

Northin News

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Postal Regd. No. JK/504/19-21

VOL. NO. 14 | ISSUE NO. 128

JAMMU, THURSDAY, 21 MAY 2026

E-paper: <https://northinnews.com/epaper/> PAGE 12 RS. 3.00

Lieutenant Governor Sinha hands over appointment letters to newly appointed constables of J&K Police

JAMMU, MAY 20: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today presented appointment letters to newly appointed constables of Jammu & Kashmir Police. On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor urged the new recruits to dedicate themselves to defending the unity and integrity of the motherland and to strengthen the proud legacy of this force.



"We must remain constantly alert and vigilant. The nature of law & order threats and terrorism has evolved, demanding a constant, unyielding vigilance and alert to threats that hide in plain sight," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that new recruits must work as a team because the threats Jammu Kashmir confronts demand cooperation between different agencies. "When we share information, plan strategies, and confront the enemy together, we build capacities that no single institution can create alone. India has always embraced the values of peaceful coexistence, mutual goodwill, and sincere friendship. Yet we face a neigh-

Army Chief Gen Dwivedi to review passing out Parade on May 30



MUMBAI, MAY 20: Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi will review the 150th course of the National Defence Academy (NDA) in Pune on May 30, a statement said on Wednesday. The prestigious event will be held at the Khetarpal Parade Ground at NDA in

the city's Khadakwasa area, it said. Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi will review the Parade as the Reviewing Officer. Nearly 355 cadets of the Army, Navy and Air Force are scheduled to pass out during the grand ceremonial parade of Spring Term-2026, marking the successful culmination of rigorous military and academic training imparted at the academy, the statement said. Prior to the Passing Out Parade, the convocation ceremony of the 150th course will be conducted on May 29 at Habibullah

No compromise on children's future, quality education top priority: Governor Gupta



KANGRA, MAY 20: The Hon'ble Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Sh. Kavinder Gupta today visited Government Primary School, Gurehra in district Kangra and reviewed the educational and infrastructural facilities being provided to students, while underscoring the need to ensure quality education in rural and far-flung areas without compromise. During the visit, the Governor interacted with students, teachers and officials of the

Education Department to assess the ground realities of the schooling system in remote regions of the State. He took detailed feedback regarding the academic environment, infrastructural requirements and key challenges faced by educational institutions in rural areas. Interacting warmly with the students, Shri Kavinder Gupta encouraged them to pursue education with dedication, discipline and self-confidence, stating that children are the future architects of the nation and must be provided every opportunity to

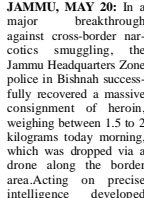
PM Modi holds talks with Italian PM Meloni focus on Trade, Defence and Innovation



ROME, MAY 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Wednesday decided to elevate India-Italy ties to the level of a

Special Strategic Partnership during official talks held in Rome. The two leaders welcomed the growing momentum in bilateral relations and agreed to strengthen cooperation across trade, defence, technology, innovation and connectivity under the India-Italy Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025-2029. According to a statement issued after the talks, both sides agreed to hold annual meetings between the leaders, including on the sidelines of multilateral events, along with regular ministerial and institutional-level engagements. Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Meloni reviewed progress in bilateral cooperation across sectors including trade and investment, defence and security, science and technology, research and innovation, space, energy, artificial intelligence, critical technologies, education, culture and people-to-people ties. The two countries

Massive Drug Haul in Jammu Headquarters Zone; Police seize 1.5-2kgs Heroin via Drone Drop near Pak Border



JAMMU, MAY 20: In a major breakthrough against cross-border narcotics smuggling, the Jammu Headquarters Zone police in Bishnah successfully recovered a massive consignment of heroin, weighing between 1.5 to 2 kilograms today morning, which was dropped via a drone along the border area. Acting on precise intelligence developed over the past week police teams had been maintaining a strict, round-the-clock vigil in the suspected sectors. The meticulous planning paid off when the illicit payload was inter-



cepted and seized before it could reach its intended recipients. A team from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) is currently reaching the spot to conduct a detailed analysis of the recovered contraband and gather vital scientific evidence. This successful seizure is a testament to the unwavering commitment of the Jammu

BRIEF NEWS

Eminent Kashmiri oncologist Dr Asim Rizvi passes away after suspected cardiac arrest

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Renowned surgical oncologist and robotic cancer specialist Dr Asim Rizvi, a native of Nablipora Hawal in Srinagar, passed away in Noida following a suspected cardiac arrest, reports said on Wednesday. The sudden demise of Dr Rizvi has sent shockwaves across the medical community, with colleagues, patients and admirers mourning the loss of a distinguished cancer surgeon known for his dedication and compassionate care. Dr Rizvi was serving as Principal Director of Surgical Oncology and

Drug Peddler detained under PIT-NDPS Act

JAMMU, MAY 20: A suspected drug peddler was detained under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district on Wednesday, officials said. The detainee, identified as Harpal Singh alias Balochi, is a resident of Kathua district. "He was lodged in Central Kot Bhalwal Jail, Jammu, after execution of the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT-NDPS) warrant," they said. According to police, Singh is a habitual offender allegedly involved in drug trafficking and other criminal

J&K State Election Commission finalizes Panchayat Electoral Rolls 2026; voter count crosses 72.24 lakh after 3.39 lakh new enrolments

JAMMU, MAY 20: The State Election Commission, Jammu & Kashmir, has concluded the annual revision of Panchayat Electoral Rolls with the publication of the Final Panchayat Electoral Rolls 2026, fixing April 1, 2026 as the qualifying date. The comprehensive exercise, which began with the release of the Draft Electoral Roll on March 27, 2026, has now formally culminated following a structured schedule of claims, objections and verification. The Commission had opened a 40-day window for filing claims and

objections from March 27 to May 5, 2026. All submissions received during this period were examined and disposed of by Electoral Registration Officers by May 14, 2026. With the completion of this process, the Final Electoral Rolls were published today, May 21, 2026, setting the groundwork for the upcoming panchayat elections across the Union Territory. The revision drive recorded significant voter activity. A total of 3,39,384 new voters were added to the rolls while 1,13,344 names were deleted due to death, shifting,

duplication, and other admissible reasons. In addition, corrections were carried out in the particulars of 17,664 voters, and 31,590 voters were transposed. The final roll now stands at 72,24,131 electors, which includes 36,62,502 male, 35,61,488 female, and 141 Third gender voters. This marks a net increase of 2,26,040 voters compared to the previous revision concluded in January 2025, when the rolls listed 69,98,091 voters with January 1, 2025 as the qualifying date. The Commission said the exercise witnessed substantial

participation from the eligible citizens, with 5,10,285 forms received during the revision period. These forms were processed by Panchayat Election Booth Officials, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers, and Electoral Registration Officers in accordance with the procedure and timelines prescribed by the Commission. To maximize outreach, the SEC undertook extensive SVEEP campaigns through print and electronic media, including radio jingles, voter appeals by the State Election

NEET Paper Leak: Court sends 5 accused to Judicial Custody, extends Khairnar's CBI remand

NEW DELHI, MAY 20: A Delhi court on Wednesday sent five accused in the NEET paper leak case to judicial custody till June 2 and extended the CBI custody of another accused. Special Judge Ajay Gupta allowed the agency's plea seeking judicial custody till June 2 of five accused persons — Manglik Khatik, Vikas Biwal, Dinesh Biwal, all three arrested from Japur; Yash Yadav, arrested from Gangram; and Dhananjay Lokhande, arrested from Ahilyanagar in Maharashtra. Judge Gupta also allowed five more days of custodial interrogation of another accused, Shubham Khairnar. In its remand paper, the agency said Khairnar needed to be



further examined to identify and apprehend other co-accused persons to whom he had sold the NEET-UG 2026 papers, besides recovering and analysing digital devices and evidence, including communication records and financial trail connected to the "paper leak network". It said that the larger conspiracy and source of the leaked question paper had to be unearthed, and the accused had to be taken to various parts of the country, including Nasik in Maharashtra. According to the paper, Khairnar also had to be interrogated to identify locations where questions were revealed to certain candidates. Earlier, on May 14, the court sent Manglik Khatik, Vikas Biwal, Dinesh Biwal, Yash Yadav and Shubham Khairnar to seven days' CBI custody, saying the allegations revealed the role of an "organised

L-G VK Saxena approves major reform for tourism sector in Ladakh, as hotels and guest houses accorded 'Industry' status

Move to benefit hotels & guest houses with incentives like water and electricity tariff at industrial rates, cheaper than existing commercial rates

LEH, MAY 20: In another historic decision aimed at strengthening the tourism and hospitality sector in Ladakh, Lieutenant Governor, Vinai Kumar Saxena, today accorded sanction for granting the registered hotels & guest houses in Ladakh the status of "Industry", a move that would provide these tourism units with incentives, concessions and infrastructure support, at par with other Industries in the UT of Ladakh. This order shall apply w.e.f. June 1, 2026. The "Industry" status for hotels and guest houses would make them eligible for electricity & water tariffs at industrial rates, which are cheaper than the commercial rates currently applicable to these units. This would also make them eligible to avail concessional bank loans, under the State/Central Govt industrial policies. Further, these hotels and guest houses would also be exempted from Property Tax.



entitled to industrial electricity tariff, of Rs 4.10 per unit. Similarly, commercial water tariffs, currently applicable to tourism establishments, range between Rs 28 to Rs 46 per kilolitre, depending upon the consumption slabs, whereas industrial water tariffs range from Rs 26 to Rs 29 per kilolitre, offering substantial relief to tourism units. Significant reductions will also apply to flat-rate water connections. In effect, these incentives and concessions would reduce the operational cost of these lodging/boarding establishments, enhance investor confidence, improve project viability, facilitate access to institutional finance and enable tourism enterprises to avail benefits under the industrial policies and infrastructure support mechanism. "Granting 'industry' status to hotels & guest houses will

FROM PAGE ONE

Lieutenant...

support systems. Using the full force of the law, we must trace and neutralize sources of funding. We must identify every network and dismantle every support system completely, the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor also cautioned that along with modern tools, police force should also adopt tradecraft of basic policing. "In matters of law and order, beat policing proves highly effective. When a beat constable resolves that no crime will occur within their jurisdiction and that public land will not be occupied illegally, such unwavering commitment inevitably delivers results," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor said all new recruits are heirs to this noble legacy and they will enrich it further. He said every uniform of the Jammu & Kashmir Police tells a story of courage, commitment, and purpose woven into the fabric of the nation's history. "Each time you put on the uniform, remember that you are adding a proud chapter to its legacy. Take pride in the ideals of defence and service that the Jammu & Kashmir Police embodies, for they define both your duty and your honour," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor also commended the Jammu Kashmir Police for its swift and effective action against the drug smugglers and drug peddlers during the ongoing Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Campaign. "J&K Police has laid out a comprehensive plan to completely choke drug entry routes. I am confident that the actions in the coming days will be stringent, and will yield major successes," he said. Over 3200 newly recruited constables were inducted into the Jammu Kashmir Police Force. Shri Atul Dooloo, Chief Secretary; Shri Nalin Prabhat, DGP J&K; Shri Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary Home Department; Shri S.J.M. Gillani, Special DG Coordination PHQ; Shri Abdul Ghani Mir, Commandant General Home Guards; Dr Mandep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; senior officials of police and civil administration, and family members of new recruits attended the appointment letters presentation ceremony.

PM Modi...

also decided to establish a Foreign Minister-level mechanism to regularly review the implementation of the Joint Strategic Action Plan. The leaders noted the growing momentum in bilateral trade and investment and welcomed efforts aimed at building long-term business partnerships. They also interacted with Indian and Italian CEOs representing sectors such as defence, digital technology, energy transition, infrastructure and logistics. India and Italy reiterated their shared objective of increasing bilateral trade to 20 billion euros by 2029 and called for the early implementation of the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement. On defence cooperation, the two leaders expressed satisfaction over growing engagement through ministerial exchanges, defence interactions and port visits. They also welcomed the signing of a Joint Declaration of Intent and an industrial roadmap for cooperation in co-design, co-development and co-production of defence equipment. The leaders highlighted expanding collaboration in science and technology and welcomed ongoing cooperation between the Italian Space Agency and the Indian Space Research Organisation. Both sides also called for deeper cooperation in emerging sectors including artificial intelligence, semiconductors, critical minerals and other advanced technologies. Reaffirming their commitment to combating terrorism, the two leaders agreed to continue bilateral and multilateral cooperation in counter-terror efforts. They also reviewed the implementation of the Joint Initiative to Counter Financing of Terrorism adopted in November 2025. Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Meloni acknowledged the contribution of the Indian diaspora in Italy and agreed to facilitate greater mobility for students, researchers and academic institutions. The two countries also decided to celebrate 2027 as the "Year of Culture and Tourism between India and Italy". They welcomed the signing of Memorandums of Understanding on cooperation for the development of the

National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal in Gujarat and on recruitment of nurses from India. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) and stressed the importance of developing connectivity infrastructure through concrete projects. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and global developments, including the Indo-Pacific, India-European Union relations and ongoing conflicts in West Asia and Europe. Prime Minister Modi underscored the importance of dialogue and diplomacy for peaceful resolution of conflicts. The Prime Minister thanked Prime Minister Meloni for the warm hospitality extended during the visit and invited her to visit India at a mutually convenient time.

Army...

Hall, NDA. Former IPS officer Kiran Bedi, who also served as the former lieutenant governor of Puducherry, will be the chief guest and address the graduating cadets. Widely regarded as the cradle of military leadership, the NDA is the country's premier tri-services training institution and one of the finest military academies in the world. It imparts rigorous military, coupled with academic and characterbuilding training, to prepare cadets for leadership roles in the defence forces. The Passing Out Parade will feature an impressive military parade, inspection of contingents, presentation of medals and awards, fly-pasts by military aircraft and helicopters, and the traditional 'Agrim Pag' ceremony by the graduating cadets, the statement said.

No compromise...

excel irrespective of their geographical location. Interacting with the officials present on the occasion, the Governor emphasized that strengthening educational infrastructure in remote schools is essential for ensuring inclusive and equitable development. He stressed the need for modern classrooms, improved sanitation facilities, digital learning resources and a conducive academic atmosphere in government schools situated in rural areas. "Quality education for every child must remain our collective priority. No compromise can be made when it comes to the future of our children," the Governor said. Highlighting Himachal Pradesh's progress in the education sector, Shri Kavinder Gupta expressed satisfaction over the State's improved performance at the national level. Referring to the Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2.0 and PGI-D 2024-25 reports released by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, he noted that Himachal Pradesh has secured the sixth position nationally and third position among the States category after registering significant improvement in educational outcomes and governance indicators. The Governor also discussed with senior officials the concept of strategic clubbing of schools for optimum utilization of resources and manpower. He observed that such measures could strengthen academic standards, enhance administrative efficiency and provide better exposure and learning opportunities to students. Describing education as the foundation of a progressive and empowered society, Shri Kavinder Gupta called upon teachers to continue working with dedication and commitment towards nurturing young minds. He particularly appreciated the efforts of teachers serving in difficult and remote areas and acknowledged their significant contribution towards nation-building. Senior officers of the Education Department and district administration accompanied the Governor during the visit.

Massive...

Police to dismantle the narco-terror ecosystem. It highlights the force's enhanced vigilance and tactical capability in countering emerging technological threats, such as drone-based smuggling from across the border. A comprehensive investigation is underway to trace the forward and backward linkages of the Pak network.

J&K...

Commissioner and regular newspaper advertisements. The district authorities further strengthened the awareness using hearings, mobile awareness vans, and other SVEEP modes to ensure no eligible voter was left out. State Election Commissioner Shantmanu commended the coordinated efforts of District Panchayat Election Officers, EROs, AEROs, PEBOs, the staff of the State

Election Commission and the Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department, as well as representatives of political parties. He also thanked the public for their active participation and cooperation in the successful completion of the revision exercise. The SEC particularly lauded the enthusiastic response from youth, who turned out in large numbers to enroll in the Panchayat Electoral Roll 2026 and contributed significantly to the 3.39 lakh new additions.

J&K...

been adopted in view of the nationwide call for adoption of measures relating to "economic self-defence" amid concerns arising from rising crude oil prices and energy security. The measures would remain in force until further orders, it said. "With effect from 21.05.2026, the high court shall encourage virtual hearings and virtual appearance by learned counsel, subject to observance of the decorum and protocol prescribed for virtual proceedings," the circular said. It said that during the vacation period commencing on June 8, the nominated vacation benches shall deal with the matters coming before them through virtual mode. "However, learned advocates who, for some unavoidable reasons, are unable to participate via video conferencing mode may appear physically before the hon'ble court(s) whenever it is functioning physically," it said. "No physical administrative inspection or visit of the districts shall be conducted till further orders. All administrative meetings shall be convened virtually," the circular added.

The order said the LTC facility for judicial officers and staff of the high court, except those already granted, shall remain unavailable till further orders. "However, for any number of days during which the LTC facility remains unavailable during any month, the relevant LTC block period shall stand extended by one month," it added. The court said the Judicial Academy shall not conduct any physical training programme, and all training programmes, workshops, orientations, and related academic activities shall be conducted only through virtual mode. "The officers of the registry shall, wherever feasible, pool the transport facilities allotted to them to minimise fuel consumption and ensure optimal utilisation of official resources," the circular said.

NEET...

gang" involved in leaking and circulating confidential examination papers for monetary gain. The next day, Lokhande was remanded in six days' CBI custody, and the court underlined that the agency needed to unearth the entire conspiracy, identify and arrest others, recover evidence and prevent tampering of evidence. Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the federal agency also sought signature specimens of accused Manisha Mandhare and Shivraj Moteaganekar, underlining its requirement to further the probe. The CBI has arrested 10 accused in the case. The other accused in the case are the alleged kingpin Pralhad Vithalrao Kulkarni and Manisha Sanjay Waghmare, who were sent to CBI custody for 10 days on May 16. The same day, the CBI arrested biology lecturer Manisha Mandhare, who was part of the National Testing Agency's (NTA) paper-setting committee. She was sent to 14 days' CBI custody on May 17. According to the agency, Waghmare conspired with a public servant associated with the NTA and others to receive the question paper and answers of the NEET exam, after which she provided them to several people, including some of the accused such as Lokhande for monetary benefit. It alleged that Kulkarni, along with Waghmare and several others, provided the "confidential exam-related material" to "selected students", for which the kingpin, who was a "subject expert", received a "substantial amount of money". He then arrested in the case was of Renukai Career Centre (RCC) coaching institute founder Shivraj Raghunath Moteaganekar on the evening of May 17 in Latur. In its remand application before the court the next day, the CBI said, "He is involved in the leakage and circulation of NEET UG exam questions-2026 and that, in conspiracy

with other accused persons, he had received the chemistry questions and answers of the exam before the examination, i.e., on April 23, 2026." The court on May 18 sent him to nine days' CBI custody, noting that the probe was at an initial stage. The NEET (UG) 2026 exam for admission to undergraduate courses in medical colleges, held on May 3, was cancelled two days later amid allegations of paper leak. The government has asked the CBI to carry out a comprehensive inquiry into the "irregularities".

L-G VK...

significantly strengthen the hospitality sector in Ladakh. Apart from reducing operational costs and improving investment potential, this historic reform will play a vital role in local employment and livelihood creation and regional development. The hospitality and tourism sector has significant potential to catalyse sustainable economic development and tourism promotion in Ladakh," L-G Shri Saxena said. This reform will also enhance visitor experience and further establish Ladakh as a world-class tourism destination rooted in sustainability, culture and hospitality, Shri Saxena added. It is noteworthy that this decision would benefit 1257 hotels/guest houses in Ladakh - 1078 in Leh and 179 in Kargil - that employ thousands of staff. However, barring a few, most of these hotels remain operational for just 6 months a year and they shut down during the winters. This results in high maintenance costs, often making the business unsustainable. The decision is also aligned with Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's push for strengthening the domestic tourism and hospitality sector by granting them "Industry" status and creating an enabling environment through suitable policy guidelines and incentives such as capital subsidies, in order to encourage investment. The decision comes following several representations from tourism stakeholders, particularly the All Ladakh Hotel and Guest House Association, seeking extension of industrial electricity and water tariffs to hotels and guest houses operating in Ladakh. Stakeholders had highlighted the increasing operational burden on tourism establishments due to high commercial utility tariffs, especially during the harsh winter months, when heating and water requirements substantially increase. The Department of Tourism & Culture, UT Ladakh, shall function as the nodal department for certifying eligible units and the implementation of the notification.

Eminent...

Robotic Surgery at Yashoda Medicity, He was widely acclaimed for his expertise in advanced gastrointestinal, colorectal, liver and pancreatic cancer surgeries, especially minimally invasive and robotic-assisted procedures. Sources said Dr Rizvi suffered a sudden heart-related medical emergency. However, no official statement confirming the exact cause of death had been issued till the filing of this report. A highly respected figure in the field of oncology, Dr Rizvi had received specialised international training in laparoscopic and robotic cancer surgery. He had completed fellowships in Colorectal and Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Oncosurgery, including advanced training at Yonsei University, South Korea. Throughout his career, Dr Rizvi earned recognition for handling highly complex cancer surgeries and promoting precision-based, patient-focused treatment methods in surgical oncology. Recently, Yashoda Medicity had featured one of his successful pancreatic cancer surgeries involving a complex Whipple procedure performed on a 70-year-old patient, terming it a "miracle of the day".

Drug...

activities in the district. He was booked in four cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act between 2003 and 2025. Five cases have been registered against him in various police stations in the district. They said a dossier was prepared against the accused and submitted to the divisional commissioner, Jammu, seeking his detention under the PIT-NDPS Act, following which the warrant was issued and executed.

Circuit House Srinagar Gets Major Upgrade with Additional Accommodation Facility

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Secretary, Hospitality & Protocol, Avny Lavasa, today conducted a detailed on-spot inspection of the newly constructed Additional Accommodation Facility at Circuit House Srinagar in view of its likely inauguration during the month of June, 2026. Director, Hospitality & Protocol, Department, Ashwani Khajuria, Deputy Director, Assistant Director Hospitality & Protocol Kashmir and officers, and other executing and allied agencies associated with the project were present. During the inspection, the Secretary reviewed the overall progress and pre-

Avny Lavasa reviews Progress, Directs expeditious completion of remaining landscaping, beautification Works

paredness of the newly constructed accommodation block comprising 12 suites and 6 guest rooms equipped with modern amenities and allied infrastructure aimed at augmenting the hospitality capacity of the department. While reviewing the final finishing arrangements, Avny Lavasa directed all the concerned executing and allied agencies to undertake and complete the remaining minor landscaping, beautification and allied works on a war-foot-

ease the operational burden on the existing accommodation infrastructure, particularly during high-level visits and peak occupancy periods. Avny Lavasa appreciated the concerted efforts put in by the Hospitality & Protocol Department and all the allied executing agencies in ensuring the completion of the prestigious project and observed that the commissioning of the Additional Accommodation Facility would significantly augment the existing hospitality infrastructure and further strengthen the quality services being extended to visiting dignitaries and guests.

Sakeena Itoo visits SKIMS Soura, reviews healthcare services, patient care facilities

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura and took assessment of healthcare services, patient care facilities and overall medical infrastructure at the premier tertiary care institution. During the visit, the Minister undertook a comprehensive tour of various departments and wards of the hospital and inspected the quality of healthcare facilities being provided to patients. She assessed the functioning of emergency services, diagnostic units, specialized treatment facilities and patient support

systems besides taking stock of the availability of medicines and essential medical equipment. The Minister also interacted with doctors, healthcare professionals, nursing staff, paramedics and administrative officers regarding the overall functioning of the institution and sought feedback about the existing healthcare delivery mechanism. She appreciated the dedication and commitment of the medical fraternity in providing quality treatment and care to patients despite increasing healthcare demands. Interacting with patients and their attendants, the Minister enquired about the medical facilities being extended to them and listened to their concerns and suggestions. She assured them that the Government remains committed towards strengthening the healthcare sector and ensuring better patient care facilities across Jammu and Kashmir. Sakeena Itoo emphasized the need for maintaining high standards of patient care, cleanliness, discipline and timely medical services within the institution. She directed the concerned authorities to ensure prompt redressal of public grievances and further improve healthcare infrastructure for the convenience of patients visiting the hospital from different parts of the Union Territory. The Minister highlighted that the Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is committed to upgrading healthcare institutions and enhancing accessibility to advanced and affordable medical treatment for the people. She also stressed upon the importance of coordinated efforts among doctors, administrators and support staff for ensuring efficient functioning of the institution and delivering patient-centric healthcare services. Director SKIMS, Dr. Ashraf Gamie; Medical Superintendent, SKIMS, Dr. Farooq Jan; Heads of different specialties, senior doctors and other officers also accompanied the Minister during the visit.

DDC Doda Chairs Public Outreach Programme at Village Dranga - Marmat

DODA, MAY 20: The District Administration Doda today organised a Public Outreach Programme (Block Divas) at village Dranga in Block Marmat. District Development Commissioner (DDC) Krishan Lal chaired the camp. The programme witnessed participation from a large number of public representatives, former DDC and BDC members, former Sarpanches, social activists and local residents. They projected a wide range of public issues, demands and grievances before the District Development Commissioner. Among the officers present on the occasion included Programme Officer ICDS, Assistant Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, District Social Welfare Officer, District Sheep Husbandry Officer, Tehsildar, Block Development Officer and officers from the Health Department and other dis-



trict and sectoral departments. The DDC inspected departmental stalls showcasing the government schemes and public welfare services. Participating departments included Agriculture and Allied Sectors, Industries and Commerce Department, KVIB, Handicrafts and Handloom Department, SBDU under Mission YUVA, Social Welfare Department, Animal and Sheep Husbandry Departments, Horticulture Department, Mission

Poshan Doda and J&K Bank. The public highlighted several issues related to healthcare, road connectivity, education, drinking water supply, power and communication facilities. Major demands raised by the residents included improvement and upgradation of the Khellani-Dranga road, regular availability of the Tehsildar in Marmat, shifting of the Tehsil office from a private building to a government building, speedy con-

struction of the PHC Building at Goha. The residents also demanded better road connectivity to upper areas including Lubber and Mangota, installation of crash barriers at accident-prone locations, availability of LPG services, completion of the Sarwal-Pitarwal water supply line, installation of ATM Machine at J&K Bank Goha, strengthening of police infrastructure including deployment of lady police personnel and provision of an X-ray machine at PHC.

18th BRTC Batch begins Training at STC Talwara



REASI, MAY 20: The 18th Basic Recruit Training Course (BRTC) Batch started today with a grand inaugural ceremony at STC Talwara. The event marked the formal commencement of training for the newly inducted batch and reflected the Institute's commitment to excellence, discipline and professional development.

The programme commenced with the ribbon-cutting ceremony by Principal STC Talwara (IPS) M.Y. Kichloo, symbolizing the official inauguration of the training programme for the newly inducted batch. Chief Guest M.Y. Kichloo congratulated all selected candidates on becoming part of the prestigious Police Department and

expressed confidence that the trainees would contribute significantly to the department and society. Earlier, Assistant Principal (Outdoor) Vishal Manias introduced the outdoor as well as indoor staff to the trainees. He accorded a warm welcome to all the Recruit Constables and encouraged them to uphold the highest standards of dedication, integrity and service during their training period and future assignments. The trainees were briefed

about the objectives, training schedule, institutional values and expectations from the batch, while emphasizing the importance of discipline, teamwork, leadership and continuous learning in shaping competent professionals. Trainees were also briefed about cybercrime awareness to instill digital responsibility, cyber hygiene, and awareness so that they remain vigilant, informed and capable of protecting themselves from emerging cyber threats.

IASOWA conducts donation drive at Government Middle School, Dodhi Gujjar Colony



JAMMU, MAY 20: IAS Officer Wives Association (IASOWA) organized a meaningful donation drive at Government Middle School, Dodhi Gujjar Colony, Jammu, with the objective of supporting the students and improving the educational environment for the children in the area. During the drive, several useful items, including sitting tables, floor mats, shoes, notebooks, sta-

tionery items and refreshments, were distributed among the students. In addition to the donated items, important developmental works in the school have also been undertaken with support from the government schemes. These included waterproofing and other infrastructure-related improvements, helping create a safer and more comfortable environment for the students.

The programme was conducted under the leadership of Monika Dullo, wife of Chief Secretary Atal Dullo. Members present on the occasion included CA Geetanjali Singla, wife of Dr. Piyush Singla, Rekha Jain, wife of Parmod Jain, Neera Goswami, wife of Anil Goswami and Kavaljeet Kaur, wife of Harvinder Singh. Chief Education Officer Jammu, Ajeet Sharma, expressed his gratitude to the IASOWA members for their valuable support in strengthening the education system for the underprivileged children. He hoped that at least one High School and one Higher Secondary School from Jammu city would be mentored by the organization in the future.

DDC Rajouri chairs Public Outreach Camp at Panchayat Siot Upper

RAJOURI, MAY 20: District Development Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today chaired a Public Outreach Camp at Panchayat Siot Upper to listen to the public grievances and review developmental requirements of the area. The outreach programme witnessed active participation from senior district officers, sectoral heads and a large number of local residents, who projected various issues and demands related to infrastructure, education, healthcare and basic amenities. Among the major demands highlighted by the public were renovation of roads from Siot to Bhanjui, Bakhar to Channi, Khaji Teri and Peer Khana, bus service between Sunderbani to Rajouri and vice versa besides the upgrading of Channi Mella road. The residents also



demanding construction of check dams at Bakhar, augmentation of drinking water supply, upgradation of Higher Secondary School Siot, filling up of vacancies in medical and educational institutions and strict action against illegal mining activities in the area.

The DDC patiently listened to the grievances and demands projected by the people and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers for prompt redressal of genuine issues. He assured the public that all legitimate concerns

would be taken up in a phased manner and every effort would be made to ensure balanced and inclusive development of the area. The DDC emphasized the importance of close coordination between the administration and the public for effective implementation of welfare and developmental initiatives. He also directed officers to undertake regular field visits and ensure timely disposal of public grievances. On the occasion, different government departments installed awareness stalls showcasing various beneficiary-oriented schemes and programmes aimed at sensitizing the public about government welfare initiatives and services. Concerned officers also responded one by one to the issues and demands raised by the public and apprised the gathering

about the measures being taken for their resolution, ongoing developmental works and future action plans in their respective sectors. Besides, a Self-Enumeration Booth under Census 2027 was also set up to facilitate and educate the public about the ongoing self-enumeration process and encourage wider participation in the national exercise. ADDC, Malik Zada Sheraz Ul Haq; ADC Sunderbani, Ramkesh Sharma; PO ICDS, Kartar Singh; DFO Nowshera, Shweta Deona; DSWO, Sandeep Sharma; ACD, Auqil Nuvaiz; ACP, Mohd Rafoof; DDE, Mohd Nawaz; CEO Education; CAHO, Dr Khalid Najeb; DSWO, Abdul Raheem; EXEN PWD (R&B) Nowshera, Sarwar Mehmood, besides other district and sectoral officers were present on the occasion.

PSPS GCW Gandhinagar hosts awareness event on "Drug De-addiction, Rehabilitation; Mental Health: Challenges and Solutions"

JAMMU, MAY 20: As part of the 100 Day Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (NMBBA) campaign, Padma Shri Padma Sachdev Government College for Women Gandhinagar on Wednesday organized an awareness programme on "Drug De-addiction, Rehabilitation and Mental Health: Challenges and Solutions" here on the College Campus. The programme was a collaborative initiative of the Departments of Dogri, Hindi, Sanskrit, Statistics, Physics, Punjabi and Urdu. The primary objective of the programme was to generate awareness among students, faculty and staff about the harmful psychological, social and physiological effects of drug abuse and to promote de-addiction, rehabilitation, early intervention and mental well-being. The programme also aimed at encouraging youth participation in building a



drug-free society through awareness, counselling and collective responsibility. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Jammu Joginder Singh was the Chief Guest and Presidium Head. Addressing the gathering, he highlighted the initiatives undertaken by the Police Department in district Jammu to curb drug abuse and promote rehabilitation through

awareness campaigns and community participation. He encouraged students to remain vigilant and contribute actively towards the eradication of drug abuse from society. A documentary on Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan was screened before the keynote session, sensitizing the participants about the serious consequences of substance abuse and the impor-

tance of prevention, rehabilitation and social awareness. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Shahnaz Bhat, Director, Police Drug De-addiction, Rehabilitation and Mental Health Care Centre, Jammu. She gave a detailed PPT presentation on the topic "Drug De-addiction, Rehabilitation and Mental Health: Challenges and Solutions." She elaborated on the psychological, social and health-related impacts of substance abuse, the warning signs of addiction and the importance of counselling, rehabilitation and emotional support systems. She also highlighted preventive strategies and the role of educational institutions and families in addressing the issue effectively. The programme was organized under the guidance of the College Principal Dr. Kulvinder Kour, who motivated the students.

DC Kathua reviews development scenario, implementation of Mission YUVA, HADP

KATHUA, MAY 20: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma on Wednesday visited Basohli and reviewed the implementation of Mission YUVA, Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Census-related activities and developmental works being executed by the PWD (R&B) Department in the subdivision. The officers from the concerned departments apprised the Deputy Commissioner about the implementation status and progress achieved under the developmental and welfare schemes in the subdivision.

Reviewing Mission YUVA, the DC stressed effective implementation of youth-oriented initiatives aimed at promoting skill development and self-employment opportunities. He directed the concerned departments to enhance outreach and ensure maximum coverage of eligible persons under the programme.

While reviewing HADP and other agriculture and allied sector schemes, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized timely

delivery of benefits to the farmers. He called for generating mass awareness regarding the government interventions and support measures launched for promoting agriculture and allied sectors entrepreneurship. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the status of ongoing PWD (R&B) works in the subdivision and directed the concerned officers to maintain quality standards and ensure completion of works within stipulated timelines.

The meeting further reviewed Census-related targets and preparedness, with the Deputy Commissioner instructing officers to work in close coordination for achieving the assigned targets in a time-bound manner. Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya and inspected the infrastructure and facilities at the institution. He interacted with the school authorities, reviewed the developmental requirements of the school and assured appropriate redressal of genuine issues raised by the administration.

DC Reasi reviews road safety measures; directs comprehensive enforcement and safety audit



REASI, MAY 20: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today chaired a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee to review the status of road safety measures, enforcement mechanisms and related infra-

structure across the district. At the outset, the Superintending Engineer Public Works Department (P&B) gave a detailed briefing on initiatives undertaken to strengthen road safety infrastructure. It was informed that the

District Road Safety Action Plan has already been formulated. "Accident-prone blackspots and blind curves have been identified and corrective measures including construction of parapets and installation of crash barriers have been initiated to minimise the road accidents and improve commuter safety," he informed. Taking serious note of road encroachments, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to submit division-wise Action Taken Reports on removal of encroachments from footpaths and roads across the district.

DC Udhampur holds public outreach cum grievances redressal camp at panchayat Ghar Mand West

UDHAMPUR, MAY 20: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Minga Sherpa today conducted an extensive tour of Block Tikri in district Udhampur and listened to scores of public issues and demands at public outreach cum grievances redressal camp held at Panchayat Ghar Mand West-Block Tikri. The camp was attended by IAS Probationer Shagun Singh, ACD Om Parkash, district officers, former PRI members and a large number of people from adjoining panchayats. The public projected several demands, seeking augmentation of drinking water supply, measures to



curb monkey menace, construction of tube well, adequate supply of LPG, shifting of the garbage dumping site at Mand West, completion of Dogra Hat, release of pending compensation for last year's flood victims, re-verification of deleted BPL ration cards, installation of hand pumps

to overcome scarcity of drinking water and opening of sewing and cutting centres. The DC gave a patient hearing to the grievances and demands raised by the former PRI members and the general public. He issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers

for early redressal of genuine issues. He directed the officers to take first-hand appraisal of all grievances and address them on priority. Several grievances were resolved on the spot by issuing directions to the concerned departments. Stressing the need for dedicated and sincere public service, the DC instructed officers to ensure disposal of genuine public grievances within the stipulated time frame. The Executive Engineer PHE was directed to restart the ongoing JIM works and rejuvenate the traditional water bowlies in the area. The DC also sensitized the public to the

government schemes and programmes including HADP, JKCP, PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and Mission YUVA, urging them to avail maximum benefits of these initiatives. Former PRI members and the general public submitted a detailed memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner and appreciated the administration for organizing the outreach camp in the area. Earlier, officers and officials of line departments sensitized the public to different welfare and development schemes and encouraged them to take advantage of the government initiatives.

NC strongly Condemns Demolition drive at Bandhi (Mahamaya Rakh) Calls It Assault on Justice, Violation of SC Guidelines, 2006 tribal act

Asks immediate relief, restoration of water, electricity, issue tents and Ration

Jammu, May 20: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Provincial President Ratan Lal Gupta on Wednesday condemned the demolition drive in Bandhi (Mahamaya Rakh) Jammu calling it a "ruthless assault on human dignity, constitutional rights and justice." He visited the site alongwith in Javed Ahmad Rana, Honble Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest & Tribal Affairs visited the demolition site to express solidarity with the affected families. Gupta said the demolition violated Supreme Court guidelines that prohibit authorities from razing residential houses without issuing mandatory show-cause notices. He alleged that the action reflected a "lawless and ruthless" approach in which a particular community was targeted. He said the drive also violated the spirit of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, and accused the administration of showing "complete insensitivity towards poor and vulnerable families." "Women, children and



the elderly were allegedly mishandled during the operation. Locals said the demolition was carried out early in the morning, leaving families with no time to save their belongings, including food grains, clothes and essential household items. Today, everything lies under rubble and people are in deep shock," Gupta said. Calling the action "inhuman and unjust," "This is not merely the demolition of structures, but the crushing of hopes and dignity of

poor families," he said. Gupta urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to personally intervene and ensure immediate rehabilitation of the affected families. He demanded adequate compensation, temporary shelter, food supplies and medical assistance for the victims, especially women, children and the elderly. "With Eid barely a week away, the administration must answer where and how these families are expected to celebrate the festival after

being rendered homeless," he said. In the evening a deputation headed by Rattan Lal Gupta Advocate Provincial President Jammu alongwith Shamim Begum former DDC Damsal, Shama Akther former Corporator, Rehmat Ali former BDC Chairman, Wali Mohd, Jamat Ali, Inayat Ali and Hanif asked the minister to restore water, electricity, issue tents and Ration to the victimized families immediately without any further delay. The NC leader also demanded strict action against the officials responsible for the drive and called for the findings of the inquiry to be made public within a fixed timeframe. He urged the administration to ensure that such actions are not repeated in future without following legal procedures and humanitarian considerations. The Honble Minister Javed Ahmad Rana ordered an inquiry into the incident and assured compensation, besides tents, food and other relief material for the displaced families.

Keshav Chopra Releases Devotional "Bhajan Mela Laga Padder Machela"

Jammu, May 20:

In a vibrant ceremony held at the Press Club of Jammu, Social Activist and Chairman of the Samvedna Society, Keshav Chopra released the latest devotional bhajan titled "Mela Laga Padder Machela". The event was attended by various prominent personalities from the media and cultural spheres, who gathered to celebrate the launch of this spiritual musical project. The devotional bhajan has been brought to life by a talented team of artists. It features the soulful voice of singer Vikram Sharma, with deeply spiritual lyrics penned by Suraj Singh Chib. The music has been composed by music director Vicky Kaith, while the visual presentation was filmed by K.K. Malhotra. The project also received special support and contributions from Nirbhay



Sathia, Janak Sawan, Satpal Bassan, Vijay Malhotra and Vicky Thakur. Speaking at the launch event, Samvedna Society Chairman Keshav Chopra highly praised the entire team for their dedication in creating a beautiful piece of devotion that connects people with their spiritual roots. He emphasized that music and art are powerful mediums that can channel the energy of the younger generation into

positive and constructive directions. While interacting with the media and the gathering, Keshav Chopra gave a strong message to the youth by raising the slogan Say No to Drugs and Yes to Talent. He passionately urged the younger generation to stay completely away from the menace of drug abuse and instead focus on discovering and nurturing their hidden talents.

BSP Strongly Condemns Demolition Drive Against Gujjar Community Houses in Jammu & Kashmir

Jammu, May 20: Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Jammu and Kashmir UT, strongly condemns the demolition drive carried out against the houses of Gujjar community members in Jammu and Kashmir. The action taken by the Government has created fear, insecurity, and anger among poor and landless families. BSP President Jammu and Kashmir UT, Darshan Rana, stated that this action reflects the failure of both the Government and Opposition, and raises serious questions regarding their alleged understanding on issues affecting poor and marginalized communities. He said that while demolitions are being carried out against a particular community, there are many other areas in Jammu and Kashmir where people are residing on Government land, yet selective action is being taken. Such discriminatory actions are against the principles of justice and equality. BSP demands immediate rehabilitation

of all affected families as per the directions and commitments issued by the Chief Minister-led Government of Jammu and Kashmir. No poor family should be rendered homeless without proper rehabilitation and humane treatment. The party further demanded strict action against all officers and officials involved in the demolition drive, if any violation of law, procedure, or human rights has taken place during the process. Darshan Rana also demanded immediate implementation of the Forest Rights Act in Jammu and Kashmir and urged the Government to convene a special Assembly session or Cabinet meeting to address the long-pending issues of forest dwellers, Gujjars, Bakerwals, and other landless communities. He further stated that during BSP Governments in Uttar Pradesh, lakhs of acres of land were allotted to landless poor families, which became an example across India.

World Bee Day Celebrated at DCTC Chimna Chak, Jammu

Jammu, May 20: Apiculture Development Scheme, Directorate of Agriculture Jammu today celebrated World Bee Day at DCTC, Chimna Chak, Bishnah, Jammu under the guidance and leadership of Director Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Jammu Shri Anil Gupta. The event was organized with great enthusiasm to mark the global observance of the day and to spread awareness regarding the importance of bees in maintaining ecological balance and food security. The programme was celebrated under the theme "Bee Together for People and the Planet", highlighting the crucial role of bees and other pollinators in sustaining biodiversity, agriculture, and the environment. 30 beekeepers from different areas participated in the event and joined the department in celebrating World Bee Day. On the occasion, Director



Agriculture Jammu Shri Anil Gupta conveyed his message emphasizing the importance of protecting bees and promoting scientific beekeeping practices. He stated that bees are indispensable for agriculture and environmental sustainability as they significantly contribute towards pollination and enhancement of crop productivity. He further stressed upon the need

to create awareness among farmers and the general public regarding the conservation of pollinators and adoption of apiculture as a sustainable livelihood option. Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Entomologist Shri Harvinder Singh emphasized that World Bee Day is not only a celebration but also an opportunity to promote awareness about the

importance and existence of bees around us. He stated that although bees are tiny creatures, they play a vital role in pollination, ecosystem sustainability, enhancement of crop productivity, and conservation of biodiversity. He further encouraged farmers and youth to adopt beekeeping as an income-generating activity and highlighted the various schemes and technical support being provided by the Agriculture Department for the promotion of apiculture in Jammu Division. The participating beekeepers also interacted with departmental officers and shared their experiences regarding beekeeping practices and honey production. The programme concluded with a collective pledge to protect pollinators and promote sustainable agricultural practices for a healthier planet.

Demolition drive at Mohmaya belt undemocratic, politically motivated: Tony

Tony alleges selective drive, demands probe, seeks action on big crocodiles

Jammu, May 20: Senior Congress leader and former DDC Taranjit Singh Tony today visited the Mohmaya belt area where a demolition drive was recently carried out by the authorities and termed the action "undemocratic, selective and politically motivated." Accompanied by Sarpanch Hafez Ullah, Raj Kumar Raju, Corporator Shamim Akhtar and Dr. Ram Lal Dogra, Taranjit Singh Tony interacted with affected families and expressed concern over the manner in which the demolition drive was conducted. He alleged that the drive was carried out at around 4 to 5 AM, roads were blocked, and people were not properly served notices before the action was initiated. "The entire operation appears to have been conducted under politi-



cal pressure. The department is working on the tunes of BJP leaders who have recently been trying to create issues around this land. Such selective targeting raises seri-

ous questions over the intention behind the drive," said Taranjit Singh Tony. Referring to the visit of Forest Minister Javed Rana to the site,

Tony said the minister himself had reportedly stated that the land was not forest land and had condemned the demolition action. "He welcomed the decision of Forest Minister Javed Rana to order an enquiry into the matter. The Chief Minister Omar Abdullah should take stern action against officers if they have misled the government or acted beyond legal authority," he said. Taranjit Singh Tony further demanded that the police verify the contents of the JDA order and clarify whether the land in question was actually forest land or not. He alleged double standards in demolition drives and claimed that influential people allegedly occupying state land continue to remain untouched while poor and marginal families are being targeted.

DC Reasi reviews proposed Annual Plan 2026-27 at District Steering Committee meeting

REASI, MAY 20: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today chaired a meeting of the District Steering Committee for the Green India Mission to review the proposed Annual Plan of Operation for 2026-27. The meeting focused on the implementation of the Green India Mission in the Mahore Forest Division, aimed at ecological restoration, enhancement of forest cover and improvement of ecosystem services. The meeting discussed the objectives and proposed activities aimed at ecological restoration, enhancement of forest cover.

MLA Arvind inaugurates Rs 58 lakh drainage project in Krishna Nagar

JAMMU, MAY 20: MLA Jammu West and senior BJP leader, Arvind Gupta today inaugurated the construction work of a drainage system in Ward No. 12, Krishna Nagar, Jammu West. The project will be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 58 lakh. The drainage project was a long-pending demand of the local residents, who had been facing difficulties due to poor drainage facilities in the area. With the commencement of this work, a major civic issue of the locality is set to be resolved. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Arvind Gupta said,

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
Open e-TENDER NOTICE	
Name of Work: "Conducting Final Location Survey, Associated Geological Studies, Traffic Survey, Traffic Engineering Studies & Design of Railway alignment and Preparation of Detail Project Report (DPR) for the proposed 1.10 Km. Section of Andhra Pradesh Line between Sri Madhavra Civil Station (SRM) and Chagpudi (CPC) station of Jammu Division."	
Approx. cost:	₹ 17.23,16,211.34 (Rupees Seventeen Crores, Twenty Three Lakhs Ten Thousand Two Hundred Eleven Only)
Est. Security Amount:	₹ 10,11,000.00 (Ten Lakhs One Thousand Six Hundred Only)
Bid Opening Date and Time:	13.06.2026 at 11:30 hrs.
Last date/Time of upload of tenders:	13.06.2026 upto 11:30 hrs. Tender documents can be downloaded by the tenderer on NEFT web site w.e.f. 10.05.2026 to 13.06.2026 upto 11:30 hrs.
Download Tender Notice & Tender Document:	For details of the tender, kindly visit www.nwr.gov.in. The sealed tender notice also can be seen on the notice board of the above office.
Tender Notice:	TSW-1258-NA-FLS-SVKW-GS Dated: 10-05-2026
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Army organises motivational lecture on how to join Indian Army

Ramban : 20 May 2026 The Indian Army organised a motivational lecture at Higher Secondary School, Batu, Banihal to inspire and guide students of classes 10th to 12th on how to join the Indian Army and serve the nation with pride and honour. The session was aimed at spreading awareness among the youth about the various career opportunities in the Indian Army, including officer and soldier entries, eligibility criteria, preparation tips and the selection process. Students were also informed about the values of discipline, courage and leadership that a career in the Armed Forces instills.



The lecture received an enthusiastic response with students showing keen interest and actively participating in the interactive session. Many students expressed their aspiration to join the Indian Army in the future. Such initiatives play a vital role in guiding young

People sandwiched between two power centres without statehood- Karra

Bhalla hits out at BJP's communal and hate politics

Jammu, May 20: JKPC Chief Tariq Hameed Karra today hit out at the centre government for not restoring the promised statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, after failing to secure majority in Assembly elections, as a result. People are sandwiched between two power centres. Addressing a workers convention at Talab Tillo Jammu, JKPC President lashed out at the BJP for betraying the people of J&K over statehood, after failing to get majority in Assembly elections to form the government. People are worst sufferers of the dual control system and getting sandwiched between two power centres, which is a



negation of the mandate of people. Accompanied by a team of Senior Congress leaders including Working President Raman Bhalla, Former ministers Mula Ram, Yogesh Sawhney, Smt Gurbachan Rana, Abul Majeed Wani, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder

Sharma, Ex DCC President & Contested candidate Mannohan Singh, Ex MLCs Ved Mahajan and Subash Gupta, Rajnish Sharma Treasurer, Shri Karra addressed a largely attended workers convention including women as part of Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan dedicated to the

week long commemoration of former Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi martyrdom. The programme was organised by senior party leader Sanjeev Panda and Ex Councillor Sonika Sharma alongwith Block and ward committees of the party. Karra said Jammu region especially Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Udhampur Reasi districts are worst affected due to policies of BJP and LG administration in the aftermath of downgrading of statehood and abrogation of special status. The Youth are getting deprived of jobs at the cost of outside candidates. Land being taken over natural resources like sand, bajori,

Return to Vedic teachings vital for India's spiritual and cultural renaissance: Swami Ram Swarup

Yoga Acharya highlights universal message of Vedas during 78-day Yajna Anushtthan at Ved Mandir, Yol

Kathua: At Ved Mandir, Yol in Himachal Pradesh, the spiritual atmosphere remained deeply devotional and enlightening as the 39th day of the ongoing 78-day Yajna Anushtthan dedicated to the four Vedas was observed with religious fervour and Vedic chanting. Addressing devotees, scholars and seekers gathered on the occasion, Swami Ram Swarup delivered an elaborate discourse based on Rigveda Mantra 10/68/3 and stressed the need for humanity to reconnect with the eternal wisdom of the Vedas for achieving lasting peace, prosperity and spiritual upliftment. Explaining the essence of the mantra, Swami Ji said that at the very beginning of creation, Almighty God revealed divine Vedic knowledge directly into the hearts of ancient Rishis for the welfare of mankind. He stated that the Vedas are not man-made scriptures but eternal divine knowledge meant to guide humanity towards righteousness, truth, discipline and



universal brotherhood. According to him, the Vedic teachings help remove ignorance, social evils and human suffering while leading society towards moral and spiritual excellence. Swami Ram Swarup Ji further explained that Vedic knowledge is attained through deep meditation, yoga, self-discipline and sincere spiritual practice. The ancient Rishis, after realising this divine wisdom, preserved and propagated it for the benefit of humanity through the Guru-Shishya tradi-

tion. He added that in this sacred tradition, God first revealed the knowledge of the four Vedas to four Rishis, from whom the wisdom later reached Brahma and subsequently common people through generations of learned sages and teachers. Describing the importance of Vedic civilisation, Swami Ji said that during Satyug, Treta and Dwapar Yugas, society remained peaceful, healthy and spiritually enlightened because people lived according to Vedic principles.

Truthfulness, compassion, discipline, respect for nature and devotion to duty formed the foundation of social life in those ages. He remarked that the atmosphere of those times was filled with happiness and harmony because humanity remained connected with divine knowledge and moral values. However, he expressed concern that from the beginning of Kaliyug, mankind gradually moved away from the Vedic path and adopted materialistic tendencies, resulting in unrest, conflict, diseases and mental stress. Swami Ji observed that abandoning the Vedas was equivalent to harming oneself, as the eternal teachings of the scriptures provide guidance for every aspect of human life. He added that great personalities such as Lord Ram, Lord Krishna and ancient sages never considered Vedic teachings difficult but instead adopted them in their practical lives and inspired society through their conduct.

Vikram Randhawa listens to public grievances at BJP headquarters

Jammu, May 20: Senior BJP leader and MLA from Bahu Assembly Constituency, Ch. Vikram Randhawa, held a public grievances camp at the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, to listen to and address the concerns of the people from different areas of the constituency. Er. T.K. Sharma accompanied Vikram Randhawa during the proceedings of the grievances camp. The camp witnessed participation from several deputations and individuals who raised civic, social, and developmental issues requiring immediate attention. During the interaction, deputations from Gole Market Gandhi Nagar, Sector-11 Trikuta Nagar, and Gangyal Garden highlighted the issue of erratic and polluted water supply in their respective areas and sought immediate intervention for ensuring clean and regular



drinking water. A deputation from Preet Nagar requested the upgradation of ration cards and issuance of Ayushman cards for eligible beneficiaries. A deputation from R.S. Pura appealed for compassionate appointment in a pending case, while residents from Madina Hills, Sunjwan demanded the construction of a 300-meter road along with a protection wall and proper sewerage system in the locality. Residents of Poonchi Mohalla, Gorakh Nagar requested the shifting of electric wires passing dangerously over residential houses. Similarly, a deputation from Old Basti Bahu Fort sought repair and maintenance of damaged lanes and drains in the area. Another deputation from Sector-11, Nanak Nagar requested sanction of social assistance for a daughter's marriage under the relevant welfare scheme. Residents from Nanak Nagar also urged for raising the boundary wall of a nallah and construction of lanes and drains.

Those who looted nation cannot question BJP's patriotism: Gaurav
Emergency, scams & appeasement politics define Congress legacy: Gaurav on Rahul's traitor remark

Jammu, 20 May 2026: BJP Spokesperson and Convener, International Affairs, Gaurav Gupta strongly condemned the remarks made by Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, terming the statement "reckless, disgraceful and anti-democratic." Reacting sharply to Rahul Gandhi's remarks allegedly calling the Prime Minister, Home Minister and BJP "traitors," Gaurav Gupta said the Congress party



itself carries a "dark legacy of attacking democracy, suppressing constitutional rights and compromising national interest for political survival." "Rahul Gandhi should first

study the history of his own party before making such absurd and insulting remarks against the elected leadership of the country. Congress has no moral authority to lecture anyone on nationalism or democracy," said Gaurav Gupta. He said one of the biggest examples of Congress' "anti-democratic mindset" was the imposition of Emergency in 1975 when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, during which civil liberties were suspended, opposition leaders jailed, press freedom curbed and democratic institutions suppressed.

PM's call to promote domestic tourism - an opportunity to attract global investment, augment foreign exchange earnings: HAI

Jammu, May 20: The Hotel Association of India (HAI), the apex body of the Indian hospitality industry, has welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent call urging citizens to travel within the country instead of opting for overseas destinations for leisure, conferences, events, and weddings. While the initiative supports the conservation of foreign exchange during uncertain global economic conditions, it also creates a significant long-term opportunity to strengthen India's inbound tourism economy and position the country among the world's most attractive and preferred destination for busi-

ness travel, tourism and MICE destination. At a time when geopolitical instability and regional conflicts are influencing global travel patterns, India stands out as a stable, democratic, culturally rich, and high-potential destination. This changing global environment presents a strategic opportunity for India to attract a larger share of international travellers seeking safer, experience-led, and value-driven destinations. With the right policy support, infrastructure expansion, and global positioning, India can substantially increase foreign exchange earnings through tourism. Mr. K.B. Kachru, President, Hotel

Association of India and Chairman - South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group, said, "Inbound tourism will be one of the defining growth engines for India's hospitality sector in the years ahead. As India attracts more international travellers across leisure, business, medical, spiritual, and cultural segments, the sector must respond with scale, quality, and world-class infrastructure. This is not merely about meeting demand; it is about building a globally competitive and sustainable tourism ecosystem." The anticipated growth in domestic tourism demand will accelerate investment in tourism infrastructure

and hospitality assets across the country. This includes the development of mid-market, premium and luxury hotels, resorts, wellness retreats, cruises, spiritual and religious circuits, heritage destinations and convention centres. Over time, supported by a focused international marketing strategy, these assets can significantly enhance India's appeal to global travellers across leisure, medical, wellness, spiritual, cultural, and MICE segments. Higher inbound tourism will directly boost foreign exchange inflows through international spending on hotels, food and beverage, transport, retail, entertainment, healthcare, and destination experiences. It will also create a more balanced and resilient hospitality market by strengthening international arrivals alongside robust domestic demand. He further added, "The current geopolitical environment is creating a unique opportunity for India. As global travellers increasingly look for stable, trusted, and culturally immersive destinations,

India is exceptionally well positioned to emerge as a preferred tourism hub. This can significantly enhance foreign exchange earnings while accelerating global investor interest in India's hospitality and tourism infrastructure." Foreign investment will be critical to accelerating hospitality growth by providing the long-term capital. "Global expertise, technology, and market access needed to develop hotels, resorts, convention centres, and allied infrastructure. "Foreign investment in hospitality is a strategic economic lever for India, with benefits extending far beyond the sector itself. Every new hotel project unlocks investment in construction, logistics, talent, technology, and supply chains, while creating durable employment across both urban and rural India." Mr. Kachru added. A focused and sustained push on inbound tourism has the potential to increase India's tourism-related foreign exchange earnings by an additional 25-30 per cent over the coming years.

Awareness Programme on Anti-Drug Abuse Held at GDC Ramgarh in Collaboration with Paramrshniti Foundation

Ramgarh, May 20: Under the aegis of the 100 Days Campaign of the Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan (Drug-Free India Mission), NCORD and NSS Unit of Government Degree College Ramgarh organized an awareness programme on anti-drug abuse in collaboration with the Paramrshniti Foundation. The programme was conducted under the guidance of Principal Prof. (Dr.) Meenu Abrol. The programme aimed to create awareness among students about the harmful physical, psychological, and social consequences of substance abuse and to inspire them to become responsible agents of change in society. Resource persons Mr. Siddharth Mahajan and Mr. Shubham Singh Charak from Paramrshniti Foundation addressed the stu-

dents and highlighted the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and staying away from drugs and other harmful substances. They discussed the far-reaching impact of addiction on individuals, families, and society, while emphasizing the significance of education, discipline, counselling, and constructive engagement in preventing substance abuse. Speaking on the occasion, Principal Prof. (Dr.) Meenu Abrol underscored the important role educational institutions play in nurturing socially responsible and aware citizens. She encouraged students to pledge against drug abuse and extend awareness efforts beyond the campus to their families and communities. She also appreciated the initiatives undertaken by the Anti-

Drug Club and NSS Unit in organizing meaningful awareness activities on a regular basis. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Snobar, Convener NSS & NCORD, expressed concern over the increasing menace of drug addiction among youth and stressed the need for collective efforts from parents, teachers, educational institutions, and society to combat the issue. She emphasized that awareness, counselling, and proper guidance are among the most effective tools to safeguard young minds from addiction. She further motivated students to focus on academics, sports, and creative pursuits to build a healthy and successful future. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, who actively interacted with the speakers and

raised important questions regarding addiction, peer pressure, and available support systems for individuals struggling with substance abuse. All faculty members were present during the event, reflecting the institution's commitment towards youth empowerment, social responsibility, and community welfare through preventive education and awareness programmes. As part of the initiative, a special lecture on the 100 Day Nishadant Abhiyan was also delivered by Mr. Shubham Singh Charak, Senior Research Fellow at the Central University of Jammu. In his address, he elaborated on the devastating effects of drug abuse on individuals, families, and the nation as a whole. He highlighted the critical role of youth in combating the

drug menace and explained how substance abuse adversely affects social harmony, economic productivity, and national development. The interactive session encouraged students to discuss preventive strategies and the importance of community-level awareness. The programme concluded with a collective pledge by students and faculty members to support the vision of a drug-free society and actively contribute towards the mission of Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan. Reaffirming the institution's dedication to national awareness initiatives, Principal Prof. Meenu Abrol stated that GDC Ramgarh remains committed to supporting government-led campaigns through grassroots awareness, research, and youth engagement in the region.

Northern Railway to organize Rozgar Mela in Jammu on May 23

Around 220 youth from J&K among 5,10,000 selected candidates to receive Govt appointment letters nationwide

Jammu, May 20: In a major step towards strengthening employment opportunities under the Centre's nationwide recruitment drive, Northern Railway's Jammu Division will organize a grand "Rozgar Mela" on May 23, during which appointment letters will be distributed to nearly 220 selected youth from Jammu and Kashmir. The event is part of the Government of India's flagship employment campaign aimed at providing transparent and merit-based government job opportunities to youth across the country. At the national level, around 5,10,000 candidates are set to receive appointment letters during the programme. The Rozgar Mela seeks to empower young aspirants by inducing them into various government services and encouraging their active participation in nation-building under the vision of "Atmanirbhar Bharat". According to officials, all administrative,



technical and security arrangements for the event have been finalized. Selected candidates from Jammu and Kashmir as well as neighbouring regions are expected to participate in the ceremony, where chief guests and senior officials.

BJP OBC Morcha delegation meets Sat Sharma, discusses key issues of OBC community

Jammu, May 20: A delegation of the Bharatiya Janata Party OBC Morcha, Jammu & Kashmir, called on Sat Sharma, BJP JK-UT President and MP (Rajyasabha) at the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, and discussed various issues concerning the welfare and empowerment of the OBC community in the Union Territory. Baldev Singh Billawaria (BJP State General Secretary) and Arun Sharma (BJP State Secretary) were present on the occasion. The delegation was led by Braham Jyot Satti, President of BJP OBC Morcha Jammu & Kashmir. During the meeting, the members of the delegation highlighted several concerns and demands related to the socio-economic and political upliftment of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in Jammu & Kashmir. Listening patiently to the



issues raised by the delegation, Sat Sharma assured the members that all genuine concerns of the OBC community would be addressed on priority and resolved in a timely manner. He reiterated the BJP's commitment towards the welfare of every section of society, especially the marginalized and backward communities. Speaking on the occasion, Sat Sharma said that

the OBC community is the backbone of the nation and has played a vital role in strengthening the social and economic fabric of India. He stated that the Central Government is committed to ensuring justice and equal opportunities for OBCs across the country. He further informed that there would be a separate and special column for the OBC community in

the upcoming caste-based census, which will be conducted after the population census. He termed this move as a historic step towards ensuring proper representation and welfare planning for backward communities. Sat Sharma also stated that the OBC community would get reservation benefits in the upcoming Panchayat and Pter elections, ensuring greater political participation and representation at grassroots levels. Expressing gratitude to Sat Sharma for his positive and supportive approach, Braham Jyot Satti said that the OBC community has always stood for nationalism and public welfare. He added that OBC members will continue to serve humanity and contribute towards nation-building with dedication and commitment.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITE APPLICATION

The Sr. Electrical Control and Manager, Northern Railway, Jammu Division invites applications for a contract for sale of ideas for the following activities:-

1. Name of work : Advisory of Full contract at (1) Saral Houshal (2) Haldipur (3) Jammu Division (4) Samba (5) Jammu Division (6) Jammu Division.
2. Nature of contract : S (S) (S) (S).
3. Last date & time of submission and opening of applications: On 09.06.2026 (Up to 12:00 hrs). Applications will be opened on 20.05.2026 and in case the file on which the application can be opened it is 10 days. The time will be opened at the same time on next working day.
4. Address of the office to file from which application forms will be available: Office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Jammu. Date: 20.05.2026 to 09.06.2026.
5. Northern Railway's web site: www.northernrailway.gov.in

The notice for inviting application forms will be published in the news available in the office website of Northern Railway: www.northernrailway.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Jammu
1805/2026
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

North in News

EDITORIAL

Railway improving infrastructure in UT creating opportunities for youth

Railway improving infrastructure in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is creating opportunities for youth in a big way. Because the single most transformative investment in physical connectivity in the region since independence has been the completion and expansion of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link, along with station modernization, electrification, Vande Bharat rollout, and feeder road integration, and this steel-and-concrete backbone is not merely about moving passengers and freight but about compressing distance, cutting logistics cost, unlocking markets, and most importantly giving the youth of J&K a reason to stay, skill, and build enterprises at home instead of migrating for low-paid work. The scale of the engineering achievement is itself a source of pride and employment because the USBRL project covers 272 kilometers through the Pir Panjal and Himalayan ranges, involves 38 tunnels totaling 119 kilometers and 927 bridges including the Chenab Bridge, which at 359 meters above the riverbed is the world's highest railway arch bridge. This is also encouraging youth to take up FPOs, food processing, and cold-chain startups, and Mission YUVA and JKRLM are channeling Mudra and Stand-Up India loans to young entrepreneurs who want to set up grading, packaging, and branding units near stations at Anantnag, Sopore, and Budgam, and the railway is providing land for kiosks, logistics parks, and One Station One Product stalls that showcase Basohli paintings, Kani shawls, cricket bats from Anantnag, and lavender oil from Bhaderwah, giving artisans direct access to 10 lakh tourists who arrived by train. The railways is also laying the foundation for industrial jobs because the Banihal-Qazigund tunnel and electrification to Baramulla have made it viable to move cement, gypsum, and limestone from Jammu to Kashmir and finished goods back. The Jammu Railway Division is developing freight terminals at Samba and Udhampur for pharmaceuticals, electronics, and defense manufacturing that are coming up under the New Industrial Policy 2021, and each unit employs 100 to 500 youth in roles from machine operation to QA, and the national transporter has signed MoUs with IIT Jammu and NIT Srinagar for Center of Excellence in Tunneling and Bridge Engineering, offering internships and PhD sponsorships so that the next Chenab Bridge is designed by engineers from Doda and Kishtwar, and the skills learned on USBRL are portable because Indian Railways is exporting expertise to Southeast Asia and Africa, and youth who started as tunnel workers are now certified for projects abroad, and women are entering the workforce because station redevelopment at Jammu.

RAJNI SHARMA, EDITOR

Skilled construction workers must be elevated

S K NAG

India cannot become a global infrastructure powerhouse merely by importing machines. Machines are assets: skilled workers denote capability. A tunnel boring machine may cost hundreds of crores, but without competent crews managing alignment, support systems, segment placement, and geological responses, even the best equipment becomes inefficient. This mindset must change urgently. The modern construction industry proudly celebrates mechanisation.

Tower cranes lift entire structural assemblies in minutes, automatic rebar bending yards process steel with precision, and modular shuttering systems have transformed speed and scale. Governments and private developers alike increasingly measure progress through machinery deployment, automation indices, and project acceleration metrics. Yet beneath this visible progress lies an uncomfortable truth: construction projects are steadily losing their human touch – and with it, the last-mile execution capability that machines still cannot replace. A machine can bend reinforcing steel, but it cannot understand the practical improvisation required when bars clash at congested beam-column junctions. Mechanical shutters can be fabricated in factories, but aligning them accurately on-site according to drawings, level tolerances, and real-world site deviations still demands experienced human judgment.



Concrete can be pumped through sophisticated systems, but preparing a structurally sound, aligned, leak-proof formwork assembly before pouring remains dependent on skilled labour. Construction, unlike manufacturing, does not happen inside a controlled environment. Every site is a living ecosystem of uncertainty – soil variation, weather changes, drawing revisions, spatial constraints, and coordination gaps between disciplines. Machines excel at repetitive processes, but projects succeed or fail in these unpredictable “last-mile” moments where human experience becomes irreplaceable.

This is where the industry today faces a growing crisis. Across India, infrastructure expansion has accelerated at an unprecedented pace. Metro rail, highways, bridges, industrial corridors, ports, airports, smart cities, and high-rise developments require enormous quantities of skilled site labour. However, the availability of trained masons, bar benders, carpenters, scaffolders, concret-

ing supervisors, and shuttering specialists is shrinking rapidly. Ironically, part of this shortage stems from well-intentioned social upliftment policies.

Over the last decade, government welfare systems, rural employment guarantees, direct benefit transfers, subsidised food schemes, and social assistance programmes have significantly improved minimum survival security for millions. Socially, this is an important achievement. No society should deny dignity or economic support to vulnerable populations. But economically, an unintended consequence has emerged: physically demanding construction labour is becoming increasingly unattractive compared to low-effort income alternatives or informal gig work. Younger generations no longer aspire to site-based work involving heat, dust, mobility, and hardship. Parents themselves discourage children from entering trades that built India's infrastructure for decades.

The result is not merely

labour shortage; it is skill erosion. Construction skills are largely experiential. A veteran carpenter understands shutter deflection not from textbooks but from years of observing concrete pressure failures. An experienced bar bender instinctively reads reinforcement drawings and anticipates site conflicts before engineers detect them. A seasoned concreting foreman can judge workable slump consistency simply by observing placement behaviour. These are tacit human skills passed through generations on project sites. Once broken, this knowledge chain cannot be rebuilt quickly through classroom certification programs.

Today many projects possess advanced machinery but lack execution-ready labour capable of integrating machine output into functional structures. This disconnect is visible in increasing project delays, rework percentages, quality failures, alignment issues, honeycombing defects, reinforcement deviations, and finishing inconsistencies. In reality, mechanisation was never meant to eliminate human involvement. It was supposed to augment human productivity. Countries with advanced construction sectors such as Japan, Germany, and South Korea did not abandon skilled trades while modernising. Instead, they elevated them. Skilled construction workers there command social respect, structured career growth, technical certification, and financial dignity.

Sona Pappu, Jay Kamdar, Merlin Group: Decoding muscle-money-TMC nexus behind Kolkata's notorious syndicate

BY SIDDHARTHA RAI

Since time immemorial, West Bengal politics has been synonymous with violence backed by a syndicate. While the Left governments created this syndicate, it was Mamata Banerjee, who not just inherited and co-opted this syndicate, but also perfected it, made it work like a well-oiled machinery, every cog fitting in the whole of intimidation and cyclical recreation of fear. She held West Bengal in a Stockholm Syndrome grip.

The All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) worked as a cartel, violence at the centre of its ruling philosophy, manifesting itself as not just a political outfit, but marshalled on the lines of organized crime.

Recently arrested Sona Pappu, less known by his real name Biswajit Poddar, was allegedly the linchpin of this criminal syndicate. He was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on charges of money laundering, land grabbing, running a criminal syndicate and lording over an extensive extortion racket. The ED grilled him for nine straight hours and then placed him under arrest, underlining that he was not cooperating. Pappu is said to be the mastermind of the Kankulia violence.

Sona Pappu was locally called the 'King' till very recently. He started working his father's jewellery shop in the Picnic Garden area and then ventured allegedly into construction and criminal business in 2010-11, committing a murder-Bediadanga in 2017. He is said to have had the political patronage, by that time, of the TMC; used to call himself “untouchable by the law”.

His real business was running a mortgage racket on the

muscle of his local gang. His real estate ventures covered posh South Kolkata. He soon, it is claimed, cartelizeed real estate. According to sources, who want to remain anonymous, at least for now, Sona Pappu was hobnobbing with all the TMC bigwigs; he used to invest TMC money. He was the muscle behind other criminal-political figures who wanted to launder money.

Meanwhile, Pappu's name had earlier surfaced in connection with violence in the Rabindra Sarovar police station area in February last year. Locals alleged that his associates were involved in clashes and vandalism in the area. While police arrested several individuals following the unrest, they were unable to trace Pappu, who went into hiding.

Despite absconding, Pappu appeared live on Facebook on multiple occasions, denying any involvement in the violence. The ED, on the other hand, launched on April 1 coordinated raids at six locations across Kolkata, including Pappu's Ballygunge residence and offices linked to construction companies. Investigators also searched the home of Rahul Das, described as one of Pappu's close associates.

During one of the searches, officials recovered a firearm from Pappu's residence. According to ED sources, the foreign-made pistol had allegedly been procured through businessman Jay Kamdar.

At this point we should look at this protagonist of this alleged racket and syndicate—Jay Kamdar.

No Joy for Kamdar

According to sources, Kamdar is an important cog in this criminal enterprise centred around money laundering and

extortion and land grabbing. He is a close associate of Sona Pappu. According to sources, Kamdar is the launderer, while Pappu is the muscle. The money they launder allegedly comes from and goes to the TMC. Their names are also linked to high-profile buyouts of several building around the Bhabanipur Education Society College near the house of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

Kamdar is also said to run a micro-credit business as a cover for his money laundering activities. One such case is the illegal money lending business run by Pappu and Kamdar in the Gariahat market in Kolkata. Gariahat market is one of South Kolkata's busiest and most iconic shopping destinations. Located at the intersection of Gariahat Road and Rash Behari Avenue, it is famous for its vibrant street shopping, vast collection of traditional Bengali sarees, gold jewellery, and daily essentials.

There are around 2000 hawkers in the market and they are lent money by this syndicate. According to local sources, this usurious enterprise lends money on a month that may be of 21, 23 or 19 days.

ED says: “Investigation has revealed that Jay S Kamdar was in close contact with Sona Pappu and having huge financial transactions with him. He had also supplied firearms to Smt. Soma Sonar Poddar wife of Sona Pappu @ Biswajit Poddar; however, she has failed to disclose anything relating to the said purchase of the firearms from Jay S. Kamdar or his company. In addition to above, Jay S. Kamdar is revealed to be involved in extensive illegal international cross border and domestic Hawala transactions through many shell companies

which are under further investigation. Investigation by ED has also revealed that Jay S. Kamdar was instrumental in siphoning funds to the tune of more than Rs. 40 Crore from a trust working in the field of education in Kolkata.”

ED adds: “ED's investigation under PMLA has so far revealed that Proceeds of Crime were generated through illegal activities including extortion, grabbing of real estate properties, unauthorized building construction through entities controlled by Biswajit Poddar @ Sona Pappu, Jay S. Kamdar and associates.”

But, where was the money invested? Sona Pappu is part of the racket that complicated the Kolkata real estate scenario. This racket was all about creating layers and layers of fake multiple ownership claims over prime properties, diluting and obfuscating real ownerships. Papers, say sources both public and in the Kolkata Police, were forged. Then this syndicate invited big real estate firms and players to buy these properties or invest in them.

The 'Merlin' of land grab

This brings us to the Merlin Group. The group, controlled by Sushil and Saket Mohta, is under ED scrutiny under PMLA for using the forged land titles and ownership documents for grabbing prime properties.

The Enforcement Directorate had conducted searches at seven locations linked to the Merlin Group in Kolkata on April 8, as part of its ongoing probe. Among the premises raided were the residences of promoter Sushil Mohta and his son Saket Mohta. Properties on Prince Anwar Shah Road and in Salt Lake were also covered during the operation.

World Metrology Day 2026 observed at Legal Metrology Complex Bemina

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: World Metrology Day 2026 was observed today at the Legal Metrology Complex, Bemina Srinagar, to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the Metre Convention in Paris in 1875, which laid the foundation for a globally uniform system of measurements and standards.

The theme for World Metrology Day 2026, "Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making", highlighted the vital role of metrology in ensuring scientific accuracy, transparency, consumer confidence and evidence-based governance. The programme focused on how reliable measurements and legal frameworks assist

policy makers in taking informed, transparent and enforceable decisions across various sectors.

The event was held under the guidance of Controller Legal Metrology, J&K, Shiv Kumar Gupta, whose continued efforts towards strengthening transparency, accountability and fair trade practices in the Union Territory were widely appreciated during the programme.

During the event, speakers highlighted the importance of Legal Metrology in protecting consumer rights, ensuring fairness in trade practices and maintaining accuracy in weights and measures. They also emphasized the proactive role of the department in strengthening trust

between consumers and traders through effective implementation of legal standards and awareness initiatives.

On the occasion, President Bakers Association, President Petroleum Dealers Association and President Wholesale Dealers Association facilitated the Controller Legal Metrology, J&K, in recognition of the department's sustained efforts towards promoting transparency, consumer protection and ethical trade practices across the Union Territory. The event concluded with a collective commitment towards strengthening compliance with legal metrology standards and promoting ethical trade practices in the market.

Growing public faith in BJP's vision and leadership reflects changing mood in Kashmir: Ashok Koul

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Several prominent leaders, trade union representatives, and social activists joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) during a grand joining programme organized at Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar. The joining programme was held in the presence of J&K BJP General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, J&K BJP General Secretary Mohammad Anwar Khan, J&K Waqf Board Chairperson Dr. Danishlan Anshu, J&K BJP Secretaries Arif Raja and Mudaris Wani, along with District President Adv. Sheikh Salmaan. NC Leaders Danish Riyaz Dar, Tariq Sofi, Mushtaq Dar, Mohd Rafeeq, Senior Trade Union Leader Shabir Ahmad Langoo and Former Senior Trade

Union Leader, Chairman Non-Gazetted Employees Union J&K Saem Bazzaz, Mohd Yousuf Zargar VP Bhartiya Krishak Samaj, Muneer Langoo and Sanoor Choudary Social Activist joined BJP on the occasion. Ashok Koul, while welcoming the new entrants, said that the massive joining programme reflects the growing confi-

dence of the people of Kashmir in the policies, leadership, and vision of the BJP. He stated that people from every section of society are associating with the party because BJP stands for development, peace, transparency, and equal opportunities for all regions and communities. Ashok Koul said that under the leadership of Prime

Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed unprecedented developmental initiatives, improved infrastructure, enhanced grassroots democracy, and empowerment of youth and marginalized sections. He added that the BJP is committed to ensuring prosperity and lasting peace in Kashmir and welcomed the new

entrants into the party fold. Mohammad Anwar Khan, speaking on the occasion, said that the joining of prominent social and political figures into BJP demonstrates the changing political mood in Kashmir. He emphasized that BJP is emerging as a strong voice of the common people in Kashmir and assured the new members.

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1 CLASS BILLAWAR

Kartar Smaah Singh S/o Halkom chand 210 malfi pelli. All Dter Tehsil Billawar

V/s
BDO Billwar

IN THE MATTER OF: An application for registration of date of certificate/death certificate us 13 (3) Registration of Birth and Death Act, 1969.

NOTICE TO GENERAL PUBLIC

Whereas the above titled applicant has filed this application for seeking direction to non-applicant for registration of birth/death particulars of applicant's Brother_namely shamsheer Singh 60sh. Hakom chand sat. Mundroo, Devi bom/died 6.05.2017 at Aher who was son

Whereas through the medium of this publication, the public at large is that in case anyone having any objection in issuance of direction with respect to registration of birth/death particulars of applicant's Brother mentioned above to the non-applicant, then he/she shall file the same before the court in person or through counsel or any recognized agent and contest the claim within 07 days from the date of this publication, failing which appropriate orders shall be passed in this publication. If the date fixed turns to be a holiday, then the matter shall be taken up on the next following working day.

Issued today on 20-5-26 under my signature and seal of this court.

Se **TEHSU DAR**
Ex-Class Billwar Billwar

NOTICE

Whereas I SUSHIL SINGH S/O Sh Sagar Singh is owner of Land missing 3 and half Marla Comprising of Khuma no 713 in ward no 1 Billwar. Teh Billwar District Kathua J&K and I want to Mortgage said Land in favour of J&K Bank Billwar for Housing loan. If any body have objection intimate to the Branch Manager J&K Bank Billwar

NOTICE

I Neeraj Jamwal W/o Sh. Manjeet Singh R/o lodhna Kishanpur Tehsil Billawar Distt. Kathua J&K U.T That the Date of Birth Certificate of my Son Nitish Singh has been issued by the Registrar Birth and Death Station House Officer Billawar on 07-08-2012 under registration No.1213-15-A in which my name is inadvertently written AS Neeraj Pathania instead of Neeraj Jamwal. Now I am applying for correction of my name in DOB certificate of my son as Neeraj Jamwal instead of Neeraj Pathania in the office of registrar BDO Office Billawar. objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority with in 7 days, from the date of publication of this notice

NOTICE

I Zahida Begum D/o Sh. Ashaq Hussain and Smt Sahida Begum R/o ward No. 7 near GHS Nathi Kindli tehsil Lohai mathar (Billawar) Distt. kathua J&K that in my 10th marks cards under roll no 166005024. session regular annual 2025. Which is issued by JKBOSE. in which My father name is wrongly recorded as Ashaq. Now I am applying for correction of my father name in 10th class record as Ashaq Hussain instead of Ashaq in JKBOSE. objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority with in 7 days, from the date of publication of this notice

NOTICE

I Farzana Bano D/o Sh. Zakar Hussain and Smt Shamsad Begum R/o ward No. 2 near GHS Nathi Machhedi tehsil Lohai mathar (Billawar) Distt. kathua J&K that in my 10th marks cards under roll no 166005012. session regular annual 2025. Which is issued by JKBOSE. in which My father name is wrongly recorded as Zakar. Now I am applying for correction of my father name in 10th class record as Zakar Hussain instead of Zakar in JKBOSE. objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority with in 7 days, from the date of publication of this notice

NORTHERN RAILWAY
INVITATION OF TENDERS THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

In Divisional Material Manager's NRI, Store Branch-DIVM Office, Ferozpur for and on behalf of President of India, invited tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following items:

Tender No.	Description	Qty.	Est. Date
SI255181	SIC of HIRE (Hydraulic Rolling Equipment)	1 lots	22.06.2026

Note:- Above tenders with detailed description are uploaded on e-Procurement system i.e. www.bids.gov.in. The firm, who desire to participate against tenders, is advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a class II digital certificate from Certifying Agency. Authorized under IT Act 2008 by Govt. of India. Manual offers/agreements tenders will not be accepted.

Tender Notice No. 012429-27 Dated: 20.05.2026 19510200

FOR FURTHER DETAILS VISIT WWW.NRI.CO

NOTICE

I Nafis Ahmed S/O Abdul Gani R/o Lane No 4 Rehmanabad Bathindi A/p Peerbagh colony Bathindi Jammu have applied for correction of my daughter name which has been wrongly written as Usra instead of correct name Yousum in her Aadhar card bearing No 962212243718 objection if any may be conveyed to the concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

NOTICE

I Gulab Devi W/o Kalu Ram R/o Hiller Tehsil Rajgarh District Ramban have applied for correction of my name which has been wrongly written as Barfu Devi instead of correct name Gulab Devi in my Aadhar card objection if any may be conveyed to the concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

NOTICE

I Fareed Ahmed S/o John Mohd R/o Gandhari Ramban have applied for correction of my father's name and my DOB which has been wrongly written as Farid Ahmed S/o Jaan Mohd and DOB 04-02-1990 instead of correct name Fareed Ahmed S/o John Mohd and DOB 13-01-1989 in my Aadhar card bearing No 409077540091 objection if any may be conveyed to the concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

NOTICE

I Kartar Chand S/o Sh Shiv Ram R/o Darshni gate Katra W. No. 7 Tehsil Katra Distt. Reasi that my mother namely Sansara Devi was Death on 03-12-2023 at home. That the name of mother as named above may please be inter in your office record/Death certificate Register as above. That the above said averments are true and correct to the best of my knowledge objection if any may be conveyed to the concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice

IN THE COURT OF TEHSILDAR EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1st CLASS RAJGARH

AZAD AHMED S/O Lt ghulam NABI R/O GHARI Tehsil Rajgarh District Ramban

Applicant
V/S
Through BDO Rajgarh

Non-Aplicant
IN THE MATTER OF: Application for seeking direction upon the non applicant to enter/register the birth Particulars of the applicant's father in the Birth Register.

NOTICE FOR PUBLIC AT LARGE
Whereas the applicant named above has filed an application seeking direction to the Non applicant to register the date of Date of death particulars of father as mentioned Below in the concerned register.

S.No. NAME FATHER MOTHER DATE OF DEATH 21-09-2025 I GHULAM NABI HABIB CHURI
Therefore by virtue of this notice at large is informed that if any person have any objection in respect in the above mentioned application, he/she shall file his/her objection in this office within seven days from the issuance of this notice falling which said application shall be dealt into accordance with law

Issued under my hand and seal of this court today on date
Executive Magistrate
1st Class Rajgarh

Office of the Area Marketing Officer DEPARTMENT OF HORTICULTURE PLANNING AND MARKETING Udhampur-Reasi, Fruit & Vegetable Mandi Complex KallarHima, Udhampur

No: AMO/UDR/2026-27/ 102-103 Dated: 18-05-2026
Subject: Self Employment Generating Schemes under HADP / JKICP and inviting online applications therefor.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION NOTICE

It is for the information of the public in general and farmers, FPOs, SHGs, Entrepreneurs, NGOs, Educated youths, Traders, Mandi Associations, Cooperatives and other stake holders in particularly that the Government of Jammu & Kashmir has launched farmers-oriented programs like PROJECT -4 (P4) -STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURAL MARKETING INTERVENTIONS under "Holistic Agriculture Development Program"(HADP) and The Jammu & Kashmir "Competitiveness Improvement of the Agriculture and Allied Sector Projects" (JKICP) -with the objective to increase farmer incomes by improving the competitiveness of their agriculture and horticulture economy and adaptation practices / interventions as envisaged in these programs strengthening Agriculture Marketing across the state, thereby generating ample of job opportunities for educated youths, farmers, entrepreneurs and all other stakeholders.

Accordingly online applications along with other requisite documents are hereby invited from the educated youths, farmers, technical / agriculture graduates, FPOs, SHGs, Cooperatives, Traders, Mandi Associations, Agri-Start Ups and other stakeholders of District Udhampur and District Reasi for below advertised Project Components:

Project Components under HADP: (Apply on Portal: hadp.jk.gov.in)

S. No.	Project/ Scheme (P4)	Project Component	Project Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Subsidy Incentives	Beneficiary Share (%)	Documents Required
1		Rural Business and Services Hub (RBSH)	30.00	UT Capex: 50 %	50 %	➤ Adhar card Copy ➤ PAN No. copy
2	HADP	Portable Grading Line	05.00	UT Capex: 50 %	50 %	➤ Bank A/C Number ➤ Revenue naqal/ Rent Dead ➤ DPR of the Project from Chartered Accountant.
3		Mini Cold Store (500-1000 MTs)	50.00	CSS (MIDH): 50% UT capex: 25%	25 %	
4		Hi-Tech Grading Line	62.00	CSS (MIDH): 50 % Subject to 37.50 lacs per line. UT Capex: 25 %	25 %	

Project Components under JKICP: (Apply on Portal: jkicp.jk.gov.in)

S. No.	Project/ Scheme (P4)	Project Component	Project Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Subsidy Incentives	Beneficiary Share (%)	Documents Required
						➤ Adhar card Copy

1	JKICP	Integrated Pack House (DMX 8M) - 15 Marla Land	50.00	UT Capex: 50 %	50 %	➤ PAN No. copy ➤ Bank A/C Number ➤ Land Documents. ➤ NOCs from relevant Departmental agencies. ➤ Approved DPR of the Project.
2		Processing Unit Large (Adequate Land)	200.00	UT Capex: 50 %	50 %	➤ Adhar card Copy ➤ PAN No. copy ➤ Bank A/C Number ➤ Land Documents. ➤ NOCs from relevant Departmental agencies. ➤ DPR of the Project. ➤ Company Registration ➤ Building Permission ➤ Approved Map ➤ FSSAI License ➤ NOC from PCB, PDD, Jalshakti ➤ In-Principal Approval from Bank.
3		Processing Unit Mini	04.00	UT Capex: 50 %	50 %	➤ Adhar card - Address Proof Copy ➤ PAN No. copy ➤ Bank A/C Number ➤ Land Documents. ➤ DPR of the Project ➤ Company Registration ➤ FSSAI License
4		Grading Line with washer	08.00	UT Capex: 50 %	50 %	➤ Adhar card - Address Proof Copy ➤ PAN No. copy
5		Mini Grading Line	03.00	UT Capex: 50 %	50 %	➤ Bank A/C Number ➤ Land Documents. ➤ DPR of the Project.

For Further Details Please Contact:-
Area Marketing Office Fruit Mandi/Udhampur: 9419111421, 9103329381, 7006236322
AGMO Office Mini Secretariat Hali No. 303, 2nd Floor/Reasi: 7006034798, 9697903007

(SUNIL SINGH)
Area Marketing Officer
Horticulture Planning & Marketing
Udhampur / Reasi

DIP/J-2352/26

'I know I can hit boundaries anytime': Vaibhav Sooryavanshi dazzles with 38-ball 93 in RR's epic chase

New Delhi, May 20: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi continued his record-breaking Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 campaign with a sensational 93 off just 38 balls against Lucknow Super Giants in Rajasthan Royals' thrilling chase of 221 in Jaipur on Tuesday night, achieving yet another milestone in a breakthrough season. The teenage sensation became the youngest player ever to score 500 runs in an IPL season, surpassing the previous record held by Rishabh Pant, who had achieved the feat at the age of 20 for Delhi Daredevils (now Delhi Capitals) in 2018. Sooryavanshi's explosive innings, packed with 10 sixes and seven fours, laid the foundation for Rajasthan's seven-wicket victory at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium, with Dhruv Jurel remaining



unbeaten on 53 to complete one of the most memorable chases of the season. After the match, the younger credited conversations with senior cricketers, former players and coaches for helping him play with greater confidence during his debut IPL season. "It feels good. It's a moment of pride. And yes, it feels good when so many seniors, cricketers, ex-

cricketers, and our coaches talk to me. It gives me confidence, and it helps me in the game," Sooryavanshi said in a video shared by IPL on X. Despite his aggressive reputation, the opener revealed that his approach during the steep chase was actually to stay patient early on before shifting gears once he got set. "I was thinking that today I shouldn't rush too much at

the start because the wicket looked really good. If I batted for a longer period, it was going to help the batter at the other end as well," he said. "That was the mindset. I know I can hit two or three boundaries or sixes anytime, so I can take some time and try to take the game deep," he added. The teenager also said Rajasthan's focus during the pressure chase was to

remain relaxed and trust their natural attacking game instead of overthinking qualification scenarios. "We wanted to enjoy and not put pressure on ourselves. The focus was to play good cricket and back our strengths," he said. "We don't have too much focus on qualification calculations. If there's a chance, it's obviously in everyone's mind, but we're trying to improve day by day." Earlier, Mitchell Marsh smashed 96 while Josh Inglis made 60 to power Lucknow to 220/5, but Rajasthan's fearless batting display ensured the hosts chased down the massive target with five balls to spare. Stand-in RR captain Yashasvi Jaiswal praised the impact made by Sooryavanshi and Jurel, saying their partnership had effectively "killed the game" for Rajasthan Royals.

Mohammed Shami acquitted in estranged wife's cheque bounce case, says 'I have paid every rupee'

New Delhi, May 20: Indian cricketer Mohammed Shami has been acquitted by the Alipore Court in a cheque bounce case filed by his estranged wife, Hasin Jahana, in a significant development in the long-running legal dispute between the two.



The case was linked to allegations made by Jahana in 2018, where she claimed that a cheque worth Rs 1 lakh issued by Shami towards household expenses had bounced after being deposited in a bank. She later approached the court and filed a case against the India pacer. On Wednesday, the Chief Judicial Magistrate's court in Alipore cleared Shami of all charges in the matter. Confirming the verdict, Shami's advocate Salim Rahman told IANS, "Cricketer Mohammed Shami has been acquitted

in the four-year-old case which was filed by his wife." Shami, who appeared in court during the hearing, said he had faith in the legal process and maintained that he had fulfilled all his responsibilities. "I have paid every rupee that I was required to pay. Whether on or off the field, I always try to handle every situation to the best

of my ability," he said after the verdict. While the cheque bounce case has now been decided in Shami's favour, the broader legal battle between the couple is still ongoing. Hasin Jahana had earlier filed multiple complaints against Shami and his family members, and the dispute over maintenance and alimony continues in court.

J&K Sports Council congratulates Vishal Thappar on selection for Senior Fencing Sabre World Cup

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council congratulated J&K's ace Sabre Fencer Vishal Thappar on his selection to represent India in the Senior Fencing Sabre World Cup scheduled to be held at Cairo, Egypt from May 22 to 24, 2026.



Vishal Thappar earned his place in the Indian team after an impressive performance during the three-phase selection trials organised by the Fencing Association of India at the National Centre of Excellence, NSNIS Patiala. His outstanding display of technique, agility, and fitness once again reaffirmed his stature as one of the country's leading sabre fencers.

Perennially, Vishal Thappar has brought laurels to the nation and Jammu & Kashmir on several occasions and has won numerous national and international medals, including a Senior Commonwealth Gold

Medal. He is presently ranked third in India in the sabre category. Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul, congratulated Vishal Thappar on this remarkable achievement and extended her best wishes to him and his family. She expressed confidence that Vishal would continue to make the Union Territory and the country proud with his performances at the international level. "The selection of Vishal Thappar for the prestigious Senior Sabre World Cup is a proud moment for Jammu & Kashmir. His dedication, consistency, and achievements continue to inspire young athletes across the region," she

Want to play more Tests with Big Three: Shanto after Bangladesh's historic win over Pak

New Delhi, May 20: Fresh off Bangladesh's historic Test series sweep over Pakistan, captain Najmul Hossain Shanto has urged the International Cricket Council (ICC) to give his side more opportunities against the traditional "big three" of India, Australia and England, saying regular exposure against top teams is crucial for Bangladesh's growth in Test cricket. Bangladesh completed a remarkable 2-0 series whitewash over Pakistan after sealing a 78-run win in the second Test in Sylhet on Wednesday. It marked Bangladesh's second consecutive Test series sweep over Pakistan after also beating them 2-0 away from home in 2024. Speaking after the historic triumph, Najmul said Bangladesh now wants to challenge themselves more consistently against stronger



opposition across different conditions. "Because, as I said, when we get the chance to play matches, when we get those new experiences, the team will slowly build. Otherwise, playing with the same team again and again, playing in the same conditions, it is difficult to actually build a team," he said. "So hopefully, the ICC will give us

more Test matches with all the teams. Now that we are getting the chance to play more matches, this is a positive aspect. But if we can play more and better matches with Australia, England, India, of course, it will be better for our team," he added. Najmul also praised the team for handling pressure well during crucial moments of the series, especially after Pakistan threatened a comeback through Mohammad Rizwan and Sajid Khan in the final innings. "I think it's difficult to explain the emotion in the last hour because, honestly, they were batting well and we were a little under pressure, but we were very honest. But one thing I will say is that compared to the previous Test matches, I will say that controlling that emotion and not panicking has become a little better," said Najmul.

Carlos Alcaraz withdraws from Wimbledon and Queen's Club over persistent wrist injury

New Delhi, May 20: The fans still have to wait to see their Spanish star back in action, as World No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz has been forced to withdraw from both Wimbledon and the Queen's Club Championships due to a persistent right wrist injury. Alcaraz confirmed the setback in a message posted on X, saying that while his recovery is progressing, he is still not fit enough to compete on grass. "My recovery is going well, and I feel much better, but unfortunately I'm still not ready to be able to play, and that's why I have to withdraw from the grass-court swing at Queen's and Wimbledon," Alcaraz wrote. "They are two really special tournaments for me, and I'll miss them a lot. We keep working to return as soon as possible." The withdrawal is another blow in a disrupted season for the



Spaniard, who has not featured on tour since injury concerns intensified during the clay-court swing. He had already missed key events, including the Italian Open in Rome and the French Open, where he was set to defend his title. Alcaraz's last major triumph came at the 2025 French Open, where he

produced a legendary five-set victory over world No. 1 Jannik Sinner in a marathon final lasting five hours and 29 minutes, widely hailed as one of the greatest Grand Slam matches in recent memory. However, signs of trouble had emerged earlier in the season. He withdrew from the Barcelona

Open after receiving treatment on his right wrist and forearm, and also skipped the Madrid Open as precautionary steps. At the Laureus Awards earlier this year, where he was named Sportsman of the Year, Alcaraz was seen wearing a brace on his right wrist, further raising concerns about his availability for the season's biggest tournaments. In April, he had already hinted at the seriousness of the issue, saying medical advice had forced him to step away to avoid worsening the injury, adding that the decision was "a difficult time" but necessary for the long term. With Wimbledon now set to go ahead without one of its brightest young stars, attention will shift to other contenders such as Novak Djokovic and Jannik Sinner as the grass-court major approaches.

Major boost for RCB as Phil Salt set to return ahead of playoffs

New Delhi, May 20: Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru have received a major boost ahead of the IPL 2026 playoffs, with explosive opener Phil Salt set to rejoin the squad later this week after recovering from a finger injury. Salt, who has been sidelined for nearly a month, had injured his left hand while attempting a boundary save during RCB's defeat to Delhi Capitals at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on April 18. The England wicketkeeper-batter subsequently returned home to recover and spend time with his family. According to an ESPNcricinfo report, Salt is now expected to travel back to India and rejoin the



RCB camp ahead of the final stretch of the tournament. However, it remains uncertain whether the 29-year-old will feature in RCB's final league-stage clash against Sunrisers Hyderabad on Friday, with the franchise unlikely to risk him so close to the playoffs. Despite Salt's absence, RCB have already sealed

qualification for the playoffs and remain firmly in contention for a top-two finish and a place in Qualifier 1. Before suffering the injury, Salt had been one of RCB's standout performers this season, smashing 202 runs in six innings at a blistering strike rate of 168.33 and providing aggressive starts alongside Virat Kohli at the top of the order.

ICC reprimands Salman Agha after bat-smashing incident in Bangladesh 2nd Test

New Delhi, May 20: Pakistan batter Salman Agha has been officially reprimanded by the ICC for breaching the Code of Conduct during Pakistan's second Test against Bangladesh in Sylhet. The incident occurred on Tuesday during the 2nd over of Pakistan's second innings when the middle-order batter, after being dismissed, struck an advertising board with his bat while walking back to the pavilion. According to the ICC, Salman breached Article 2.2 of the ICC Code of Conduct, which relates to the abuse of cricket equipment, ground equipment or



fixtures during an international match. Along with the official reprimand, one demerit point has also been added to Salman's disciplinary record. It was his second offence in a 24-month period, taking his tally to two demerit points. His previ-

ous breach under the same article came during an ODI against Bangladesh in Dhaka earlier this year. Salman admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by ICC match referee Jeff Crowe, meaning no formal hearing was required.

'Talk about cricket': Riyan Parag urges commentators to avoid personal remarks

New Delhi, May 20: Rajasthan Royals skipper Riyan Parag has called for greater respect towards players and urged commentators and experts to avoid personal remarks during the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 season, stressing that analysis should remain focused on on-field performances. Speaking after Rajasthan Royals' crucial seven-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants, which he missed due to a recurring hamstring injury, the RR captain said criticism often crosses the line and fails to acknowledge the preparation and pressure behind the scenes. "As far as the IPL is concerned, there are a lot of things happening outside this year. I feel



the whole country loves cricket a lot. We, as players, try to give our best whenever we can. We perform according to the expectations of the crowd. So, I feel, we should all love cricket and look at it in the

same way. He added that harsh judgments after poor team performances ignore the effort that goes into each game. "Players are working very hard. It is very easy to say, if a team gets all out for 75 or 80

runs, that they do not know how to play or have the mindset to play. But before that game, there is a 3-4 days' preparation (period) to ensure how we can score 200-250. But sometimes it doesn't happen. We are humans too and we make mistakes too." Parag, earlier in the spotlight over an on-field vaping controversy during the season, also raised concerns about the tone of external commentary, saying it can unfairly shape public perception of players and performances. "So, I feel, as much as it is happening outside, especially the commentators, their voices are reaching out to the people. I would request them to love cricket and talk about cricket." Parag told reporters at the end of the game.

North India bakes under brutal heatwave as Delhi nears 46°C, UP records 48.2°C

New Delhi, May 20: Large parts of North and Central India continued to reel under an intense heatwave on Tuesday, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) warning that temperatures are likely to remain dangerously high over the next several days. Delhi-NCR is expected to touch nearly 46 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, while parts of Uttar Pradesh have already crossed the 48-degree mark. The prolonged spell of extreme heat has pushed authorities to issue orange and red alerts across several states, including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh. The IMD has warned that heatwave to severe heatwave conditions are likely to persist across northwest and central India through the week, raising concerns over heat-related illnesses, dehydration and power demand. In Delhi, the Safdarjung observatory, consid-



ered the city's official weather station, recorded a maximum temperature of 45.1 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, nearly 4.7 degrees above normal and the highest so far this season. Some areas of the national capital saw even harsher conditions. Ridge station recorded 46.5 degrees Celsius, Ayanagar touched 45.5 degrees, while Lodhi Road

reported 45.2 degrees. The IMD said Banda in Uttar Pradesh emerged as the hottest place in the country on Tuesday with a maximum temperature of 48.2 degrees Celsius. Heatwave severe heatwave conditions were reported in isolated pockets of East Uttar Pradesh, while Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and parts of West Uttar

Pradesh also remained under intense heat stress. The weather agency has forecast severe heatwave conditions over West Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh till May 25. Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi are also likely to remain under heatwave conditions throughout the week. Even nights are offering little relief. The IMD warned that "warm night" conditions are very likely over Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Vidarbha, meaning temperatures after sunset may remain significantly above normal. Delhi's air quality worsens amid scorching weather as extreme temperatures also worsened Delhi's air quality on Tuesday. The city's Air Quality Index climbed to 208 by evening, making it the poorest air quality recorded since April 28. Following the deterioration in pollution levels, the Commission for Air Quality Management activated Stage I restrictions.

Tamil Nadu: Vijay-led TVK govt expected to expand Cabinet on May 21

New Delhi, May 20: C. Joseph Vijay-led Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) government in Tamil Nadu is reportedly gearing up for its first Cabinet expansion on Thursday, May 21. It is looking forward to a crucial political balancing act that is aimed at addressing alliance expectations, regional representation, and internal party dynamics. The final round of consultations on the ministerial list is nearing completion ahead of a likely swearing-in ceremony scheduled for Thursday morning. IANS quoted sources as saying, Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, who is currently holding additional charge, could arrive Chennai on Wednesday evening to oversee the formalities related to the expansion. The insiders have claimed that the state government is likely to accommodate alliance partner Congress in the expanded Cabinet, with two Congress legislators emerging as leading contenders for ministerial positions. Amid speculations over possible Cabinet berths for members of the AIADMK faction led by CV Shanmugam and SP



Velumani, sources told IANS that the ruling leadership might have stepped back from such a move after strong opposition from alliance partners, including Congress. Left parties and the Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK). Speaking on condition of anonymity, a senior Tamil Nadu minister said that there had never been any formal discussion regarding.

Delhi man arrested from Prayagraj after jumping parole 24 years ago



New Delhi, May 20: In a major breakthrough, Delhi Police have arrested a life convict in a murder case who had been absconding for 24 years after jumping parole in 2002. An official on Wednesday, May 20, identified the accused as Rakesh Patel alias Pappi who is said to have changed his identity and

was living under the name 'Nandlal Verma' in Prayagraj to evade arrest, reported. As per Delhi Police officials, Rakesh and his two associates had in 1990 stabbed his neighbour to death in north Delhi's Jahangirpuri area. Rakesh along with Chandar Prakash and Anil Kumar were convicted for murder in 1995 and sen-

tenced to life imprisonment. Later on, Patel was granted parole by the Delhi High Court in 1999 for his marriage. Soon after, he surrendered before the jail authorities after the end of his parole. Thereafter, he was granted parole again in 2002, after the birth of his second child. However, when his parole ended on June 24 that year, Rakesh did not surrender. Jail authorities have confirmed that he was released on parole on June 3, 2002 and never returned after the expiry of the parole period. To track Rakesh, a police team conducted technical and manual surveillance, analysed his criminal history as well as parole records, mobile details and known hideouts.

Police ask family to collect body amid decomposition concerns, court to hear plea for second autopsy

New Delhi, May 20: The Twisha Sharma death case took another turn on Wednesday after Madhya Pradesh Police asked the family to take custody of her body from AIIMS Bhopal, warning that prolonged storage could lead to decomposition and affect forensic evidence. The development came hours before a magistrate court in Bhopal was scheduled to hear the family's plea seeking a second post-mortem examination outside Madhya Pradesh, preferably at AIIMS Delhi. The family has maintained that an independent medical opinion is necessary to ensure transparency in the investigation. In a letter



issued by Katara Hills Police Station to Twisha's father Neeraj Sharma, police said AIIMS Bhopal had informed authorities

that the body would require preservation at minus 80 degrees Celsius to prevent decomposition, but such a facility was not available at

the hospital. According to the letter, the body is currently being preserved at minus 4 degrees Celsius in the AIIMS Bhopal mortuary. The communication further noted that standard mortuary freezers can only slow decomposition over time and cannot completely stop it. The letter stated that the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at AIIMS Bhopal had informed police on May 18 that "in order to prevent decomposition, the body ought to be stored at a temperature of minus 80 degrees Celsius", a facility unavailable at the institute. Police also told the family that they had "no objec-

tion" to a second post-mortem examination being conducted. "You are hereby informed that the police have no objection to a post-mortem being conducted. However, given that the deceased's body has been stored in the mortuary for an extended period, you are humbly requested to make arrangements to take custody of the deceased's body," the letter read. Family seeks second autopsy at AIIMS Delhi Twisha Sharma, wife of Samarth Singh, allegedly died by suicide at her matrimonial home in Bhopal's Katara Hills area on May 12. Her post-mortem examination was conducted.

Unity move in AIADMK as efforts begin to bridge Palaniswami-Shanmugham rift

New Delhi, May 20: Even as AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami (EPS) called for unity during a meeting of district secretaries, parallel efforts appear to be underway within the party to reconcile differences between him and the dissident faction led by senior leader C.V. Shanmugam, amid concerns that the feud is undermining the party's prospects in



the long term. However, the extent of progress made in these efforts remains unclear. The developments came at a time when Shanmugam has reiterated his demand for an early meeting of the party's General Council to

discuss crucial issues, including the AIADMK's repeated electoral setbacks in recent years. The informal meeting of district secretaries on Tuesday, convened by Palaniswami, witnessed some unexpected developments. Though

it was originally scheduled to be held at his residence, the venue was shifted at the last minute to the AIADMK headquarters. Leaders loyal to EPS claimed that the majority of the party's 82 district secretaries attended the

meeting, while the rival camp insisted that a considerable number of office-bearers stayed away. Former minister and senior D. Jayakumar was among the notable absentees. The AIADMK headquarters later stated that some district secretaries who could not attend had conveyed reasons for their absence. According to party sources, Palaniswami used the meeting to explain the party's electoral performance and reassure district secretaries, including newly appointed functionaries, that AIADMK had previously overcome difficult political phases and returned to power despite severe electoral setbacks.

14 Trinamool MLAs get invite for CM Adhikari's administrative review meeting in North Bengal

New Delhi, May 20: As an expression of political courtesy, the elected legislators from the opposition Trinamool Congress from eight districts in North Bengal have received invitations to attend the administrative review meeting for the region to be chaired by Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari at Siliguri in Darjeeling district on Wednesday. "Trinamool is the only opposition party in the state which has elected legislators from the eight districts of North Bengal. Accordingly, all 14 Trinamool Congress legislators have been sent invitations from the Chief Minister's Office to be present at the meeting," confirmed an officer from the CMO. It is learnt that the



invitation to the opposition legislator had been sent following the insistence of CM Adhikari in the matter, since he wanted to set an example that the involvement of the opposition legislators and seeking their suggestions on public service is an essential and healthy practice in a democratic system. Political observers feel that through this gesture, the new Chief Minister also wants to send a subtle message to his pre-

decessor, Mamata Banerjee, during whose 15-year tenure from 2011 to 2026, not a single opposition legislator was invited to any of her official programmes as the Chief Minister. The system of inviting opposition legislators to official government programmes was also practised by the two previous Marxist Chief Ministers, Late Jyoti Basu and Late Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee.

'They wanted a car': Family alleges dowry harassment after Gwalior newlywed's death



New Delhi, May 20: A 21-year-old newlywed woman allegedly died by suicide at her in-laws' house in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior district, with her family accusing the husband's family of harassing her over dowry demands and repeatedly pressuring her for a car. The case has once again put the spotlight on rising allegations of dowry-linked harassment involving young married women. Police said a case would be registered

against the in-laws after examining the post-mortem report, statements of family members and evidence collected from the spot. The deceased, identified as Palak Rajak, was a resident of Suniari Pura under Morar police station limits in Gwalior. According to police, she got married on April 14, 2025, and allegedly died by hanging herself at her in-laws' residence on May 12. Family alleges repeated taunts over dowry

According to the police officer, Palak's family accused her in-laws of demanding a vehicle, withholding her stridhan and repeatedly taunting her after marriage. "Based on the statements given by the family members, allegations have emerged that the in-laws continuously harassed her and demanded a vehicle," Soni said. He added that the family claimed the alleged harassment began within months of the marriage and had caused severe emotional distress to the woman. "The marriage took place around a year ago and it is alleged that within three to four months, the taunting and demand for a vehicle had started. The deceased would often discuss this with her family members," he said. Police said further legal action would follow after completion of the preliminary investigation.

PM Modi has sold the country, alleges Rahul Gandhi

RAEBARELI, MAY 20 (UNI) Congress MP and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, on Wednesday, blamed the Narendra Modi government for the economic crisis and even alleged that the BJP government has sold out the country to the US. "A severe wave of inflation is imminent due to an impending economic storm. The prices of gas, diesel, and petrol will rise. Fertilizers will become unavailable," he claimed. Addressing a public gathering at a Bahujan Swabhimann Sabha in Lodhwa village in Raebareli on his second day of visit, the Congress leader launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Modi. Home Minister Amit Shah, and the BJP. He alleged that these industries are traitors to the nation and they have sold the country to the US. Pointing out at the audience seated before him, he remarked, "You are all clapping right now, yet, when members of the RSS tear up the Constitution right in front of you, you remain silent. I want to tell you that this Constitution embodies your voice and your very blood. It is your duty and your responsibility to protect and preserve it." When RSS workers come before you, tell them openly that your Prime Minister, Home Minister, and

organization are traitors. You have sold out India," he said. The Congress MP said, "Now an economic storm is coming. Modi won't be able to save you. Remember, just like he cried during Covid and demonetization, saying 'Hang me,' He'll come on TV again. He'll fold his hands. He'll cry. He'll say, 'It's not my fault.' He continued, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi tells you not to travel abroad. He tells you not to buy gold. He tells you to purchase electric vehicles instead. In the near future, even farmers will be unable to procure fertilizers. An economic storm is brewing. In just a few months, you will witness the extent to which inflation will soar—how high petrol prices will climb, how high diesel prices will rise, how high gas prices will climb." The Prime Minister openly declares, "Do not buy gold, do not travel abroad," yet he himself travels internationally in aircraft worth thousands of crores of rupees. And you people remain silent." Rahul Gandhi alleged that the ideology of Narendra Modi and the RSS has launched an assault on the country's Constitution. "It is the Constitution that has provided for reservations. The Constitution mandates the existence of a public sector in the country to gener-

ate employment opportunities; however, Modi has handed over the nation's entire wealth to the Ambani and Adani groups. The Modi government has dismantled MGNREGA and privatized the public sector. The Constitution stipulates that every individual is entitled to one vote, yet, through the SIR process, the votes of millions of people have been struck off." He further said, "The Constitution mandates reservations. There should be justice in the judiciary, and a free and fair media. But Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, and the RSS have ended all of this. They've taken your money from your pockets, privatized the public sector, and installed RSS vice-chancellors in universities. They know neither history nor geography," he alleged. Rahul Gandhi said, "If we fold our hands before Veera Pasi and Ambekar, it is our responsibility to respect their ideology. If Ambekar were sitting here in front of you, you would have raised slogans in front of him. Then, if you had gone out and shaken hands with the British, it would have been an attack on Ambekar's ideology." The Constitution, he said, "Today we are remembering Veera Pasi, but as I was listening to the speech, I was thinking that the ideology that Ambekar had

being destroyed. Don't think this is an ordinary book. This is an ideology that was in the blood of Ambedkar, Gandhi, and Veera Pasi. This book was written after independence. In it, you will find someone who fought and died for it. The voices of Guru Nanak, Kabir, Buddha, and all of them are present in this Constitution. Showing the Constitution, Rahul Gandhi said, "Slogans won't achieve anything. Whatever happens will come from protecting it. Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi said, "I want the country to see the Mahatma Gandhi of the 21st century. Let Ambedkar be seen. Where will these people come from? They won't come from abroad or from the sky. They will come from among you people. The RSS and the BJP destroyed the Constitution. They stopped MGNREGA. RSS chancellors were installed in universities. They don't know anything, yet they are sitting there. The RSS installed them. This is how these people destroyed the Constitution." Gandhi arrived in Raebareli on Tuesday on a two-day visit. He reached Amethi from Raebareli this afternoon. He will meet patients at Sanjay Gandhi Hospital there.



Countries positioning military assets for opening Strait of Hormuz, says NATO chief Rutte

Moscow, May 20: Lashing out at Iran for attempting to hold the global economy "hostage," NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte on Wednesday said NATO allies are discussing the deployment of military assets to the region to help keep the Strait of Hormuz open amid escalating tensions involving Tehran. Rutte said Iran's attempts to disrupt navigation through the strategic waterway posed a direct threat to global trade and allied security. "Iran is trying to hold the global economy hostage by closing a vital waterway on which much of the world depends," Rutte said while addressing a press conference ahead of the NATO foreign ministers' meeting in Sweden, calling it "a direct assault on freedom of navigation and global commerce." Warning that any disruption to the strategic waterway would threaten global trade and allied security, Rutte said several NATO members are already stepping up preparations to safeguard freedom of navigation in the Gulf. He said several NATO countries,



including France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom, were already repositioning military assets near the region to ensure safe transit through the Strait of Hormuz. "And this preparation is key to ensuring that the strait can be open for transit. We will also discuss how to further strengthen cooperation with NATO partners in the Gulf region," he confirmed that discussions were underway within

NATO on whether the alliance could assume a broader role in the Gulf crisis. "The situation is dynamic. Discussions are ongoing on whether NATO can play a constructive role," he said, without elaborating on the possible scope or timeline of any NATO-led operation. The NATO chief also defended growing European military engagement alongside the United States, saying European and Canadian allies had responded

rapidly to Washington's calls for support. "This is a debate that started again a year ago. This is why Europe is spending so much more to basically end the over-reliance on one ally when it comes to the defence of the overall totality of NATO territory. This is why European and Canadian allies are increasing their spending, increasing their capabilities, massively investing in the defence industrial base on both sides of the Atlantic," Rutte said. "Thousands of flights" had taken off from European bases in support of US operations, including refuelling and logistics missions, he said. On Ukraine, Rutte reiterated that European allies and Canada were sharply increasing defence spending to reduce dependence on the United States and strengthen NATO's conventional deterrence capabilities. He dismissed suggestions that recent announcements of US troop adjustments in Europe reflected disarray within the alliance, saying the changes were part of a "structured transition" agreed with Washington.

CEPA Turns Four As UAE-India Trade Hits New Highs

Dubai, May 20: Business and policy leaders gathered in Dubai to mark four years of the India - U A E Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, reaffirming the deal's role as a driver of one of the world's fastest-growing bilateral economic partnerships. The high-level event, organised by the Indian Business and Professional Council Dubai, brought together government representatives, diplomats, investors and industry leaders to assess CEPA's impact and chart the next phase of cooperation. IBFC Dubai Secretary General Dr. Sahitya Chaturvedi said bilateral trade has grown 37 percent since the agreement came into force in 2022. UAE exports to India rose 41 percent, while Indian exports to the UAE climbed 30 percent.



Both sides are now working toward a revised target of 200 billion US dollars by 2032. Ahmed Aljneibi, Director at the UAE-India CEPA Council, told the gathering that the partnership is moving beyond trade facilitation toward deeper economic integration. "The focus now shifts from expansion to deep integration, enabling businesses, startups and investors to unlock the next generation of opportunities across health, sustainability, manufacturing and fintech," he said. He described the bilateral relationship as increasingly measured "by companies' capital and talent, not just trade volumes." Sector discussions highlighted opportunities in pharmaceuticals, clean energy, fintech, aviation and digital commerce - with participants agreeing that sustained policy coordination will be key to meeting the two countries' long-term ambitions. Discussions also covered CEPA 4.0 priorities, regulatory frameworks.

Slain Security Guard Of California Mosque Engaged Gunmen In Shootout, Hailed As Hero



California, May 20: The security guard slain at the Islamic Center of San Diego was hailed on Tuesday as a fallen hero who sacrificed his life to keep 140 school children inside the mosque safe by engaging two gunmen in a shootout that derailed the teenage suspects and helped thwart their attack. Authorities also disclosed that the 17- and 18-year-old assailants, who took their own lives shortly

after Monday's shooting, were believed to have met online and were apparently "radicalized" in hate-related ideology on the internet. Late on Tuesday, CNN reported that it had obtained and reviewed graphic video purported to be footage of the mosque shooting recorded and livestreamed by the two suspects, including a final clip that appears to show one of the gunmen shooting his companion and

then himself. A day after the gun violence, police, FBI and other officials held a news conference focused on the three victims, all men affiliated with the mosque, who were slain in the attack and credited with putting themselves in harm's way to save others. The security guard, Amin Abdullah, 51, also known to some as Brian Climax, immediately recognized the two youths as a threat and opened fire on them as they ran past him outside the mosque, according to San Diego Police Chief Scott Wahl. The suspects then paused to return fire, Wahl said. Abdullah wound up fatally shot in the parking lot, along with two other men who distracted the suspects after they stormed into the building, drawing their attention through a window.

Hidden Sugar Patterns On Human Cells Can Help In Early Cancer Detection: Study

Washington, May 20: Scientists have uncovered a hidden "sugar code" on the surface of human cells that could transform how diseases are detected. Using an advanced imaging technique called Glycan Atlas, researchers at the Max Planck Institute in Munich, Germany, mapped the tiny sugar structures coating cells and discovered that these patterns shift depending on what the cell is doing. Immune cells changed their sugar layouts when activated, and cancerous tissues displayed distinct surface signatures compared to healthy tissue. Every human cell is covered by a thin layer of sugars called the glycocalyx. This outer coating of cells interact with their surroundings and may also provide important clues about what is happening inside the cell itself. Researchers at the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Light (MPL) have now created detailed maps of these sugar structures using advanced



high resolution microscopy. Their findings, published in Nature Nanotechnology, suggest that changes in the arrangement of these sugars could one day help doctors detect diseases such as cancer. The glycocalyx surrounds all human cells like a protective outer shell. Rather than remaining fixed in place, these complex sugar molecules constantly shift and reorganize. Scientists in the

"Physical Glycosciences" research group, led by Prof. Leonhard Mockl at MPL, study how this sugar coating behaves and what it reveals about cell biology. To investigate these structures, the team developed a technique called "Glycan Atlas." Using cutting edge super resolution microscopy, they mapped the glycocalyx at the level of individual sugar molecules across many different types of

cells. Their work included cell culture lines, primary human blood cells, and tissue clean energy. Maps showed that the glycocalyx changes its molecular arrangement depending on the condition of the cell. For example, immune cells displayed different sugar patterns after being stimulated to respond to what happens during an immune response. According to the researchers, this provides the first direct evidence that the glycocalyx functions almost like a display screen, showing information about a cell's internal state on its outer surface. The team found that these nanoscale sugar patterns could reliably distinguish between different cellular states. Their measurements allowed them to identify separate stages of cancer development, tell the difference between activated and inactive immune cells, and distinguish cancerous regions from healthy regions in human breast tissue.

Rajnath Singh Meets South Korea Defence Minister, Discusses Defence Cooperation

New Delhi, May 20: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday held talks with South Korea's Minister of Defence Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA), Lee Yong-Cheol, as part of his visit to the East Asian nation aimed at strengthening bilateral defence cooperation. Earlier in the day, Singh held a bilateral meeting with his South Korean counterpart Ahn Gyu-back in Seoul, during which both sides agreed to expand cooperation in defence, cyber security and strategic affairs under the growing strategic partnership between India and South Korea. In a post on X, Singh described the discussions as "excellent" and said



both countries explored ways to deepen defence industry ties and technological collaboration. "Held an excellent meeting with my South Korean counterpart, Ahn Gyu-back in Seoul. We discussed ways to further deepen India-Republic of Korea defence, defence

industry and strategic cooperation, with a shared commitment towards regional peace, stability and technological collaboration," Singh said. According to the defence minister, the meeting resulted in the exchange of multiple agreements aimed at strengthening institu-

tional cooperation in defence and security. India and South Korea exchanged agreements on promoting defence cyber cooperation between India's National Defence College and the Korea National Defence University, as well as cooperation in United Nations peacekeeping initiatives, Singh said. "It was a highly productive meeting as India and Korea exchanged Agreements on Promoting Defence Cyber Cooperation, between the National Defence College of India and the Korea National Defence University of RoK and UN Peacekeeping Cooperation, making our partnership stronger and multidimensional," he added. In a major step towards

enhancing bilateral security ties, India and the Republic of Korea also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) focused on cooperation in defence, cyber security and defence information sharing. The agreement was signed during Singh's official visit to Seoul in the presence of Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back. The MoU is aimed at strengthening collaboration in countering emerging cyber threats, protecting critical military infrastructure, sharing best practices in digital defence and enhancing institutional mechanisms for information sharing to improve situational awareness and regional security.

Chinese teacher slams student's 'lack of benches' complaint in smoking area

Washington, May 20: A Chinese student's complaint regarding lack of benches in the smoking area at a university received a strong rejection by the teacher and sparked major discussion over smoking publicly in China. Using the school's internal feedback channel, the student at the Xian International Studies University in northwestern Shaanxi province had earlier complained about lack of benches, which makes smoking too "exhausting". The student even asked the administration to provide more benches. What happened next was something that the student never expected. A teacher at the university responded with a lengthy letter stating that making smokers feel tired was exactly why the area was designed in the way it was, according to South China Morning Post. The letter from the teacher said that the smoking area in the university was not a "resting area," adding that it set up to "provide a transition space for those who temporarily cannot quit smoking, to smoke away from the crowd and reduce the influence of second-hand smoke on

other people". "When you complain about feeling 'tired' smoking while standing, have you thought of how tired other people are withstanding your second-hand smoke? ... What really makes you tired is not the lack of benches, but your dependence on cigarettes. If you feel tired, then smoke less. If you want comfort, you can go to the library, classroom or the playground," it added. Towards the end, the teacher even offered help to all those looking forward to quit smoking. The teacher at the university has been praised by many on the social media platforms in China, according to South China Morning Post. "This is a perfectly written letter, logical, comprehensive, thoughtful. I hope more students can realise the harm of smoking," one person wrote. Another added, "This is what true education is like". A third person was shocked to find out that there were "smoking areas in universities. I thought smoking is banned everywhere there". As per the 2024 China Adult Tobacco Survey carried out by the China's National Health Commission, smoking rate among people aged 15 and above is 23.2 per cent in the country - a decrease of 0.9 from 2022.

Over 8.5 Million Developers Use Google AI Models Monthly; Alphabet Plans \$190 Billion Capex: Sundar Pichai



Washington, May 20: US-based technology giant Google, backed by Alphabet Inc., said more than 8.5 million developers are now building applications and experiences each month using its artificial intelligence (AI) models, CEO Sundar Pichai said.

Speaking about the company's AI infrastructure investments, Pichai said Google expects its capital expenditure to reach nearly \$190 billion this year, with a major portion allocated to AI data centres, custom silicon and model training. He said demand across

Google's AI ecosystem continues to rise among developers, enterprises and consumers. According to the California-headquartered company, its model APIs are currently processing nearly 19 billion tokens per minute. More than 375 Google Cloud customers processed over one trillion tokens each during the past year. Pichai also highlighted growing adoption of the company's AI products. He said the Gemini app has crossed 900 million monthly active users, more than doubling from last year. Google's AI-powered search tools,

India ranks fifth in global military spending as world defence expenditure rises by 2.9 per cent in 2025: SIPRI

Washington, May 20: World military expenditure rose by 2.9 per cent to reach USD 2887 billion in 2025, with India spending 3.2 per cent of the global total, according to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Military Expenditure 2025 report. The USA, with a 33 per cent share of total global military expenditure, spent the most in 2025, followed by China and Russia, which accounted for 12 per cent and 6.6 per cent of the global total, respectively. The top three countries - USA, China and Russia - spent a combined total of USD 1480 billion, or



51 per cent of the global total in 2025, marking the 11th consecutive year of growth. Germany accounted for 3.9 per

cent of global military expenditure, making the country Europe's largest defence spender in 2025. India ranked fifth globally, accounting for 3.2 per cent of the world's military spending, followed by the United Kingdom (3.1 per cent). As per the report, global military spending has gone up by 41 per cent over the past decade (2016-25). However, the year-on-year increase in 2025 was considerably smaller than the 9.7 per cent rise recorded in 2024 and marked the lowest annual rate of growth since 2021. The world's military burden - the share of global gross domestic product (GDP).

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47th District-Level NCORD Meeting held in Budgam

DC Emphasises strong enforcement, Rehabilitation and Awareness under NMBA

BUDGAM, MAY 20: 47th District-Level Narco Coordination (NCORD) Committee Meeting was today convened at the DC Office Budgam under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Asmir Khan, along with SSP Budgam Hariprasad KK, to review ongoing anti-drug measures and strengthen strategies for a drug-free Budgam.



Colleges, Executive Officers of Municipal Development Departments and other concerned officers, from Excise, Police, Health, Education, Rural

decisions made during previous meetings and assessed progress achieved under the ongoing 100-Day Intensive Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan being implemented across the district. Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that drug abuse is not merely a law enforcement issue but a serious social challenge affecting families, youth, and the overall social fabric. He said that the administration shall continue to adopt a zero-tolerance approach against drug peddlers, traffickers, and cultivators, while simultane-

ously ensuring proper treatment, counselling and rehabilitation facilities for victims of substance abuse. The DC emphasised that a multi-dimensional strategy involving strict enforcement, preventive awareness, community participation, counselling and rehabilitation is essential for eliminating the menace of drugs from society. He highlighted the extensive awareness activities being carried out under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, including massive IEC campaigns, awareness programmes in schools and colleges, counselling sessions.

CME on World Hypertension Day held at SKIMS Medical College Srinagar



SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Department of General Medicine, SKIMS Medical College Srinagar today organized a Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme in the College Auditorium to mark World Hypertension Day, observed globally on May 17. The CME programme was attended by Principal, SKIMS Medical College, Prof. Dr. Fazal Qadir Parry, Heads of various departments, senior and junior faculty members, Medical Superintendent, residents, nursing staff and students. Addressing the gathering, the Principal appreciated the Department of General Medicine for organizing

the programme on a significant public health issue. He described hypertension as a "silent killer" and stressed the importance of timely diagnosis and proper management to prevent complications. Dr. Head, Department of General Medicine, Prof. Dr. Tariq Bhat, in his welcome address, highlighted the importance of conducting such academic activities and emphasized the clinical relevance of the topics discussed during the CME. During the scientific sessions, Senior Resident Dr. Khalid Bin Mushtaq delivered a presentation on "Prooperative Management of Hypertension," while senior faculty member Dr. Naik Muzafar, who is also a co-author of the Indian Hypertension Society Guidelines for Home Blood Pressure Monitoring, spoke on "Home Blood Pressure Monitoring (HBPM)."

Mission Shakti Budgam organises Cyber Safety Awareness Programme at GDC Budgam

BUDGAM, MAY 20: SANKALP Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW), Mission Shakti Budgam, under the aegis of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), organised an awareness programme on cyber safety in collaboration with the Cyber Police Station Budgam at Government Degree College (GDC) Budgam. The programme was conducted under the supervision of Bilal Ahmad Mir, District Social Welfare Officer Budgam. The awareness session aimed to educate students about cybercrime, online frauds, digital security, safe use of social media and preventive measures to ensure online safety. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation



from students and faculty members of the college. During the event, Afroza Akhbar, District Mission coordinator, Mission Shakti Budgam, highlighted the objectives and initiatives of Mission Shakti and stressed the importance of awareness among youth regarding the safe and responsible use of digital platforms. PW (ASI) Humayoun Kabir from Cyber Police

DC Srinagar reviews progress on construction of Migrant Transit Accommodation at Zewan

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today undertook a visit to Zewan area of District to oversee the progress of ongoing works being executed on construction of Migrant Transit Accommodation for PM Package Employees. He also inspected progress of works on the new Revenue Complex to house Tehsil Office Panthachok. During the visit, the DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Feroze, IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer R&B, Tatheer Manzoor, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, Executive Engineer R&B, Executive Engineer PPD, Executive Engineer PHE, Tehsildar Panthachok and other concerned Officers. While reviewing the status of works at the



Migrant Transit Accommodation site at Zewan, the Deputy Commissioner was informed that the project comprises of 39 accommodation blocks with a total of 936 flats. Out of these, construction of 33 blocks has been completed, while finishing works on the remaining six blocks are progressing steadily. He was further apprised that allied infrastructure works including boundary wall,

10 lifts have already been commissioned. He directed the concerned executing agency to ensure completion of lift installation in 16 additional blocks in the shortest possible time. The DC also instructed the R&B Department to initiate macadamization works on the approach roads and emphasized the need for close coordination among all departments and executing agencies to ensure timely completion of the project. Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited Panthachok to inspect the ongoing construction of the new Tehsil Office complex being executed by the R&B Department. He was informed that nearly 90 percent of the work on the new Tehsil Office building has been completed. The complex comprises the Tehsildar's Office, Tehsildar Office, Establishment Section, Record Room and a Waiting area for visitors.

One-Day Orientation cum Training Programme for PLVs of DLSA Srinagar, Budgam concludes

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: In compliance with the directions of the J&K Legal Services Authority, the District Legal Services Authority Budgam, in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority Srinagar, organized a one-day Orientation cum Training Programme for Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) of DLSA Srinagar and Budgam at the ADR Centre, DLSA Srinagar. The programme was conducted under the guidance of Haq Nawaz Zargar, Principal District & Sessions Judge, (Chairman DLSA Srinagar); O.P.

Baghat, Principal District & Sessions Judge, (Chairman DLSA Budgam) and under the supervision of Tabassum Qadir Parry, Secretary DLSA Srinagar Budgam. The initiative aimed at strengthening the role and functioning of Para Legal Volunteers at the grassroots level and enhancing their capacity in delivering legal aid and awareness services effectively. Chairman DLSA Srinagar, while addressing the participants, emphasized the vital role played by PLVs in ensuring access to justice for all sections of society, particularly the marginalized and vulnerable. He directed the newly empanelled PLVs to work with dedication and stand for the constitutional values. The welcome address was delivered by the Secretary DLSA Srinagar Budgam. During the technical sessions, distinguished speakers deliberated extensively on various important legal and social issues. Lateef Ahmad Khan, Chief LADC Budgam spoke on the role of Para Legal

Volunteers in spreading legal awareness and facilitating access to justice for marginalized and vulnerable communities. Similarly, Faheem, System Officer elaborated on recent developments in the Legal Services Delivery System and the use of technology for efficient functioning of DLSAs. He demonstrated practically step by step operations of e-court services. Advocate Suhaila Ali, Panel Lawyer highlighted the importance of professional and sensitive interaction with litigants, beneficiaries, and government

departments. Likewise, Nisar Ahmad Mir, PLV DLSA Budgam discussed the implementation of various NALSA schemes and outreach programmes at village and community levels. Advocate Mir Naveed Gul delivered an insightful session on family laws, including marriage, maintenance, custody, guardianship, judicial separation, divorce, and inheritance matters. Minhaj, Assistant LADC Srinagar addressed criminal laws relating to bail, arrest, and the rights of prisoners.

JKEDI concludes 3-Day PMFME Training Programme at Sempora Campus

SRINAGAR, MAY 20: Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Wednesday concluded a three-day training programme organised under the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme at its Main Campus, Sempora. The programme saw enthusiastic participation from aspiring entrepreneurs as well as officers from the Department of Horticulture. Organised by JKEDI District Centre Pulwama, the training programme was aimed at enhancing the entrepreneurial competencies of aspiring and existing entrepreneurs engaged in the micro food-processing sector. Over the course of three days, participants were provided detailed insights into business planning, financial management, market linkages, government support schemes, and access to institutional credit facilities. The programme was designed to strengthen the capacities of participants by equipping them with the essential skills and knowledge required for establishing and sustaining successful micro food-processing enterprises. The initiative also seeks to promote entrepreneurship, generate self-employment opportunities, and contribute to the local economy by strengthening grassroots enterprise ecosystems. The training sessions were conducted by JKEDI faculty members under the overall supervision of Director JKEDI, Muhammad Younis Malik. Addressing the participants, the Director encouraged aspiring and existing food-processing entrepreneurs to take full advantage of the PMFME schemes and expand their enterprises. JKEDI has been consistently

DLSA Ganderbal holds review meeting on Legal Services Activities

GANDERBAL, MAY 20: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal today held a review meeting, in pursuance to the Plan of Activities for the month of May, 2026 issued by the J&K Legal Services Authority, with an aim to assess and strengthen the functioning and effectiveness of legal services activities in the district. The meeting was chaired by the Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal and attended by officials, Legal Aid Defence Counsel System (LADCS), Para Legal Volunteers PLVs of DLSA G a n d e r b a l / T L S C Ganderbal and TLSC Kangan. During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held regarding the functioning and effectiveness of legal services pro-



grammes and activities being carried out in the district. Emphasis was laid on improving coordination among PLVs, TLSCs and other functionaries; for streamlining legal aid services and ensuring better outreach to the eligible beneficiaries. The performance and progress of the Legal Aid Defence Counsel System (LADCS) was also reviewed. Various challenges faced during implementation of legal aid activities were discussed and suitable measures.

SKUAST-K, CPRI join hands to strengthen Potato cultivation in Gurez

BANDIPORA, MAY 20: Working under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor SKUAST-Kashmir, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai and instrumental support by the Director Extension-cum-Dean Faculty of Horticulture, Prof. Raifhana Habb Kanth, the varsity is moving ahead to revitalize further the potato seed production system across Gurez valley. In this endeavour, the Division of Vegetable Science (FoH) in collaboration with KVK / MAR&ES Gurez today organized a mega Farmers awareness-cum-training programme at village Zedgay Tulai valley under ICAR Tribal Sub Plan (TSP). All India Coordinated Research Project on Potato (AICRP



on Potato) sponsored by ICAR -Central Potato Research Institute (CPRI) Jalandar. The programme was attended by the Head CPRI Jalandar, Head / Scientist, KVK, MAR&ES Gurez, Scientists from Division of Vegetable Science (FoH), besides large number of tribal farmers / farm-women.

Gurez was the most favourable place for growing quality potato under natural and organic pursuits and that CPRI shall provide all support for overall development of economically important and heritage crop of Gurez valley. Extending gratitude to Prof. & Head Division of Vegetable Science, the Principal Investigator ACRIP on Potato Prof. Faheema Mushtaq in her message highlighted the initiatives taken by the University for promotion of potato and to develop the area as Seed hub on participatory basis. Referring to the recent developments done at Budgam and Neem villages of Tulai valley, she informed that in the backdrop of significant results, the efforts are on to bring other areas of Gurez under the ambit of seed production system to reduce the dependency on imports. Today's programme at Zedgay Tulai was a post-script to the efforts in place for the purpose, she informed. In this endeavour, a one-day awareness-cum-training programme was conducted wherein the beneficiaries were given free of cost quality Potato seeds for sowing under scientific standards. Development Officer (BDO) Gurez, Dr Iftekhar also spoke on the occasion and urged farmers to take full advantage of potential technologies generated by SKUAST-Kashmir.

CS reviews sustainability plan for Industrial Biotech Parks in J&K

Calls for leveraging these parks to strengthen biotechnology ecosystem in J&K

JAMMU, MAY 20: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today reviewed the readiness, operational framework and future sustainability plan for the Industrial Biotech Parks being established at Kathua and Handwara in Jammu and Kashmir, while stressing the need to transform these facilities into vibrant centres of innovation, entrepreneurship and technology-driven industrial development. The review meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology Department; Commissioner Secretary, Planning, Director, CSIR Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine; CEO, Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency; CEO, Centre for Innovation and



Transformation in governance gaps highlighted by the professionals, observing that an institutional structure in the form of a Society already exists for running these parks. He called for putting in place a professional management system for taking day-to-day operational decisions and ensuring optimum utilisation of these assets in line with the objectives envisioned for their establishment. He further emphasised the need for

clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the Science & Technology Department and CSIR-IIM Jammu in creating a conducive ecosystem for startups, entrepreneurship and capacity building. He urged the IIM to position the required professional manpower at these facilities in accordance with on-ground requirements, noting that the institution possesses the expertise and capability to provide the necessary technical and scientific support. The Chief Secretary also called for formulation of measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with defined timelines to achieve tangible outcomes and develop these parks into some of the best-performing innovation assets across the nation. He

directed CITaG to extend all possible assistance to the department in this endeavour. Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology Department, Babila Rakwal, apprised the meeting about the present status of infrastructure created at these parks. She informed that optimal utilisation and efficient functioning of these facilities would require professional management under the guidance of institutions like IIM Jammu, supported through adequate funding from the department and convergence with relevant Government of India schemes. During the meeting, Director, CSIR-IIM, Dr Zabeer Ahmed, and CEO, CITaG, Dr Sandeep Ananihanaryan, gave detailed presentations.

Deputy Chief Minister reviews progress of developmental works, availability of essential services in Uri

Stresses quality, timely execution of projects in Uri

URI, MAY 20: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today chaired a meeting of senior officers at Officer's Club Uri to review the availability of essential services, basic facilities and progress of developmental works across the Uri Sub Division.



The meeting was attended by MLA Uri Dr. Sajjad Shafi, Chief Engineer R&B North Kashmir, Chief Engineer PMGSY. Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramalla, Sub Divisional Magistrate Uri, Joint Director Mining and other senior officers of the district administration and line departments.

During the meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister stressed the need for prompt service delivery, robust development and seamless public outreach

to ensure amicable redressal of genuine public grievances. He directed the officers to remain accessible to the people and ensure time-bound disposal of developmental and welfare issues. Reviewing the progress on ongoing infrastructural projects, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasized quality execution and timely completion of works. He instructed the officers to conduct regular and random inspection of projects to ensure strict adherence to the prescribed

guidelines and SOPs.

The Deputy Chief Minister also reviewed the status of road connectivity projects in Uri. He said that around 20 road projects have been undertaken in the area during the last one and a half years while additional projects are in the pipeline and will be taken up for execution soon. He stressed that developmental initiatives should ensure better connectivity and improved living standards for the people living in remote villages.

Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan

Ramban administration organises mega padyatra at Banihal; Commissioner Secretary leads events

RAMBAN, MAY 20: Continuing the ongoing Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, the district administration Ramban today organised a mega awareness padyatra and awareness programme at Banihal to intensify the campaign against the drug abuse and spread awareness among the youth and general public regarding the harmful effects of narcotics. The programme was presided over by Commissioner Secretary Science and Technology, Babila Rakwal, who is also the Mentor Secretary for implementation of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan in Ramban. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, youth, civil society members, teachers, officials and local residents from all walks of life. Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan, SSP Ramban

Arun Gupta, ADC Ramban Varunjeet Singh Charak, SDM Banihal Mohammad Naseeb Bajraan, SDM Ramsosyed Mazahir Hussain Shah and other district officers were present on the occasion. During the event held at the Government Model Higher Secondary School Boys Banihal the Commissioner Secretary administered Nasha Mukht pledge to the participants. He also inaugurated a Volleyball Match organised as part of the campaign to promote sports and a healthy lifestyle among youth as an alternative to drug addiction. Meanwhile, the Commissioner Secretary flagged off a Bike Rally and Mega Padyatra from Government Model Higher Secondary School Boys Banihal, spreading the message against drug abuse. The rally passed through the main market.

Sakeena Itoo presides renaming ceremony of GHS Hapatnar as Shaheed Adil Hussain Shah Memorial GHS Hapatnar

ANANTNAG, MAY 20: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today presided the renaming ceremony of Government High School (GHS) Hapatnar as Shaheed Adil Hussain Shah Memorial High School Hapatnar. MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani (Kalo); Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Health Services Kashmir, CMO, CEO, other senior officers of district administration, family members of Shaheed Adil



Hussain and large number of locals were also present on the occasion. Addressing a large gathering, the Minister paid rich tributes to Shaheed Adil and said that the renaming of the institution is a humble tribute to the courage, sacrifice and patriotism displayed by the martyr. She added that the sacrifice

of brave son of the soil will not be forgotten and Shaheed Adil will be remembered in our hearts, as this school is dedicated in his name to recognise his sacrifice. Calling Shaheed Adil Hussain as national hero, Sakeena Itoo said that Government is committed to support the family in every possible

manner. "Everyone remembers martyr Adil Sahib. Along with Jammu and Kashmir, he has left his mark across the country. No one can ever forget the sacrifice he made," Sakeena Itoo said. The Minister recalled that Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah and former Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah had

promised the family that the school would be renamed after the martyr, adding that the government fulfilled the promise within a year.

The Minister emphasized that educational institutions play a vital role in shaping the future of society and renaming the school after Shaheed Adil would serve as a constant source of inspiration for students and youth of the area. She urged the students to work hard with commitment, discipline and contribute positively towards nation-building and social progress.

Shaleen Kabra reviews progress of JJM in Anantnag

Takes stock of Jal Shakti Department preparedness for SANJY-2026

ANANTNAG, MAY 20: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Jal Shakti, Shaleen Kabra today visited Anantnag and chaired a comprehensive review meeting with the concerned officers at the DC Office to assess the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and irrigation schemes in the district besides taking stock of the Jal Shakti Department's preparedness for the ensuing Shri Amarath Ji Yatra-2026. Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, MD JJM, Director Planning, JSD, Chief



Engineer, PHE/I&FC, Conservator of Forests South, ADC, CPO, Technical Officers, SE Hydraulics, Executive Engineers and Senior Officers of various engineering wings, DFOs, DMOs and other officers attended the meeting.

During the meeting, DC delivered a detailed presentation regarding the status of Water Supply Schemes under Jal Jeevan Mission in the district. It was informed that against a total of 1,32,915 rural households in the district,

Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) have been provided to 1,23,516 households, achieving coverage of around 92.93 percent under the mission. The meeting was informed that a total of 369 schemes comprising 573 works are being executed, out of which 380 works and 250 schemes have been completed so far. Component-wise progress regarding pipe networks, RSFPs, OHTs and dug wells was also provided to the chair.

Speaker JKLA inaugurates bridge at Chowdrigund, Chadoora

BUDGAM, MAY 20: Marking a significant milestone for the regional infrastructure, Speaker Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today officially inaugurated a newly constructed double lane 25-meter bridge with total width of 11.70 meter at Chowdrigund on Nallah Apzari, Chadoora. The bridge, constructed with an estimated cost of 474.65 lakh, is set to drastically improve the local connectivity,



ease commutes and stimulate economic activity in the region. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, the Speaker emphasized that establishing a robust connectivity network is the cornerstone of sustainable growth. He reiterated the government's steadfast commitment to transform the regional landscape.

Advisor to Chief Minister reviews New Assembly Complex construction, inspects dev works in Jammu

JAMMU, MAY 20: Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, today conducted a comprehensive on-site review of the New Legislative Complex at Jammu besides inspecting the development works in the region. The visit was aimed to inspect the ongoing construction work and ensure that all state-of-the-art infrastructural amenities aligned with global standards for Legislative efficiency are being adhered to by the executing agency. The Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Project, Division-II presented the overview of the project, floor-wise facilities being constructed, details of enhanced seating capacity of Assembly Hall, construction of

central hall, external finishing etc. During the visit, the Advisor toured the central assembly hall, review the administrative chambers and the surrounding public utility spaces. Emphasizing the government's commitment towards reinforcing democratic infrastructure in the Union Territory, the Advisor directed the executing agency to expedite the remaining finishing works and complete the project well within the specified time limit. He underscored that timely completion of the modern complex is vital for the smooth functioning of future democratic proceedings and convenience of public representatives. "Robust infrastructure is the



backbone of effective governance. This new complex is not merely a building; it is a symbol of democratic ethos and must be completed promptly with uncompromising quality," said the Advisor during the inspection. Nasir Aslam interacted with the senior engineers

of PWD(R&B) Jammu and Mechanical Engineering Department, taking detailed stock of the structural and technical specifications of the project. He instructed the authorities to ensure seamless integration of advanced IT infrastructure, modern acoustics and

enhanced security systems within the premises including e-Vidhan. The upcoming New Legislative Complex is designed to provide a highly accessible, eco-friendly and technologically advanced environment for the lawmakers with facilities like e-Vidhan. With the expedited timeline, the administration aims to facilitate an enhanced working environment for the region's representatives. The Advisor was accompanied by senior officials from the civil administration. Later, Nasir Aslam inspected various ongoing developmental works in Jammu along with Chief Engineer PWD (R&B), Jammu, Rajesh Augustam, Superintending Engineer, Chief

Medical Officer Jammu and other senior officers. During the visit, the Advisor reviewed the permanent restoration work of the approach road to the 4th Tawi Bridge, Jammu. The senior officers informed that the project has been allotted an estimated cost of 714.59 crore with a stipulated completion period of 12 months. The restoration work is aimed at improving the connectivity and ensuring smooth traffic movement in the area. Nasir Aslam also inspected repair and renovation works being carried out at Yatri Niwas Bhagwati Nagar in view of the upcoming Shri Amarath Yatra. The project included construction of temporary sheds and hangars for Yatrias and langars

besides laying of bitumen in parking areas and internal roads. The works are being executed at an estimated cost of 71.59 crore with a completion period of one and a half months. The Advisor also inspected another major project envisaging construction of a 105-meter span prestressed RCC bridge over Balole Nalla at Gadi Gafi. The Advisor was informed that the bridge work has been completed at an estimated cost of 77.2 crore within 24 months. During the inspection, the Chief Engineer PWD (R&B), Jammu briefed the Advisor about the ongoing preparations and infrastructure works related to the Shri Amarath Yatra, particularly the arrangements.

Editor, Publisher, Printer & Owner: Rajni Sharma, Published at: Sec-2, Channi Himmat, Jammu
Early Times Printing Press Samadhian Road, Jammu
E-Mail: editor.northinnews@gmail.com
All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Jammu City

