1533 have been completed. In R&B sector, Charar-i-Sharif division, total 41 works have been approved and 30 have been completed during 2025-26. In Education, out of 97 approved works 24 have been completed so far. In Jal Shakti, a total 67 works

have been approved in Budgam and Chadoora division, out of which 41 have been completed. A detailed discussion was also held regarding restoration of Chadoora bridge which is a vital link connecting a vast population of the area with Budgam and other parts of Kashmir. The Speaker directed the officers of R&B to expedite the restoration of this important bridge in order to mitigate the suffering of people. He also instructed the Engineers to keep the road leading to Baiji bridge on both sides in good condition for hassle free movement of vehicles. The Speaker stressed the need for timely execution of developmental works and emphasized effective coordination among the departments to ensure that public welfare schemes reach the grassroots level efficiently. He

directed the officers to prioritize the projects of public importance and maintain transparency, accountability and quality in execution. The Speaker emphasized a "people-first" approach to governance. He issued firm directives to the concerned departmental heads to prioritize immediate redressal of public grievances and proactively resolve any administrative or technical bottlenecks hindering the completion of vital infrastructure projects. "Our objective is to ensure that the benefits of development are not just statistics on paper but tangible improvements in the daily lives of our citizens," said the Speaker. "Administrative hurdles must be cleared swiftly to ensure that essential services reach the doorsteps of the common man without delay."

**NOTICE**  
I, BEER SINGH THUKAR BAli S/o BHAGAT RAM THUKAR BAli R/o BOHARDAR Tehsil RAM-SOO and District Ramban I have applied for correction of my Adhar name father name which has wrongly recorded as adhar BEER SINGH BAli S/o BHAGAT RAM the actual name as per record is BEER SINGH THUKAR BAli S/o BHAGAT RAM THUKAR BAli Now the public at large is hereby informed that it is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection

**NOTICE**  
I, Madhu Devi D/o Sh. Baldev Singh and Smt Mahani Dasi R/o Hottar edhs, Billawar Distt kthua J&K that in my 10th class record under roll no 166024054, session regular annual 2026 and RR No. 2466013000240003, which is issued by JKBOSE. in which My DOB is wrongly recorded as 28-08-2008. Now I am applying for correction of my DOB in 10th class record as 28-08-2010 instead of 28-08-2008. JKBOSE, objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority with in 7 days, from the date of publication of this notice

**NOTICE**  
I, Sudhanshu Sharma S/O Sh. Bansil Lal R/O Najot Tehsil lohail malhar Distt kathua J&K that in my Driving Licence Record JK-08202001192 which is issued by RTO Kathua, That in my DL, my Father name is wrongly record as Bansil Lal Sharma. Now I am applying for correction of my father name as Bansil Lal instead of Bansil Lal Sharma in RTO office Kathua, objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority with in 7 days, from the date of publication of this notice

### L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena inaugurates India's highest Astro Turf football grounds, synthetic athletic track and VIP Stand at Open Stadium, Leh

**LEH, MAY 14:** The Lieutenant Governor of UT Ladakh, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today inaugurated India's highest AstroTurf Football Stadium, built at 11,500 ft, in Leh. He also inaugurated the newly-constructed VIP Stand and the laying of the 8-lane synthetic athletic track in the Stadium, marking a major milestone in the development of world-class sports infrastructure in Ladakh. The VIP Stand at the Open Stadium has been constructed at a cost of ₹79.85 crore under the Special Development Package (SDP) of the Department of Youth Services & Sports, while the synthetic track and Astro Turf football ground have been developed at a cost of ₹10.50 crore under the Government of India's flagship "Khelo India" scheme. The

sports complex includes an 8-lane synthetic athletic track, state-of-the-art Astro Turf football ground, VIP stand, long jump pits, handball and volleyball courts and spectator galleries, making it a fully-equipped sports infrastructure facility. In addition, a 64-room youth hostel has also been developed to provide accommodation facilities for athletes, coaches and visiting teams. The sports facility is expected to ensure year-round sporting activities despite the extreme weather conditions of Ladakh. Calling it a historic development, Lieutenant Governor Shri Saxena said that the facility symbolises the collective resolve to build a healthy, strong and empowered society through sports and youth engagement.

**UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD, R&B DIVISION, KATHUA**

**FRESH NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

**Sl. No. Name of Work** **Staffed** **Approx. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)** **Estimate No. (R&B)** **Estimate No. (R&B)** **Time allowed for completion** **Time and date of opening tender** **Class of Contractor**

1. Repair/Renovation in Higher Secondary School Sarwan District Kathua (Under PAB 2025-26) (2<sup>nd</sup> Call) PWD (R&B) Division Kathua 1.00 480- 2000- Month-01 26.05.2026 or after 1000hrs D
2. Repair/Renovation in Middle School Gali Chak Dera Singh District Kathua (Under PAB 2025-26) (2<sup>nd</sup> Call) PWD (R&B) Division Kathua 1.00 400- 2000- Month-01 26.05.2026 or after 1500hrs D
3. Repair/Renovation in Middle School Kathua A District Kathua (Under PAB 2025-26) (2<sup>nd</sup> Call) PWD (R&B) Division Kathua 1.00 400- 2000- Month-01 26.05.2026 or after 1500hrs D
4. Construction of Ramp in Middle School Dabwali District Kathua Sangra Shiksha PM SHRI (3<sup>rd</sup> Call) PWD (R&B) Division Kathua 0.26 600- 320- Month-01 26.05.2026 or after 1500hrs D
5. Construction of Ramp in Primary School Kumbh District Kathua Sangra Shiksha PM SHRI (3<sup>rd</sup> Call) PWD (R&B) Division Kathua 0.26 600- 320- Month-01 26.05.2026 or after 1500hrs D
6. Construction of Ramp in Primary School Guler District Kathua Sangra Shiksha PM SHRI (3<sup>rd</sup> Call) PWD (R&B) Division Kathua 0.26 600- 320- Month-01 26.05.2026 or after 1500hrs D

1. Date of issue of Tender Notice  
2. Period for downloading/bidding documents  
3. Date, Time and place for bid opening  
4. Bid submission start date  
5. Bid submission end date  
6. Date of issue of opening Technical Bid (T/Bid)  
7. Date and time of opening of Financial Bid (F/Bid)

1. If the contractor / firm fails to complete the work within the time mentioned in the B/T / Contract, then the awarded contract will automatically be cancelled after informing the performance security of the contractor / firm and work put to fresh tender without serving any notice from this office and the contractor is declared for further tenders from the division for the period of one year.

2. 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 viewed/downloaded from the departmental website: <http://tenders.gov.in> prior to below schedule.

3. The electronic bidding system would not allow any level submission of bids after due date and time. At or near the time Bidders may modify their bids by updating their request for modification before the deadline for submission of bids. For this, the bidder needs not to make any additional payment towards the cost of tender document. For bid modification and consequential 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 shall be allowed as per below terms. The bidder may withdraw by updating the 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.

4. The date and time of opening of Financial Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.tenders.gov.in](http://www.tenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message (either e-mail address). The Financial bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD/R&B Division Kathua. The bidders who are not bid submitted are required to attend the opening of Financial Bids.

5. The bidders who are not bid submitted are required to attend the opening of Financial Bids.

6. The bidders who are not bid submitted are required to attend the opening of Financial Bids.

7. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the bidding documents and additional Performance Security in the case of payment and tender opening of Financial Bid.

8. Failure of bidders to attend the opening of Financial Bid.

9. Failure of bidders to attend the opening of Financial Bid.

10. Failure of bidders to attend the opening of Financial Bid.

No. SNIT/2025-27/425-740  
Date: 12.05.2026

**Executive Engineer PWD/R&B Division Kathua**

**DIP/J-2013/26**

# Study Warns Of Dangerous Heat At 2026 World Cup As Climate Risks Grow

New Delhi, May 14: Football's global players' union renewed concerns on Thursday about heat at the 2026 World Cup after scientists warned the likelihood of dangerous temperatures for players and fans has sharply increased. An analysis by climate research group World Weather Attribution found that roughly a quarter of the 104 matches at the expanded tournament across the United States, Mexico and Canada are likely to be played in conditions exceeding safety limits recommended by FIFPRO, almost twice the risk seen at the 1994 World Cup in the U.S. Around five matches could take place in conditions considered unsafe, where postponement would be advised, the researchers said. Scientists assessed the risk using kickoff times and the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) index, which measures how effectively the body can cool itself. "The calculations to estimate the likelihood of 2026 FIFA World Cup games being played in high WBGT conditions are in line with FIFPRO's calculations published in 2023," said FIFPRO's medical director, Vincent Gouttebarge. "These estimations justify the need for – and implementation of – a series of mitigation strategies with a view to better protecting players' health and performance when they are exposed to hot conditions." FIFPRO recommends cooling mea-



sures when WBGT rises above 26 degrees Celsius and says matches should be postponed if it exceeds 28C, which is equivalent to roughly 82C in dry heat or 30C in high humidity. FIFA told Reuters that it has carried out heat-risk planning, with measures including three-minute hydration breaks in each half of games, cooling infrastructure for fans and players, adapted

work-rest cycles, and enhanced medical readiness that scale according to real-time conditions. "FIFA is committed to protecting the health and safety of players, referees, fans, volunteers and staff," the global governing body said in a statement. "MORE CONSERVATIVE FOOTBALL" Chris Mullington, consultant anaesthetist at Imperial College London NHS Trust and clinical senior lecturer at Imperial College London, said extreme heat is more likely to influence how games are played than trigger widespread medical emergencies among players. "It will be more of a performance issue than a health issue," he said. "These players are elite athletes and acclimated. You'll see players self-pacing. That behavioural thermoregulation is very difficult to override. "So you may end up with more conservative football." Cooling systems are expected to reduce some of the risk at three of the 16 host venues, according to the analysis.

# IPL 2026: Kohli's Unbeaten 105 Powers RCB To Top Spot With Six-Wicket Win Over KKR

New Delhi, May 14: Virat Kohli produced a vintage hundred and remained unbeaten on 105 off 60 balls as he steered Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a six-wicket victory over Kolkata Knight Riders and reclaimed the top spot on the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 points table at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium in Raipur on Wednesday.



After Angkrish Raghuvanshi's fluent 71 and Rinku Singh's unbeaten 49 powered Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to 192/4, Kohli delivered a masterclass in chasing with 11 fours and three sixes at a strike rate of 175 – his ninth IPL ton and 10th overall in T20s – as RCB completed the chase with five balls to spare. With the majority of his shots coming through the leg side, Kohli produced a chasing masterclass to leave the Raipur crowd delighted after rain delayed the start of the match by 75 minutes. Chasing 193, RCB began cautiously as debutant Saurabh Dubeey conceded just two runs in the opening over. The tempo changed in the second over when Vaibhav Arora erred in line, and Kohli capitalised with four boundaries, including a flick over square leg and a crisp cut shot. Jacob Bethell also

# Inter Ease Past Lazio To Win Coppa Italia And Seal Double

New Delhi, May 14: Inter Milan beat Lazio 2-0 in the Coppa Italia final on Wednesday, with an Adam Marusic own goal and a Lautaro Martinez strike handing the newly crowned Serie A champions the domestic double.



Inter started brightly at the Stadio Olimpico, carrying the confidence of their recent title triumph and a 3-0 league win over Lazio at the same venue on Saturday. The breakthrough came in the 14th minute when Marusic misjudged a header from a corner and diverted the ball into his own net. Inter maintained control and nearly extended their lead soon after, but Denzel

Dumfries saw his close-range volley blocked as Lazio struggled to cope with sustained pressure. Lazio's defensive troubles persisted 10 minutes before halftime when Nuno Tavares lost possession deep in his own half. Marcus Thuram capitalised, delivering a low cross for Martinez to tap in and double Inter's advantage. "We showed good results, performances, intensity, so I am proud that we are finishing with another trophy that means so much," Martinez told Sport Mediaset.

# City Slice Arsenal's League Lead To Two Points With 3-0 Win Over Palace

New Delhi, May 14: Manchester City kept the pressure on Premier League leaders Arsenal with a comfortable 3-0 win over Crystal Palace on Wednesday, trimming the gap at the top of the table to two points as the title race sprints towards its conclusion.



Goals from Antoine Semenyo, Omar Marmoush and Savinho ensured Pep Guardiola's side did all they could on a night when City played with authority and control to lift them onto 77 points, while Arsenal have 79, with two games remaining for each. While City still need Arsenal to squander points in one of their remaining matches, Guardiola's men showed no sign of resignation, and Semenyo put them ahead in the 32nd minute when Phil

Foden's crafty back-heel set him up to slot a shot into the bottom-left corner. Marmoush doubled City's lead in the 40th minute, when Foden's touch on a cross landed at the Egyptian's feet and he shot on the turn back into the far corner. It marked the first time the seldom-used Foden has provided multiple assists in the first half of a Premier League game in his career. Savinho added a third in the 84th minute when he latched onto a through ball from Rayan Cherki and finished with a left-footed shot

from the edge of the six-yard box. Had City lost or drawn against Palace on Wednesday, Arsenal would have clinched their first league title in 22 years with a victory over already-relegated Burnley on Monday. "It's a massive game, must-win, so we are really happy," Foden said. "The aim is to keep pushing and keep (Arsenal) on their toes," he added. "We've seen a lot of things can happen on the final day. I've experienced it many times when the game doesn't go your way. We just have to keep pushing and doing our part." Ahead of Saturday's FA Cup final against Chelsea, Guardiola made six changes to his team, including resting his league-leading scorer Erling Haaland for the night.

# Iran Hold World Cup Departure Rally Despite Continuing Concerns

Tehran, May 14: Iran hosted a World Cup departure rally attended by thousands of fans in Tehran's Enghelab Square on Wednesday night even if concerns remain about the team getting into the United States and competing at the tournament.



The players, who will continue their preparations at a training camp in Turkey next week, were cheered by the crowd as they made patriotic statements from a stage and the kit they will wear at the June 11 to July 19 tournament was unveiled. "This is the best send-off in the last four World Cup campaigns," Iranian FA (FIRI) President Mehdi Taj told state TV. "The players are with the people, and the crowd stands with the

country's dignity, honour, and strength. Whatever the result, may Iran's flag be raised there and defended." Iran's participation in the World Cup has been in question since the U.S. and Israel started the regional war by launching air strikes on the Islamic Republic in late February. As in Canada, the IRGC is classified as a "terrorist entity" in the U.S. and Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said no one with ties to the organisation would be admitted to the country. Iran has placed responsibility for getting the players and team officials into the U.S., where Team Melli are scheduled to play all three World Cup group matches, firmly in the hands of tournament organisers FIFA. "Nothing has arrived yet regarding the visas. We hope it will definitely be handled within the timeframe," Hedayat Mombeyni, the FIRI secretary-general, told state TV at the rally on Wednesday. "FIFA has made promises, and hopefully those promises will lead to results and the players will receive their visas on time."

# PSG Crowned French Champions Again After Win At Second-Placed Lens

New Delhi, May 14: Paris St Germain secured a fifth successive Ligue 1 title, beating nearest challengers Lens 2-0 away in their penultimate match of the league season on Wednesday.



Khвича Kvaratskhelia scored after 29 minutes and substitute Ibrahim Mbeye added a stoppage-time strike to see PSG advance to 76 points, out of the reach of Lens, who are assured of second place on 67 points. The championship is PSG's 14th Ligue 1 title and strengthens their status as the most successful club in French league history. The Parisians, who will play in the Champions League final later this

month, were all but assured of the title going into the fixture with a six-point lead over Lens and a vastly superior goal difference but needed one more point to make sure. But they needed a series of dramatic saves from goalkeeper Matvey Safonov to ensure victory as their hosts had several good opportunities to win the game in an electric atmosphere at Stade Bollaert-Delelis. Lens had a 20th-minute header from Adrien Thomasson cleared off the PSG line by Illia Zabamuyi but nine minutes later Ousmane Dembele stole the ball from Lens defender Malang Sarr and put a quick pass through for Kvaratskhelia to hammer home from point-blank range.

# Former England Women's Wicket Keeper Taylor Named Men's Fielding Coach For NZ Series

London, May 14: Former England wicket-keeper Sarah Taylor will become the first female coach to work with the men's senior team after being named fielding coach for next month's three-test series against New Zealand. The 36-year-old won the Twenty20 and 50-over World Cups with England in 2009 and made 226 appearances across all formats before retiring from international cricket in 2019. Taylor has had coaching stints with county side Sussex and the England Lions since her retirement and has been



appointed on a short-term basis in place of Carl Hopkinson, who is working with Indian Premier League (IPL) side Mumbai Indians. "We've been brought in, unbelievably impressed with her and the way that she goes about her business," director of cricket Rob Key told reporters on Wednesday. "I just think she's one of the best in the business at what she does. She's been outstanding, and she's."

# Asian Weightlifting Championships: Gyaneshwari Yadav Wins Silver, Bronze In 53kg Category

New Delhi, May 14: India's narrow podium finish in the women's 53kg category set the tone on the third day of the Asian Weightlifting Championships 2026 in Gandhinagar, where Gyaneshwari Yadav secured a silver medal in the snatch and a bronze in the overall total, missing out on a higher finish by just one kilogram. The championships, being held at the Mahatma Mandir and Exhibition Centre since May 11, have brought together 178 elite athletes from 28 Asian nations and two Commonwealth countries. The event also carries significance as a qualification pathway for the Commonwealth Games



earned her the silver medal in that segment, trailing Zhao's 95kg. In the clean and jerk, Zhao maintained her dominance with a 121kg lift, while Nguyen's 108kg effort helped secure her position in the overall silver medal spot. The event concluded with all three medal positions decided by marginal differences, underlining the competitive standard of the field. Reacting to the performance, Ashwani Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Indian Weightlifting Federation, said the result reflected both determination and progress within the national setup. "Gyaneshwari's performance is a strong indicator of India's



## NEET paper leak probe zeroes in on Rajasthan family that celebrated 5 govt medical seats a few months ago

New Delhi, May 14: The NEET-UGC 2026 paper leak investigation has turned the spotlight on a family from Jamnara in Rajasthan that had publicly celebrated five MBBS admissions through NEET just months before the scandal surfaced. The Special Operations Group (SOG), which is probing the alleged leak network, is now examining the financial transactions, political links and digital records of brothers Mangalal Binwal and Dinesh Binwal, who are accused of procuring and distributing the leaked paper across Rajasthan. Both men are currently in custody.

The case gathered fresh attention after investigators linked the accused family to a November 2025 social media post in which Dinesh Binwal had called it "a matter of pride" that five children from the family secured admission



to Government Medical Colleges through NEET. According to relatives, two daughters of Dinesh's late elder brother Ghanshyam Khatik cleared NEET in 2024, while another daughter from the family and Dinesh's son reportedly qualified in 2025. Family members, however, refused to identify the fifth candidate mentioned in

the post. Investigators now suspect that Mangalal's son, who appeared for NEET-2026 this year, may also have had access to the leaked paper. SOG probing money trail and Gurugram connection. According to sources in the Rajasthan SOG, the brothers allegedly obtained the NEET paper from Gurugram on April 26 after

paying an advance amount of Rs 30 lakh. Officials suspect the leaked paper may have reached more than 1,000 candidates across the state. Investigators believe the total deal was struck for nearly Rs 45 lakh. The two accused belong to Jamnara Ramgarh tehsil, around 30 km from Jaipur, where they reportedly live in a large farmhouse spread across nearly 2,000 square yards. Locals describe the brothers as known faces in the area with a lavish lifestyle and several luxury vehicles parked at the property. The farmhouse is located close to the Jamnara Ramgarh police station. The SOG arrested the brothers on May 9 after receiving intelligence inputs linked to the alleged paper leak network. Investigators are also looking into Dinesh Binwal's political connections. His social media accounts reportedly feature photographs with ministers, former ministers and MLAs.

## MEA calls attack on Indian-flagged cargo ship near Oman 'unacceptable', all crew rescued

New Delhi, May 14: India on Thursday strongly condemned the attack on an Indian-flagged cargo vessel off the coast of Oman, calling the incident "unacceptable" as concerns deepen over the safety of commercial shipping routes in West Asia. The sharp response from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) comes at a time when tensions across the Gulf region continue to escalate following the ongoing confrontation involving Iran, Israel and the United States. The latest maritime incident has once again raised fears over the vulnerability of civilian vessels operating near key international trade routes. According to preliminary reports, the Gujarat-owned cargo vessel MSV Haji Ali sank after it was hit by what was



described as a drone or missile-like projectile on May 13 while passing through Omani waters. The ship was travelling from Berbera Port in Somalia to Sharjah at the time of the attack. In an official statement, the MEA said, "The attack on an Indian-flagged ship off the coast of Oman yesterday is unacceptable, and we deplore the fact that commercial shipping and civilian mariners continue to be targeted." The ministry confirmed that all Indian crew members onboard were safe and ship was travelling from Berbera Port in Somalia to Sharjah at the time of the attack. "India reiterates that targeting commercial shipping and endangering innocent civilian crew members, or otherwise impeding freedom of navigation and commerce, should be avoided," the statement added.

## Major chaos at Calcutta High Court, lawyers shout 'thief' slogans at Mamata Banerjee



Kolkata, May 14: Chaotic scenes unfolded at the Calcutta High Court on Thursday, May 14, when TMC chief Mamata Banerjee faced "thief" slogans from a section of lawyers. The former West Bengal chief minister was trying to exit the premises following a post-poll violence hearing when the

incident took place. She was accompanied by TMC leader and advocate Kalyan Banerjee. Kalyan Banerjee later alleged that the lawyers under the influence of the BJP attempted to heckle Mamata Banerjee, and the party's legal team had a tough time safely escorting her out. Talking to

reporters, Kalyan Banerjee said the court is "not a place to publicly brand someone a thief or a dacoit. We can also say similar things about Opposition party leaders. The former CM had gone to the court to argue a petition, and we faced immense difficulty while leaving the place after the hearing got over..."

If this can happen to Mamata Banerjee, imagine what's happening currently with the ordinary workers of the TMC across Bengal," he added. Mamata Banerjee had appeared before the High Court to argue over the alleged post-poll violence in the state as well as attacks on TMC party offices.

## Punjab, Chandigarh to begin voter roll revision from June 15

New Delhi, May 14: The Election Commission of India has announced that Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls will begin in Punjab and Chandigarh from June 15, with Booth Level Officers (BLOs) set to carry out door-to-door verification of voters across the region. Officials said Punjab currently has around 2.14 crore registered voters, and the revision exercise aims to update the electoral database ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections in the state. Under the SIR process, BLOs and Booth Level Agents (BLAs) will visit households to verify voter details, add names of eligible new voters and remove incorrect, fake or duplicate entries from the electoral rolls. The exercise will also focus on correcting errors related to names and addresses. The Election Commission described the revision as a comprehensive voter list update drive intended to ensure



that no eligible voter is left out and no ineligible person remains included in the electoral rolls. According to officials, the process involves the distribution and verification of forms at the household level. Voters will be required to confirm their details with BLOs or BLAs. In cases where a person's name appears in voter lists at more than one location, the duplicate entry will have to be removed. Citizens whose names are missing

from the rolls will be able to apply for inclusion by submitting the required forms and supporting documents. The Commission said several documents would be accepted during the verification process, including Aadhaar card, birth certificate, passport, Class 10 marksheet, permanent residence certificate, pensioner identity card, caste certificate and identity cards issued by government departments. Documents related to land

or house allotment, entries in the National Register of Citizens (NRC), family registers and forest rights certificates will also be considered valid. Officials said the SIR exercise is aimed at addressing changes that have occurred over the past two decades due to migration, deaths and duplication of voter entries. The Commission noted that intensive revision exercises had been conducted periodically between 1951 and 2004, but significant demographic changes since then have made another large-scale verification necessary. The Election Commission had earlier launched the first phase of the exercise in Bihar, where the final electoral roll reportedly includes 7.42 crore voters. In the second phase, SIR has also been announced for Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.

## Storms and lightning leave 111 dead across UP; Prayagraj worst-hit, Yogi orders relief

New Delhi, May 14: A powerful spell of thunderstorms, heavy rain, hailstorms, and lightning strikes tore through several districts of Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday evening, leaving at least 111 people dead and 72 injured, officials said on Thursday. The large-scale destruction prompted Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to order immediate rescue and relief operations across affected districts, with officials directed to stay on alert and submit regular situation reports every three hours.



According to the Relief Commissioner's Office, the severe weather also killed 114 livestock and damaged 87 houses. The administration said district authorities are being provided funds and assistance on priority as teams continue surveys in affected areas. Prayagraj reported the highest number of deaths at 21, followed by Sant Ravidas Nagar with 14

fatalities and Fatehpur with 11. Deaths were also reported from districts including Basti, Sambhal, Kanpur Dehat, Barabanki, Bahraich, Hardoi and Unnao.

Chief Minister Adityanath expressed condolences to the families of those killed and instructed District Magistrates to immediately reach affected locations and speed up relief work. He also asked officials to carry out ground assessments to ensure compensation for loss of life, livestock and crop damage is released without delay. The Chief Minister further directed authorities to regularly share updates related to compensation and relief efforts through social media platforms. Prayagraj

records highest deaths after storm fury. District Magistrate Vineeta Singh told IANS that strong winds and an intense storm caused extensive damage in Prayagraj district on Wednesday evening. "Till late at night, 17 deaths had been reported in Prayagraj district. Later during the night, the number rose to 21. Lekhal officials and the district administration reached the affected spots and carried out the necessary formalities. The relief amount provided by the government was made available promptly once the required documents are received," she said. In Fatehpur, District Magistrate Nidhi Gupta Vats said the death toll climbed to 11, while 15 people sustained serious injuries. She said rescue and relief operations were underway, with administrative teams deployed on the ground.

## HBSE Class 10 result out; Bhiwani's Deepika tops

Chandigarh, May 14: Haryana Board of School Education (HBSE) on Thursday declared the Class 10 examination results, recording an overall pass percentage of 89.6 per cent, with girls outperforming boys in the state board examinations. HBSE Chairman Dr Pawan Kumar said that a total of 2,76,640 students had appeared in the matriculation examinations this year, out of whom 2,47,860 students successfully cleared the exams. He said 15 students secured positions in the state merit list. Deepika, a student of Adarsh Senior Secondary School in Bhiwani, emerged as the state topper by scoring 499 marks out of 500. Her father, Rajkumar, works as a clerk



in the same school. According to the family, Deepika relied mainly on self-study and secured full marks in four subjects while scoring 99 in one term paper. Four students jointly secured the second rank with 498 marks each. These include Raunak from Charkhi Dabri, Khushi and Annu from Hissar, and Dipanshu from Mahendragar. Eleven stu-

dents jointly secured the third rank with 497 marks each. The board said Charkhi Dabri topped the district-wise results in this year's Class 10 results followed by Jind and Mahendragar. Nuh district recorded the lowest performance in the state. HBSE officials stated that this year's Class 10 results were lower than the previous two years.

## From a 1996 defeat in a Communist stronghold to Kerala CM: The political journey of VD Satheesan



New Delhi, May 14: Damodaran (VD) Satheesan, born on May 31, 1964, in Nettoor, Ernakulam, was on Thursday named Kerala's new Chief Minister by the Congress, ending nearly ten days of uncertainty following the United Democratic Front's decisive victory in the 2026 Assembly elections. The announcement came after an internal tug-of-war within the Congress that at times spilled onto the streets. Satheesan, who turned 62 this month, will

and went on to complete his LLB from Kerala Law Academy Law College, Thiruvananthapuram, followed by an LLM from Government Law College in the same city. Before entering electoral politics, he practiced law at the Kerala High Court for approximately ten years. Student politics and early organisational roles Satheesan's entry into politics began through the Kerala Students Union (KSU), the student wing of the Indian National Congress. He rose through campus ranks as an arts club secretary, university union councillor, and eventually chairman of the Mahatma Gandhi University Union during 1986-87. He also served as a secretary of the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) and later as an AICC Secretary.

became the 13th chief minister of Kerala since the state's formation in 1956. On Satheesan's early life and education Satheesan grew up in a middle-class Nair family as one of six siblings in Nettoor. He attended Panangad High School, where he served as school leader, before completing his undergraduate degree at Sacred Heart College, Thevara, in Ernakulam. He subsequently earned a postgraduate diploma in Social Work from Rajagiris College of Sociological

## 'I'm cooperating': Pawan Khera appears before Assam Police in Riniki Bhuyan passport row

New Delhi, May 14: Congress leader Pawan Khera on Thursday appeared before the Crime Branch Police Station in Guwahati in connection with the ongoing controversy over allegations made against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sarma. Speaking briefly to reporters outside the police station, Khera said he was cooperating with the investigation. "The investigation is underway, with administrative teams deployed on the ground. The case has turned into a high-voltage political confrontation between the Congress and the BJP after Khera alleged during an April press conference that Riniki Bhuyan Sarma possessed three passports from India, the UAE and Egypt, besides owning undisclosed luxury properties in Dubai and a company in Wyoming, United States. The Sarma family has denied the allegations and described the documents circulated online as "AI-



generated fabrications" allegedly spread by Pakistani social media groups. "What triggered the controversy The remarks had triggered sharp reactions from Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who accused the Congress leader of spreading falsehoods and waging of legal action. Responding earlier to the allegations, Sarma had said, "Before levelling an allegation, he should have asked the Foreign Minister

Gandhi could also come under the scope of the investigation, alleging that the Congress leader may have provided the documents being cited in the controversy. Supreme Court granted anticipatory bail to Khera. The Supreme Court had earlier granted anticipatory bail to Khera in the matter after the Gauhati High Court rejected his plea on April 24. A bench comprising Justices JK Maheshwari and Atul S Chandurkar observed that the allegations and counter-allegations appeared, at first glance, to be politically motivated and said custodial interrogation was not necessary at this stage. The apex court directed that Khera be granted anticipatory bail in the event of arrest, while asking him to cooperate fully with investigators and appear before authorities whenever required. The court also barred him from influencing witnesses, tampering with evidence or leaving the country without prior permission.

Khera ji has aged, yet he speaks like a madman. Assam Police can find and bring people from 'pataal' as well." The Chief Minister had also alleged that Khera fled to Hyderabad after searches were carried out. "I have come to know through the media that the police have gone to his residence in Delhi, but he has run away to Hyderabad. The law will take its own course," Sarma had said. He further claimed that Rahul

# India-Africa Business Dialogue To Focus On Trade Expansion, Tech And Supply Chain Links

Johansburg, May 14: The government on Thursday said the upcoming India-Africa Business Dialogue (IABD) and Exhibition, to be held on the sidelines of the 4th India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-IV), will serve as a key platform to deepen economic, strategic and technology partnerships between India and African nations.

A curtain raiser event for the initiative was held on May 13 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi under the chairmanship of Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, bringing together ambassadors, high commissioners, senior officials, industry leaders and stakeholders from both sides.

The dialogue is aimed at expanding cooperation in trade, investment, technology, and people-to-people



ties, while also strengthening South-South collaboration, according to the government.

Addressing the gathering, Goyal highlighted India and Africa's civilisational ties and said both regions can together shape a more inclusive and innovation-driven future for the Global South. He noted that bilateral trade between India and Africa reached USD 93.69 billion in 2025-26,

marking a 14.39 per cent increase over the previous year. India's exports stood at USD 45.42 billion, while imports were USD 48.27 billion. Goyal stressed the need to move beyond raw material trade towards value-added manufacturing, integrated supply chains and technology-driven cooperation. He said sectors such as renewable energy, green hydrogen, electric mobility, digitali-

sation, telecommunications, agriculture, healthcare, defence production and critical minerals would be central to future engagement. He also underlined the importance of youth-driven growth, skilling and innovation, noting that nearly two-thirds of the population in both India and Africa is below the age of 35. The minister said the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), valued at nearly USD 3.4 trillion, combined with India's USD 4 trillion economy, presents significant opportunities for deeper integration, resilient supply chains and expanded manufacturing ties. Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said the upcoming dialogue will bring together policymakers, investors, industry leaders and entrepreneurs from both regions. He said the event will feature poli-

cy discussions, sectoral roundtables, B2B and B2G meetings, and exhibitions showcasing innovation in areas such as climate action, digital technologies, manufacturing, healthcare, finance and logistics. Agrawal added that recent India-Kenya and India-Tanzania joint trade committee meetings reflected growing momentum in India-Africa economic relations. According to the government, the initiative aligns with long-term development goals such as Viksit Bharat 2047 and Africa Agenda 2063, with a focus on stronger trade corridors and diversified supply chains. The government has invited wide participation from African and Indian stakeholders to ensure the success of the upcoming summit and associated business events.

# Boxes gone, files missing: Did CIA raid Gabbard's office before JFK, MK Ultra files went public?

Washington, May 14: Apolitical storm erupted in Washington after allegations surfaced that the CIA had seized sensitive files related to the John F. Kennedy assassination and the controversial MKUltra programme from the office of Director of National Intelligence Tuli Gabbard. The controversy quickly snowballed into a wider confrontation over classified records, executive authority and long-running conspiracy-linked investigations in the United States. While Fox News reported that CIA agents had removed several boxes of documents from Gabbard's office, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence flatly rejected the claim, calling reports of a "raid" false. According to Fox News, the files allegedly taken from the office included records linked to the assassination of former US



President John F. Kennedy and MKUltra, the Cold War-era CIA programme accused of conducting mind control and psychological experiments using drugs such as LSD. Olivia Coleman, Press Secretary for the Director of National Intelligence, denied the reports in a statement posted on X.

"This is false - the CIA did not raid the DNI's office," she wrote.

The matter gained further traction after Republican Representative Anna Paulina Luna warned the CIA of legal action if the documents were not returned within 24 hours.

Luna, who chairs the House Oversight Task Force on the Declassification of Federal Secrets, said Congress had formally requested the records and accused the agency of obstructing the declassification process ordered by the President.

**What Anna Paulina Luna said on the alleged CIA action**

"The reason why this is troubling, A) there was an executive order that the president directed the full declassification of JFK but then also to the MKUltra files famously the CIA said that all documents were released.

# 'Emmanuel Macron was slapped by wife after she caught him flirting with Iranian-French actress,' claims new book



London, May 14: French President Emmanuel Macron's wife Brigitte Macron "lost her temper" and slapped him allegedly after discovering a flirty exchange of messages between him and Iranian-born actress Golshifteh Farahani, according to a new book.

The incident that took place last year during Macron's state visit to Vietnam was caught on cameras, triggering a massive controversy. Macron had later clarified that the

incident was blown out of proportion and that he was "joking" with his wife. However, the book titled An (almost) perfect couple by French journalist Florian Tardif claims that Brigitte "lost her temper" on the plane after discovering flirty messages on Macron's phone from the Iranian-origin actress.

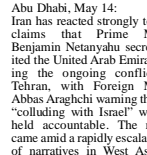
Tardif alleged that even though the relationship between Macron and Farahani was "platonic," some exchanges — which the journalist said were

forwarded to him by people close to Macron — "went quite far."

According to Tardif, a message from the actress sent to Macron read: "I find you very attractive." To this, the French journalist responded — "I find you very pretty."

Moments before the couple was to disembark from their plane in Vietnam, Brigitte came across a text from the actress and what happened next was seen by the whole world. "This led to tensions within the couple, which resulted in this private scene becoming public," Tardif told RTL Radio. While Brigitte has not spoken about the incident publicly, the clarification from Macron wasn't enough to stop US President Donald Trump from taking pot-shots at him.

# Abu Dhabi denies, Iran warns, Israel boasts: Netanyahu's 'secret UAE visit' claim that set West Asia on edge



Abu Dhabi, May 14: Iran has reacted strongly to Israeli claims that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu secretly visited the United Arab Emirates during the ongoing conflict with Tehran, with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warning that those "colluding with Israel" would be held accountable. The remarks came amid a rapidly escalating war of narratives in West Asia after Israel claimed a behind-the-scenes diplomatic breakthrough with the UAE during "Operation Roaring Lion", even as Abu Dhabi publicly rejected reports of any such visit or undisclosed military coordination.

In a post on X, Araghchi said that security agencies had already warned the country's leadership about attempts to build anti-Iran alignments in the region.

"Netanyahu has now publicly revealed what Iran's security services long ago conveyed to our leadership. Enmity with the Great People of Iran is a foolish game. Collusion with Israel in doing so: unforgivable. The collusion with Israel to sow division will be held



to account," he said.

What Israel claimed about Netanyahu's UAE visit

The Israeli Prime Minister's Office on Wednesday said Netanyahu had secretly travelled to the UAE during the military campaign against Iran and held talks with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

In a statement posted on X, the Israeli PMO described the visit as a "historic breakthrough" in bilateral ties.

"Prime Minister's Office Statement: In the midst of



Operation Roaring Lion, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu secretly visited the United Arab Emirates, where he met with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed. This visit has led to a historic breakthrough in relations between Israel and the UAE," the statement said.

Israeli media reports added to the speculation surrounding the alleged visit and security cooperation between the two countries.

According to the Times of Israel, senior US officials confirmed earlier this week that Israel had sent



an Iron Dome battery along with personnel to the UAE during the conflict with Iran.

The report also cited claims that Mossad chief David Barnea travelled to the UAE at least twice during the war to coordinate over the regional situation. The Wall Street Journal, quoting Arab officials and a source familiar with the matter, also reported on the alleged coordination.

The Times of Israel further claimed that the two countries coordinated an attack on a major Iranian petrochemical facility. UAE dismisses reports as "entirely unfounded"

Soon after the Israeli PMO statement surfaced, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a categorical denial.

The ministry said relations between the UAE and Israel remain publicly governed under the Abraham Accords framework and rejected suggestions of any undisclosed arrangements. "The UAE reaffirms that its relations with Israel are public and conducted

# Iran dismisses support for Bahrain-US Hormuz resolution as 'misleading and deceptive'



Tehran, May 14: Iran's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN), Amir-Saeed Iravani, has sharply criticised the Bahrain-US effort to rally support for a draft UN resolution on the Strait of Hormuz, calling the campaign "ridiculous, misleading, and deceptive", according to Iranian state media Press TV. "US efforts to highlight growing support for an anti-Iran draft resolution are ridiculous, misleading, and deceptive," Iravani said. He further said that, "no level of support gained through pressure or coercion can legitimise illegal US actions against Iran, including maritime blockades, attacks, and the seizure of commercial ves-



sels, as well as the detention of crews like pirates." Meanwhile, a draft United Nations Security Council resolution calling for freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz has secured the backing of 112 co-sponsoring nations, according to a diplomatic source cited by Al Jazeera. The resolution, introduced

by Bahrain and the United States, aims to safeguard international waterways, commercial shipping, energy supplies and the safety of seafarers, Al Jazeera reported. According to the news report, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait joined Bahrain and the United States as the principal sponsors. Countries includ-

ing India, Japan, South Korea, Kenya and Argentina, along with most European Union (EU) member states, have also backed the draft.

"The list takes up three full pages," said Al Jazeera's correspondent in New York, Gabriel Elizondo. "It's essentially being co-sponsored by two-thirds of all 193 UN member states." The news report noted that this is the second such resolution introduced by Bahrain. A previous draft submitted last month was vetoed by China and Russia, both of which have expressed reservations about the latest proposal.

No date has yet been set for a vote on the resolution, Al Jazeera reported. Meanwhile, days after President Donald Trump

disputed Iran's peace proposal plan and stated that the ceasefire stands on "life support", Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs, Kazem Charibabadi, accused the United States of "not doing serious diplomacy". In a conversation here, he also maintained that Iran has "not attacked neighbouring countries" and referred to the presence of US military bases in the region.

"US is not doing serious diplomacy," he said. Charibabadi told ANI that the Strait of Hormuz situation will be better than before once peace is established. "There will be transparency. There will be no discrepancy. We will not go beyond international law."

# EU Revises Draft List To Continue Imports Of Indian Aquaculture Products Beyond September 2026



Brussels, May 14: India has received a major boost in its seafood export sector after the European Union (EU) included the country in its revised draft list for the continued export of aquaculture products to the European market beyond September 2026.

The revised draft list, published by EU on May 12, addresses concerns that emerged after India was omitted from the earlier Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2598 issued in October 2024. That regulation had excluded India from the list of third countries authorised to export products of animal origin intended for human consumption to the EU from September 2026 onward. The latest development comes after India under-



took several compliance measures in accordance with the European Commission (EC) Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/905. The regulation requires exporting countries to ensure that animals and animal products exported to the EU are free from the use of antimicrobial medicinal products for growth promotion and antimicrobials reserved for human treatment.

According to the EC's

communication, the revised list includes countries that have demonstrated compliance with EU restrictions on antimicrobial use in food-producing animals and have provided the required guarantees under EU regulations.

The proposed inclusion is being seen as a significant relief for India's seafood industry, particularly for aquaculture exporters who depend heavily on the European market.

# Meta Rolls Out WhatsApp 'Incognito' Mode To Address Privacy Concerns For AI Chats



Washington, May 14: Meta has introduced a new "incognito" mode for chats with its Meta AI chatbot on WhatsApp, as the company moves to address growing privacy concerns around AI-based conversations, according to a report by TechCrunch. The company announced on Wednesday that users will soon be able to start private conversations with Meta AI through a new icon in one-

on-one chats on WhatsApp. The feature is also expected to be added to the standalone Meta AI app in the coming months. According to Meta, the incognito chats will operate within a secure environment where conversations will not be visible to others, stored, or retained after the user exits the chat. Messages exchanged in the mode will automatically disappear once the session is closed. Alice Newton-Rex, Vice President of Product at WhatsApp, said users are increasingly relying on AI for sensitive and personal interactions, including financial, health, and relationship-related queries. "People are starting to use AI for everything, including some of their most private thoughts, whether that's tackling financial or health ques-

tions, or for advice on how to respond to a tricky message from a friend.

# 'Iran a victim of illegal expansionism and warmongering' Tehran lashes out at US, Israel from BRICS stage in Delhi



Tehran, May 14: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Thursday launched a strong attack on the United States and Israel at the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi, accusing both countries of violating international law and fuelling instability in the region.

Addressing the gathering, Araghchi said Iran had become the target of what he described as "brutal and unlawful aggression" and urged BRICS nations and the wider international community to take a firm stand against what he called "warmongering" and repeated violations of the UN Charter.

His remarks came at a time of heightened tensions in West Asia,



with Tehran repeatedly accusing Washington and Tel Aviv of escalating military and political pressure on Iran. The Iranian minister used the BRICS platform to push for stronger diplomatic backing from emerging economies and

America's own intelligence community," Araghchi said during his address. "The truth is that Iran, like many other independent nations, is the victim of illegal expansionism and warmongering. These are ugly things, which have no place in today's world," he added.

Iran seeks stronger BRICS response against US and Israel

Araghchi urged BRICS member states to open a condemnation what he termed "illegal aggression" against Iran and prevent the politicisation of international institutions. "Iran therefore calls upon BRICS member states and all responsible members of the international community to explicitly condemn violations.



"The attacks on my people have been justified with false claims that run counter to the informed assessments of the International Atomic Energy Agency and even



## Shaleen Kabra visits Sempora Housing Colony reviews facilities for move employees

SRINAGAR, MAY 14: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Estates Department, Shaleen Kabra, today conducted a detailed inspection of the newly constructed Estates Housing Colony at Sempora.

He reviewed the quality of construction, availability of essential services and overall living conditions for the employees.

During his interaction with the move employees residing in the colony, the ACS had feedback on accommodation, mess facilities, transport and sanitation. He emphasized that employee welfare remains a top priority and called for coordinated efforts by all the line departments to ensure seamless provision of services.

Shaleen Kabra directed the Estates Department and concerned agencies to address minor deficiencies on priority. He instructed the PHE and PDD to ensure uninterrupted water and power supply, with dedicated helplines for quick grievance redressal.



The ACS asked the department for running of dispensary within the colony 24\*7 and directed the R&B Department to complete the remaining landscaping and internal road works within 15 days. Stressing inter-departmental synergy, he called for a nodal officer to be designated for real-time coordi-

nation between Estates, JKTC, JKRTC, and District Administration. Shaleen Kabra was accompanied by Director Estates Kashmir Mohd Ashraf Hakak, Deputy Director Kashmir, Assistant Director, and senior engineers from PHE, PDD, R&B, and UEED. The team made

a comprehensive round of the colony, inspecting the flat interiors, common areas, parking, drainage and the mess facility. He appreciated the efforts of field staff in making the colony functional ahead of the Darbar Move.

The flats at Sempora had remained under construction for more than a decade due to funding and logistical constraints. They were completed after substantial funds were provided in recent years. The colony has now proved highly useful in accommodating the officers and officials during the Darbar Move period, reducing pressure on private arrangements.

The mess facility is being managed by Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation to provide quality meals to the residents. Besides, the Jammu and Kashmir Road Transport Corporation has deployed a dedicated fleet of vehicles for daily movement of the employees.

## Additional Commissioner Kashmir reviews Digitisation of Jamabandis in Shopian

SHOPIAN, MAY 13: Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Akramullah Tak, along with ADDC Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone today took stock of the digitisation of Jamabandis in the district during a review meeting held at the Conference Hall of the Tehsil Office, Shopian.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faz; Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Shopian, Shakoor Ahmed Dar, besides all Tehsildars and revenue officials of the district.

At the outset, the Additional Commissioner conducted a detailed assessment of the ongoing digitisation process across all Tehsils and directed the concerned officers to expedite the remaining work



related to backlog mutation updation. While reviewing the progress of digitisation of revenue records in the district, Tak was informed that 100 percent of Jamabandis across Shopian district have been digitised, while the work on updation of backlog mutations has also been completed. Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized that digitisation of revenue records is

a vital governance reform aimed at ensuring transparency, efficiency and citizen-centric service delivery, besides facilitating easy access to land-related information. He instructed the officers to maintain close coordination and ensure accuracy in the digitised records so as to avoid discrepancies and inconvenience to the public.

## Food Safety Department seizes fake 'Imported' Basel Seed Drink worth Rs 3.56 Lakh in Anantnag

ANANTNAG, MAY 14: Based on credible inputs regarding the sale of "Basel Seed Drink" of various flavours being marketed as an imported product under the "American" brand, the Food Safety Department, Anantnag conducted raids at multiple locations across the district and seized 150 cases of the product worth approximately Rs 3,56,400.

The seizures were made from various Food Business Operators (FBOs), including M/S Aayit Trading Company, General Bus Stand Anantnag; M/S Hamas, Bypass Road Anantnag; and M/S Valley Traders & Distributors, Pashoo Market Anantnag.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that the concerned FBOs had procured the products from M/S Krusha Premium Industries Pvt. Ltd., Sonipat Haryana; M/S GS. Food Labs, Pooth Khurd, New Delhi; and M/S Aamant, Chowadi Fowara Chowk, Jammu. During scrutiny of the labels, serious discrepancies were observed. The products were labelled as "American" Brand Basel Seed Drink, Product of Thailand, purportedly manu-

factured by Golden and SUN EXPORT, Bangkok, Thailand, without mandatory importer details on the label. Furthermore, the products were found carrying a fake FSSAI license number.

Investigation conducted so far also suggests that the product, despite being marketed as an imported commodity, is suspected to have been manufactured locally. The seized stock has been taken into custody for further legal and analytical proceedings under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. Samples of the product have also been lifted for detailed laboratory analysis to ascertain its safety and quality standards.

The department has initiated a comprehensive investigation to identify all individuals and entities involved in the alleged and illegal manufacture/distribution of the product. The Department of Food Safety reiterates its commitment towards safeguarding public health and advises consumers to remain cautious while purchasing food products carrying suspicious or misleading labels.

## Javid Dar reviews status of veterinary units, infrastructure across Kashmir

SRINAGAR, MAY 14: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired a review meeting at the Civil Secretariat here to assess the status of veterinary units across Kashmir and review the progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and Union Territory sector schemes of APD. The meeting was attended by Director Finance, APD, Deputy Director APD, Deputy Director, Husbandry Kashmir besides other senior officers of the department. Taking stock of the manpower requirements in the



Animal Husbandry Department, the Minister was informed that all requisite formalities for filling vacant posts of Veterinarians and Para-

professionals have been

completed in accordance with the established guidelines. He was also told that the tendering process for the pending works is set to

be completed shortly. Emphasising the urgency of strengthening the veterinary healthcare infrastructure, the Minister directed the officers to ensure that the tendering process is completed within one week while adhering strictly to the procedural norms and maintaining complete transparency. During a detailed review of the budgetary allocations and expenditure under various developmental schemes, the Minister sought a comprehensive account of the physical and financial progress achieved under Centrally Sponsored and UT sector schemes being implemented across Jammu and Kashmir. Emphasising timely execution of development works, the Minister directed the concerned officers to further intensify monitoring of all ongoing projects, particularly those being implemented under NABARD and other flagship programmes. He made it clear that random field inspections should be undertaken to verify the on-ground progress and ensure that the intended benefits of these projects are reaching stakeholders effectively. Highlighting the importance of modernizing the livestock sector, the Minister stressed the need for comprehensive upgradation of farms and strengthening of training infrastructure to equip the farmers with improved technical knowledge and better resources.

## DC Bandipora interacts with Youth Clubs under Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan

BANDIPORA, MAY 14: Continuing the ongoing efforts under the Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, District Administration Bandipora on Thursday organised an interaction programme with Youth Clubs to strengthen community participation and youth engagement in the fight against drug abuse.

Addressing the participants, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of building a strong mind among youth through positive engagement and constructive activities.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted the need for establishing and strengthening knowledge centres to channelise the energy of youth towards education,



creativity and personality development. The DC also urged parents to actively engage with their children through prayers, sports activities

among youngsters.

To ensure regular interaction and coordination with youth groups, the Deputy Commissioner directed all Block Development Officers (BDOs) to convene meetings with Youth Clubs at least once every month.

She encouraged participants to remain actively involved in the campaign against drug abuse and report any issue requiring administrative intervention.

The Deputy Commissioner stated that Youth Clubs shall serve as a vital bridge between youth, vulnerable individuals, and the Wagar Knowledge Centres. She informed participants that as part of the anti-drug initiative one such centre is nearing completion and

will soon be operationalised at the Mini Secretariat, while four more centres will be developed in the coming time with an eventual target of one such centre in each Rural Block. These centres will function as hubs of knowledge, recreation, and information, providing meaningful avenues for youth and vulnerable sections of society through constructive engagement, awareness, and personal development.

The programme focused on creating awareness regarding the harmful effects of substance abuse, implementation of the COTPA Act, and the need for sustained collective action to safeguard future generations from the menace of drugs.

## Mass Awareness Activities under Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan continue across Bandipora

BANDIPORA, MAY 14: District Administration Bandipora on Thursday continued activities under the 100-Day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan across the district with awareness programmes, pledge ceremonies, group singing events, cultural performances, sports activities, rallies, Gram Sabhas and signature campaigns organised in schools, colleges and Panchayat Halls.

Awareness programmes, pledge ceremonies and group singing activities were organised at HSS Chuntimulla, HSS Nowgam Bandipora, PM SHRI HSS Shadipora, HS Jurnial Talai, HS Ahmsharif, HSS Ketson,



effects of substance abuse and promote a drug-free society. PM SHRI GHS Sumbal, HSS Nowgam, HS Koragbal, Government High School Garoora, and other educational institutions under the banner of Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan to spread awareness regarding the harmful

effects of substance abuse and promote a drug-free society. PM SHRI GHS Sumbal, HSS Nowgam, HS Koragbal, Government High School Garoora, GHS Naidkhai, HS Jurnial Talai and HSS Gadakhud.

## JKEDI brings together investors, startups at Networking Meet-2026

SRINAGAR, MAY 14: Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Thursday organized a One-Day Networking and Investors Meet-2026 in collaboration with Tally Startup Collective and SanchiConnect, a deep-tech enablement network, at its Main Campus, Sempora. The event, held under the aegis of the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27, commenced with an address by Director JKEDI, Mohammad Younis Malik, who welcomed investors, mentors, accelerators, founders, startups and entrepreneurs participating in the programme. Stressing the importance of such engagements, he termed the event a significant step towards building a vibrant and sustainable startup ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir. Dr. Sumil K Shekhwat, CEO, SanchiConnect; Vivek Sanyasaria, Head - Startup and Govt Alliance at Tally Solutions Pvt Ltd.; Stanley Stephen, Managing Director, Small Ticket Fund.; Bhavish Sood, General Partner, Modulo

Capital were the resource persons of the event. Joint Director JKEDI, Chand Kishor Sharma, was also present on the occasion. Speaking during the event, the Director JKEDI highlighted the entrepreneurial spirit deeply rooted in the region's heritage and culture, stating that entrepreneurship has always been embedded in the ancestral mindset of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He observed that while the region has traditionally been known for tourism, handicrafts and its rich cultural identity, the youth today are increasingly exploring global opportunities through innovative startup concepts and emerging business models. Encouraging the participating investors and accelerators, the Director JKEDI urged them not to reject raw ideas coming from young minds, but instead appreciate and motivate budding entrepreneurs. "Do not merely look at the balance sheets of our startups and founders, but see the hope and determination in their eyes," he remarked.

## Commissioner FDA reviews Enforcement measures

Calls for strong Public Health vigilance ahead of festivities

SRINAGAR, MAY 14: Commissioner, Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), Jammu & Kashmir, Khalid Jahangir held an introductory meeting with senior officers and field functionaries of Drug and Food Wing of the department, after assuming charge today. During the meeting, held at the Conference Hall Combined Drug and Food Laboratory, Srinagar, the Commissioner emphasized the critical role of the department in safeguarding public health and ensuring the availability of safe food and quality drugs to the people of Jammu & Kashmir. He stressed that field functionaries must remain visible, accessible, and proactive on the ground and should dis-

charge their duties strictly in accordance with the mandate of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Drugs & Cosmetics Act. He directed officers to strengthen surveillance and inspection mechanisms to ensure that food business operators (FBOs) and pharmacy establishments comply with the prescribed legal standards and regulatory requirements. The Commissioner stressed that enforcement activities should be carried out in a fair, transparent, and professional manner. He further emphasized the need for coordinated teamwork among all enforcement officers of the department to ensure effective implementation of food safety and drug

control measures. Drawing attention towards growing menace of drug abuse and its adverse impact on society, particularly on the younger generation, the Commissioner highlighted the importance of awareness and strict enforcement measures. He stated that the UT of J&K has already launched a comprehensive 100-day Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan campaign against drug abuse, and directed all field officers to actively participate in the campaign by conducting awareness programmes, public outreach activities, and coordinated enforcement drives at the grassroots level. In view of the forthcoming Eid festivities and Moharram, the Commissioner directed the

field staff to intensify market surveillance and enforcement activities, particularly focusing on highly consumed food items during the festive season. He asked the enforcement teams to remain extra vigilant and proactive in checking the quality, hygiene, adulteration, storage, and sale of food products in markets across Jammu & Kashmir.

Reaffirming the commitment of the Food & Drugs Administration towards public welfare, he called upon all officers and stakeholders to work collectively with dedication and integrity to strengthen the regulatory framework and ensure a healthier and safer society for the people of Jammu & Kashmir.



# LG Manoj Sinha Inaugurates South Kashmir Volleyball League-2026

**SRINAGAR, MAY 14:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday inaugurated the South Kashmir Volleyball League-2026 at Shopian. He also dedicated the Multipurpose Sports Indoor Hall at Arhama constructed at a cost of Rs 4.94 crore to the Youth.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor hailed sports tournaments like South Kashmir Volleyball League as a powerful declaration of the youth's transition from spectators to the architects of their own destiny.

He emphasized that the league started in 2021, has emerged as a major platform for youth engagement, promotion of competitive sports culture and strengthening of volleyball activities across South Kashmir.

"South Kashmir



Volleyball League is significantly contributing towards the campaign of 'Nasha Mukti J&K' by promoting sports as a positive avenue for youth participation and social transformation," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that, under the leadership of Honble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, we have laid a strong foundation for

the youth to realise their dreams and showcase their immense talent at national and international sports arena.

"By engaging large number of youth across the Union Territory in volleyball and various sporting activities and national integration programmes, the administration is successfully channeling the energy of the youth toward nation-building.

Every serve and every spike on this volleyball court is a message that our youth are confronting challenges and moving forward as an integral part of the national mainstream," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that Shopian is at the heart of South Kashmir's sports revolution.

"Approximately Rs 22 crore spent on sports infra-

structure in Shopian over the last six years. Ongoing works worth Rs 8.80 crore are currently underway in the district. 20 Khelo India centers are operational across South Kashmir, with five in Shopian alone, providing training and equipment to 600 regular trainees," he said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor also appealed to the young sports persons to act as role models and mentors and guide new generation towards a drug-free, brighter and healthier future.

He also reiterated the administration's resolve to eliminate the narco-terror ecosystem from Jammu Kashmir. The four day South Kashmir Volleyball League is being organized by Volleyball Association J&K and Jammu Kashmir Sports Council.

# Div Com Jammu visits Kathua: Reviews progress of key projects, NMJKA; SANJY-2026 arrangements

**INSPECTS DAK EXPRESSWAY, NH WORKS, SAHAR AND RAVI BRIDGES, LAKHANPUR CORRIDOR CALLS FOR INTENSIFYING ANTI-DRUG MEASURES, SPEEDY DIGITIZATION OF REVENUE RECORDS**

**KATHUA, MAY 14:** Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar today conducted a whirlwind tour of Kathua district to inspect major infrastructure projects. He also chaired meetings to review the implementation of Nasha Mukti Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan and assess arrangements for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026.

During the visit, the Divisional Commissioner inspected the progress of works on the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway and reviewed the pace of construction on various stretches. He held detailed discussions with the concerned officers and executing agencies regarding the roadmap for timely completion of the prestigious project and stressed the need for maintaining



quality standards while ensuring adherence to deadlines.

He also visited different sections of the National Highway, including the ongoing reconstruction works of Sahar and Ravi bridges, which were damaged in last year's floods. Assessing the restoration and strengthening works on these vital connectivity points, the Divisional Commissioner directed the

concerned departments to expedite the pace of execution so that inconvenience to commuters and transporters is minimized.

The Divisional Commissioner further inspected the Lakhampur Corridor and took stock of the beautification, traffic management and civic improvement measures being undertaken in view of the upcoming pilgrimage season.

# Sr Vice president Jammu chamber applauded the initiative of PM

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** Senior vice president Jammu chamber of commerce Anil Gupta applauded the initiative taken by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to cut down his conveyance to only two vehicles. On the action of our Prime Minister Modi many BJP CM's, Governor's have also taken similar steps. This initiative will reduce our dependency of fuel purchase from other countries and in reward our foreign reserves will raise. Gupta also said, not to purchase gold for one year is



another good step. But central government should give a suitable amnesty to gold suppliers, jewellers and gold smiths along with their artisans. Government

should provide interest free loans to jewellers and one year salary to artisans so that they can run their livelihoods. In this need of hour Government should stop online trade, because main players in online businesses are foreign based companies. Trading communities who are generating revenue in shape of GST and income tax & also providing jobs to needy persons are primarily local. Trading community always stand for the best of our country & betterment of countrymen.

# Sakeena Itoo inaugurates Two-Day International Conference on "Manoeuvring Business Society and Culture in the New World Order" at Govt. SPMR College of Commerce Jammu

**JAMMU, MAY 14:** Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo inaugurated Two-Day International Conference on "Manoeuvring Business, Society and Culture in the New World Order" at Government SPMR College of Commerce here today.

MLA Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi; Vice Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu, Prof. Dr. K. S. Chandrasekar Rao; Director Colleges, Prof. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir; Director, CEC, UGC, Prof. Prikshit Manhas; Principal SPMR College, Prof. Sunil Gupta; Deans of different faculties of Cluster University of Jammu, Principals and former Principals of various Government Degree Colleges from across the Jammu Division, senior academicians, intellectuals, administrative officers and other distinguished dignitaries from the fields of higher education, research and public administration, faculty members of the college and large number of students were

**Highlights transformative role of education in building inclusive, progressive, innovation-driven society**



also present on the occasion. The conference also witnessed the presence of eminent academicians, policy-makers, administrators, researchers, industry experts from across the country and abroad. Addressing the gathering, the Minister emphasized the transformative role of education in building an inclusive, progressive and innovation-driven society. She highlighted the urgent need for academic institutions to cultivate ethical leadership, social responsi-

bility and global perspectives in order to effectively navigate the emerging challenges of the new world order. The Minister highlighted the need for collaborative thinking and innovative approaches to ensure sustainable growth, inclusive development and preservation of cultural values amid changing global realities. She appreciated the efforts of Government SPMR College of Commerce for organizing an international platform aimed at encouraging meaningful discus-

opportunities for constructive dialogue on pressing socio-economic and cultural issues confronting modern societies.

Vice Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu, Prof. Dr. K. S. Chandrasekar Rao delivered a thought-provoking address on the changing dimensions of global business, higher education and cultural integration. He highlighted the significance of adaptability, innovation and intellectual resilience in responding to the complexities of the modern world. Director Colleges, while speaking on the occasion, underscored the need for collaborative academic ecosystems that encourage critical inquiry, policy-oriented research and meaningful engagement with contemporary global realities. In his keynote address, Director, CEC, UGC, Prof. Prikshit Manhas shared profound insights into the changing paradigms of education, technology and global academic ecosystems in the contemporary world order. He highlighted the necessity of integrating technology, innovation, MSME.

# DC Reasi reviews Mission YUVA PM-SYM implementation

**REASI, MAY 14:** Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today chaired a meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) to review applications submitted under Mission YUVA through the Skill and Business Development Unit. During the meeting, the committee conducted a detailed scrutiny and evaluation of the applications, following which 241 cases were approved for financial assistance and institutional support under the programme. The Deputy Commissioner directed the JK Bank authorities to ensure expeditious processing and timely disbursement of all approved cases so that the beneficiaries can establish their enterpris-

es at the earliest. He also instructed the concerned departments to create new batches for entrepreneurship and skill development programmes and stressed that no training centre should remain inactive. Later, the Deputy Commissioner chaired another meeting to review the implementation and progress of the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PM-SYM) in the district. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the registration progress under the scheme and assessed the performance of the concerned departments and agencies involved in its implementation.

# J&K poised to begin Inland Water Transport services soon

# CS assesses progress achieved in partnership with IWAI

**SRINAGAR, MAY 14:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today reviewed the progress and future roadmap for development of inland water transport infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir during a high-level meeting held to assess the initiatives being undertaken by the Transport Department in collaboration with the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI). The meeting focused on the promotion of sustainable, eco-friendly and modern water transport systems across major rivers of the Union Territory, with special emphasis on development of cruise tourism, urban water transport facilities and navigational infrastructure on

the notified National Waterways in Jammu and Kashmir. Those who attended includes ACS, PWD, Chairperson, IWAI; Secretary, Transport Department; Transport Commissioner; other officers from IWAI; Representatives from line departments and senior officers from the Transport Department. The Chief Secretary reviewed the issues requiring inter-departmental coordination including removal of coffer dams under bridges, raising of HT and LT power lines, provision of electricity and water connections at terminals, construction of connecting roads, sewage treatment facilities at



key ghats and permissions related to tree cutting and construction activities. Emphasising the immense tourism, economic and environmental potential of inland waterways in Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned depart-

ments to work in close coordination with IWAI for timely execution of all components of the project. He stressed that development of modern water transport infrastructure would not only provide a sustainable mode of transportation but also significantly enhance tourism

potential, generate employment opportunities and create new avenues for economic activity along riverfronts across the Union Territory. He further underscored the need for ensuring seamless integration of water transport facilities with tourism infrastructure while maintaining ecological sensitivity and preserving the natural character of rivers and surrounding landscapes. During the presentation made by Chairperson, IWAI, Sunil Paliwal it was elucidated that significant progress has been achieved on the development of National Waterway-49 on river Jhelum, where a river cruise corridor from Pantha Chowk to

Wular Lake spanning nearly 76 kilometres is being developed. It was further informed that construction of eight floating jetties along the Jhelum corridor is underway and is expected to be completed by July 2026. The development of associated onshore infrastructure is targeted for completion by July 2027, while installation of navigational aids is scheduled to be completed by July 2026. Fairway maintenance along the river stretch is being carried out jointly by IWAI and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir through deployment of dredgers to ensure safe and uninterrupted navigation. The meeting was informed that the procurement of ten hybrid

electric boats with a carrying capacity of 20 passengers each is being processed by IWAI, with bids presently under evaluation. The contract is likely to be awarded by May 2026, while delivery of the vessels is expected by March 2027. Reviewing the interventions being undertaken in the Jammu region, the Chief Secretary was informed that cruise tourism infrastructure is also being developed on river Chenab under National Waterway-26. A nine-kilometre river cruise stretch from Reasi to Akhnour Fort is proposed, where construction of two jetties has already been awarded and is expected to be completed by July 2026.

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