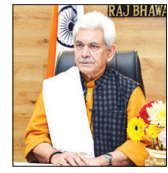


Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

Lok Bhavan Jammu & Kashmir
@LokBhavanJandK



In the remaining 80 days, a whole-of-government effort must confront and dismantle the web of drug addiction. This requires a change in mindset. Sometimes people say this is not my problem. This attitude must change. Drug smugglers thrive on public indifference and silence.

Srinagar • Friday 01, May 2026 • Vol: 17 • Issue No: 105 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 1/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

CM Hails Jmu-Sgr Rail Link As Transformative For Economy, Trade

Attends Flagging-Off Ceremony Of Vande Bharat Express



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday attended the flag-off ceremony marking the historic extension of the Vande Bharat Express service from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra to Jammu, enabling for the first time a direct rail connection between Jammu and Srinagar.

The train was flagged off by Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw in the presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, PP/DoPT, Atomic Energy, Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, Members of Parliament Sat Paul Sharma and Gulam Ali Khatana, several MLAs, along with senior officials from the Government of India, Northern Railways and the Jammu and Kashmir

administration.

Addressing the gathering prior to the flag-off ceremony, the Chief Minister described the occasion as "a day long awaited by the people of Jammu and Kashmir," emphasizing that the extension of the Vande Bharat Express to Jammu marks not just improved connectivity, but the beginning of a transformative phase in the region's development.

Congratulating the Union Government and the Railway Ministry, the Chief Minister recalled the inauguration of key infrastructure projects, including the iconic Chenab Railway Bridge and Anji Khad Bridge, nearly ten months ago. He noted that what was once seen as a major engineering feat has now evolved into a highly popular and widely utilized mode of transport.

Highlighting the overwhelming response •P-06

Narco-Smuggling No Less Than Terrorism: LG

Says Smuggling Of Narcotics Represents Terrorism In Disguise

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday equated narcotics smuggling with terrorism, warning that those found involved will face the strictest possible punishment.

"I firmly believe that drug abuse is a form of silent terrorism, not merely a matter of law and order. The smuggling of narcotics represents terrorism in disguise. It is a hidden threat that devastates our youth, weakens families, and undermines the very foundations of society," LG Sinha said while addressing Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir Campaign in Doda.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said the people's movement against drug abuse reflects their determination and unity, and this menace can be eliminated when communities rise together and speak with one voice.

The Lieutenant Governor said that narcotics smuggling is no less than terrorism and those involved will be given stringent punishment.

We have decided that drug traffickers in Jammu Kashmir will be treated under the law the same way terrorists are. They are enemies of society, enemies of humanity and enemies of our youth. We are committed to wiping out this threat," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also stated that every drug smuggler, every local peddler, every member of a drug syndicate working to destroy society will be identified and put behind bars.

"I give you my word: we will not rest until the networks spreading this poison are completely dismantled," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Lieutenant Governor observed that path to success in this campaign is demanding, and the challenge is significant. He said of the 100-day effort, 80 days remain and each day is now vital.



et, enemies of humanity and enemies of our youth. We are committed to wiping out this threat," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also stated that every drug smuggler, every local peddler, every member of a drug syndicate working to destroy society will be identified and put behind bars.

"I give you my word: we will not rest until the networks spreading this poison are completely dismantled," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Lieutenant Governor observed that path to success in this campaign is demanding, and the challenge is significant. He said of the 100-day effort, 80 days remain and each day is now vital.

"Every moment must be used with purpose, and every citizen must take part in this Jan-Andolan. Together, we can make Jammu Kashmir a shining example for the nation: a society free from the burden of drug addiction," the Lieutenant Governor said.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor also underscored the importance of Jan-Bhagidari and said that this fight cannot rest on government machinery alone and society must actively participate.

"In the remaining •P-06

I firmly believe that drug abuse is a form of silent terrorism, not merely a matter of law and order

It is a hidden threat that devastates our youth, weakens families, and undermines the very foundations of society

We have decided that drug traffickers in Jammu Kashmir will be treated under the law the same way terrorists are

They are enemies of society, enemies of humanity and enemies of our youth

Every drug smuggler, every local peddler, every member of a drug syndicate working to destroy society will be identified

I give you my word: we will not rest until the networks spreading this poison are completely dismantled

J&K To Witness Rain, Thunderstorms From May 3: MeT

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The India Meteorological Department on Wednesday said Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness generally cloudy weather with spells of rain and thunderstorms between May 3 and 5, and advised farmers to suspend agricultural operations during this period.

The MeT Centre Srinagar, predicted that weather will remain generally dry on May 1 and 2, although brief showers cannot be ruled out.

"Generally cloudy weather with one •P-06

Centre Approves 243 Cr For PM SHRI Schools In J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Project Approval Board of the PM SHRI - Schools for Rising India scheme has approved a total outlay of 243 crore for Jammu and Kashmir for the financial year 2026-27.

The PAB meeting, chaired by Union Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Sanjay Kumar, was attended by Commissioner Secretary, School Education, Ram Nivas Sharma, along with the Project Director and other senior •P-06

Agencies Test Response Readiness Counter-Terror Drill Held At Srinagar Airport



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: A multi-agency counter-terrorist exercise was conducted at Srinagar international airport on Thursday to test emergency response and coordination among security forces, officials said.

As per the details available, the CISF-led drill, in coordination with CRPF, police, AAL, BCAS and other stakeholders, simulated real-time scenarios to assess preparedness, communication

and evacuation procedures under the airport's counter-terror contingency plan.

It said the exercise evaluated response protocols through the coordinated deployment of specialized units, real-time scenario simulation and comprehensive testing of actions as per the Counter-Terrorist Contingency Plan, including communication channels, evacuation drills, and inter-agency coordination mechanisms.

"Such exercises play a vital role in enhancing •P-06

Vande Bharat Extended To Jammu, Upgraded From 8 To 20 Coaches

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Flags Off Train At Jammu Tawi

UMAISAR GULL

JAMMU: Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday flagged off the extended Srinagar-Katra Vande Bharat Express from Jammu Tawi Railway Station. The train, which earlier ran between Srinagar and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, will now operate up to Jammu Tawi.

After the flag-off, the minister inspected key structures of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL), including the Anji and Chenab bridges. He was flanked by J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and senior railway officials, and BJP leaders.

Speaking to reporters, Vaishnaw, said the Vande Bharat service, launched last year after the



inauguration of the Jammu-Srinagar rail line by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has now been upgraded from 8 to 20 coaches. "The service has been extended from Katra to Jammu to meet rising demand," he said.

He said the trains have witnessed 100 per cent occupancy since launch, with over 5.5 lakh passengers already travelling on

the route.

Vaishnaw said improved rail connectivity has boosted freight movement and reduced logistics costs. "Cement prices have dropped by around Rs 50 per bag. Over 2 crore kilograms of apples have been transported to Delhi, and movement of perishables like cherries will become easier," he said, adding that •P-06

CS Inaugurates SOC To Strengthen Cyber Security Across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Thursday inaugurated the Jammu and Kashmir Security Operations Centre (JK SOC), marking a significant step towards strengthening the Union Territory's cyber security infrastructure.

Additional Chief Secretary, (Financial Commissioner) Revenue, Shaleen Kabra; Principal Secretary, Home, Chandraker Bharti; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Ramesh Kumar; Secretary, IT Department, Dr. Piyush Singla; Director General, National Informatics Centre, VTV Ramana; CEO, Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency, Mahima Madan; and SIO, NIC J&K, J. S. Modi were present on the occasion.

The JK SOC has been

established to enhance the cyber security framework of the UT administration. It will provide round-the-clock monitoring, threat detection, and incident response capabilities to safeguard critical government digital infrastructure and sensitive data from cyber threats.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary emphasized that with the rapid digitization of government services, ensuring robust cyber security has become imperative. He further observed that the SOC will serve as the nerve centre for securing the Union Territory's digital assets and ensuring the safe and seamless delivery of e-governance services to citizens here.

The centre is equipped with advanced tools for real-time threat intelligence, vulnerability •P-06

India Treats Terrorists, Sponsors Equally: Rajnath

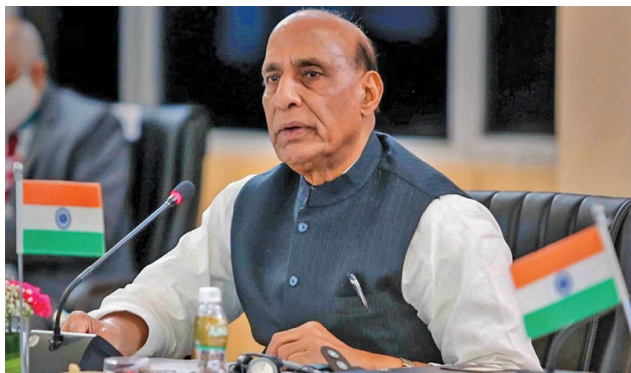
Says aiding terror to invite strong action too, armed forces ready for any situation

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said India did not succumb to nuclear threats during Operation Sindoor and asserted that there would be no distinction between terrorists and those backing them.

Addressing a security summit here, Singh, said India ignored attempts at intimidation during the operation and acted in line with its national interest. "We were threatened, but we did not fall for any bluff. Necessary steps were taken keeping national security in mind," he said.

Singh asserted that the decision to stop the "Operation Sindoor" was voluntary and not due to any constraints in military capabilities.



"The armed forces had demonstrated both precision and preparedness during the operation launched in response to the Pahalgam terror attack," he said, adding, "It was a conscious decision taken on our terms. Our forces were ready for a long war and continue to remain prepared with

enhanced capabilities."

The Minister described 'Operation Sindoor' as a shift in India's approach to terrorism, indicating that the country would no longer limit its response to diplomatic measures following attacks on its soil. He said the action sent a clear signal that terrorism would not be tolerated under

any circumstances.

Referring to Pakistan, Singh alleged that the neighbouring country continues to provide support to terrorism and called it the "epicentre of international terrorism". He stressed the need to address not just the operational aspects of terrorism but also its ideological and political foundations.

He said India's approach to terrorism has evolved, underlining that those aiding or sponsoring terror would be treated on par with perpetrators. "There will be no difference between terrorists and their sponsors," he said.

The minister described terrorism as a multi-dimensional threat, requiring action beyond military responses. He said tackling its operational networks alone •P-06

'Kashmir Food Safety Wing Hit By Staff Crunch, Case Backlog'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Food Safety Department in Kashmir is grappling with manpower shortages, limited laboratory infrastructure and a mounting backlog of cases, reveals official information obtained under the Right to Information (RTI) Act by activist M.M. Shuja.

The RTI reply, states that 25 posts are lying vacant in the Kashmir division, including 5 gazetted and 20 non-gazetted posts. It said that against a sanctioned strength of 13 gazetted posts, only 8 are in position, while in the non-gazetted category, 41 officials are working against 61 sanctioned posts.

Regarding budget utilisation, the reply states that the department has consistently utilised most of its allocated funds over the last five financial years. In 2025-26, out of Rs 878.02 lakh allocated, Rs 868.30 lakh was spent.

Similarly, Rs 786.85 lakh out of Rs 795.57 lakh was spent in 2024-25, Rs 738.98 lakh out of Rs 767.69 lakh in 2023-24, Rs 721.08 •P-06

J&K Records Historic Rs 5,824 Crore Investments In Financial Year 25-26

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir has recorded its highest-ever annual investment of Rs 5,824.42 crore in the financial year 2025-26, marking a major milestone in the Union Territory's industrial growth and ongoing economic transformation.

According to official data accessed, the investment is over 13 times the average annual inflow recorded between 2014 and 2021, reflecting a sustained surge in industrial activity across the UT.

The data shows that the upward trend has remained consistent over recent years, with investments rising from Rs 2,153 crore in FY 2022-23 to Rs 3,389 crore in FY 2023-24 and Rs 4,145 crore in FY 2024-25, culminating in the current record.

For the first time, multiple anchor investments exceeding Rs 500 crore are being grounded in the region. As per the data, 312



industrial units involving a cumulative investment of Rs 7,864 crore have completed more than 50 percent of groundwork and are expected to begin production soon.

The conversion of investment proposals into functional units has also improved notably. Under the New Central Sector Scheme (NCSS), 88.6 percent of registered units have already commenced production. Over the past three years, incentives worth Rs 2,513 crore have been disbursed under various schemes, including NCSS, GST reimbursement, PMEGP and other programmes of the Industries and Commerce Department.

The MSME sector •P-06

Nasha Mukht J&K

Div Com directs for meticulous execution of plans for seamless Padyatra

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In preparation for the upcoming Nasha Mukht J&K Padyatra scheduled for May 3, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review arrangements laying strong emphasis on precision, coordination, and seamless execution.

The meeting was attended by senior officials, including the DIG Central Kashmir, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner SMC, Director Information & Public Relations, Director Health Services, SSP Traffic, and heads of various departments such as School Education, Higher Education, Transport, Culture, Hospitality & Protocol, Tribal Affairs, and other key stakeholders.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner stressed the importance of meticulous planning and effective inter-departmental coordination to ensure the smooth conduct of the padyatra and associated events. He directed all concerned departments to formally invite stakehold-



ers and special guests in advance.

On the occasion, the Div Com gave special emphasis to arrangements at the Football Stadium, the designated venue for the flag-off ceremony besides arrangements enroute and at culmination point.

Officials were instructed for installation of Pandal, ensure adequate seating facilities for VVIPs, dignitaries, and participants.

He also instructed that participants must reach the venue before 7:30 AM for timely commencement of the event.

Regarding transportation facility, designated

nodal officer was tasked with developing a comprehensive plan for the movement of students and participants, ensuring sufficient transport availability on designated stations.

The Information Department was assigned the responsibility of enhancing the event's outreach and visibility through the installation of a Public Address System (PAS), preparation of a theme-based video, display of an anti-drug pledge on digital screens, and the creation of thematic flags and banners.

To amplify public engagement, the Divi-

sional Commissioner also directed the formation of a human chain by students from the venue up to Poloview.

The Deputy Commissioner Srinagar was instructed to ensure the availability of essential services along the entire route of the padyatra.

The Cultural Department was tasked with organizing performances, including songs and thematic presentations, within a stipulated timeframe. Meanwhile, the Hospitality & Protocol Department was directed to distribute refreshments for students and participants in advance while for VVIPs, and other dignitaries at the venue.

Security and crowd management responsibilities were entrusted to the Police Department, which will also oversee the deployment of a police band to support the event.

The Divisional Commissioner reiterated that the padyatra is a significant initiative aimed at promoting a drug-free Jammu and Kashmir and called for comprehensive efforts from all departments to ensure its success.

DLTC Meeting stresses timely completion of connectivity works in G'bal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: A meeting of the District Level Telecom Committee (DLTC) was held here Thursday under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Syed Faheem Bihaqi to take stock of the progress of mobile tower installation, elimination of communication gaps, and the status of broadband connectivity works across the district.

The meeting held a detailed review of mobile tower installation by various service providers, with particular focus on areas that continue to lack adequate network coverage. It was noted that out of total identified tower sites for which land has been made available, almost all are now functional while work on the remaining a few sites is still pending, and all concerned agencies were directed to complete these without further delay.

Concern was expressed over BSNL's failure to complete assigned works despite earlier directions at previous committee meetings. The state-run operator was specifically directed to immediately take up pending tasks and provide a compliance report. Airtel and Jio were directed to expedite instal-



lation of towers at critical locations, particularly at District Hospital Ganderbal and the Darend area, where absence of reliable connectivity poses a direct challenge to healthcare access and emergency response.

The meeting also informed that surveys across all blocks in the district have been completed, active work is currently underway in Kangan and Lar blocks. Work in Safapora block, however, remains incomplete, and the executing agencies were directed to accelerate progress there and adhere to the prescribed timeline.

KPDCL was specifically

directed to prioritise the provision of electricity to all telecom installation sites, as power availability remains a prerequisite for the commissioning of towers and broadband nodes.

All agencies were further directed to ensure that pending work orders are issued within a week, so that ground-level execution is not stalled on account of procedural delays.

Telecom companies were also directed to carry out proper restoration of sites following installation works and to take full responsibility for protecting public infrastructure and civic assets during execution. Any damage to roads, footpaths, or utilities caused during cabling or tower installation must be made good by the concerned agency.

The ADC underscored that seamless telecom connectivity is not a matter of convenience but a necessity for effective delivery of public services, functioning of healthcare facilities, coordination during emergencies, and the broader development goals of the district.

He stressed that strengthening telecom infrastructure is vital for public service delivery, emergency response, and overall socio-economic development of the district, and called upon all stakeholders to work in close coordination to achieve targets within the prescribed timeframe.

The meeting was attended by the officers and officials of district administration, besides representatives of BSNL, Airtel, Jio, and other concerned departments and agencies.

GCOE Sgr organizes Drug Awareness Mural under NMBA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Department of Fine Arts and the Beautification Committee of Government College of Education (GCoE), M.A. Road Srinagar, organized a wall painting under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhayan on the college campus.

The mural was inaugurated by Prof. (Dr.) Seema Naz, Principal of the College, in the presence of faculty members including Prof. Mohd Yaseen Pir, Prof. Nashid Naseem, Prof. Lateef Shah, Prof. Bilquees, Prof. Mansoor Lone, Prof. Abdul Gani Kumar, Prof. Syed Shaban, Prof. Abdul Rashid, Prof. Showkeen Bial, and other staff members.

The artwork was created by B.Ed. students of College Shayad Rashid and Mukhtar Ahmad under the supervision of Arshid Sualah. The mural highlights the ill effects of drug abuse and conveys a strong message of prevention, awareness, and collective responsibility towards building a drug-free society.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. (Dr.) Seema Naz appreciated the creative efforts of the students and lauded the initiative as a meaningful contribution towards the national campaign against drug abuse. She emphasized that such activities not only enhance artistic expression but also play a vital role in shaping social responsibility among future teachers.

Faculty members present on the occasion also praised the initiative and encouraged students to continue using art as a medium for social awareness and positive change. They reiterated the importance of educational institutions in guiding youth away from substance abuse and towards constructive engagement.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks, acknowledging the efforts of Fine Arts, the Beautification Committee, supervising faculty, and the student artists for successfully executing the awareness initiative.

DC B'pora interacts with Numberdars, Chowkidars on Drug Abuse Prevention

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib on Thursday held an interaction with Numberdars and Chowkidars at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat to discuss measures for curbing drug abuse and strengthening community participation in the anti-drug campaign across the district.

During the interaction, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts by the administration, police, teachers, parents, and community representatives in eradicating the menace of drug abuse. She stated that the administration is working round the clock to address public concerns and ensure effective implementation of preventive measures.

During the interaction,

participants appreciated the Deputy Commissioner's concern for the district and stated that responsibility for tackling social issues cannot rest on the government alone, adding that society must also play its role. They thanked the Deputy Commissioner for providing them an opportunity to share their views and observed that such interactions strengthen coordination between the administration and the community.

The participants also highlighted various public concerns and assured full support to the administration in the fight against drug abuse and in maintaining peace and social harmony in the district.

On the sidelines of the interaction, Numberdars from various areas raised issues related to delayed honorarium and highlighted concerns regarding its timely disbursement.

DC Kulgam inaugurates Milk Value Addition Startup at Poniwah

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Thursday inaugurated a Milk Value Addition Startup at Poniwah established under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

The unit has been set up by beneficiary Jalaluddin Bhat through the Department of Animal Husbandry, Kulgam under HADP,



Project-23 (Dairy Development in J&K), with a subsidy/grant of Rs 25 lakh provided to support the venture.

The inauguration was held in the presence of Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Kulgam, Dr. Shakeel Ahmad Dar, along with officials from the Animal Husbandry Department and other concerned stakeholders.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted the importance of value addition in enhancing farmers' income and creat-

ing sustainable livelihood opportunities.

He emphasized that such initiatives under HADP aim to modernize the agriculture and allied sectors while encouraging entrepreneurship.

He also urged the youth to actively leverage government-sponsored employment schemes to establish income-generating units and become self-reliant.

Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Kulgam



shared that the unit has a processing capacity of around 10 quintals of milk per day and is producing a range of value-added dairy products including curd, yoghurt, and cheese.

He added that the department is committed to support dairy farmers through innovative interventions, infrastructure development, and capacity building.

He added that such initiatives play a vital role in boosting local dairy production and promoting self-reliance.

DC Anantnag visits Shampora, extends condolences to bereaved family

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, on Thursday visited Shampora, Qazigund, and expressed heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family of Fatima Altaf, a Class 2nd student who tragically lost her life after being hit by a vehicle on April 27 at Qullibagh, Kurigam.

The young girl was on her way to school along with her sister, Tehmima Altaf, and others when the unfortunate incident occurred.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner consoled the grieving family and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul. He also enquired about the health of the deceased's sibling, who was critically injured during the accident.

As an immediate relief measure, Dr. Bilal sanctioned a cumulative financial assistance of

Rs 3.6 lakh in favour of the affected families. An amount of Rs 2 lakh (Rs 1 lakh under Road Accident Assistance and Rs 1 lakh from the District Red Cross Fund) was sanctioned for the deceased. For the critically injured sibling, Rs 1 lakh (Rs 50,000 each under Road Accident Assistance and District Red Cross Fund) was sanctioned. Additionally, Rs 60,000 (Rs 50,000 under Road Accident Assistance and Rs 10,000 from the District Red Cross Fund) was sanctioned for another victim from another family who sustained minor injuries in the incident. The bank cheques for the sanctioned amount were handed over to the affected families on the occasion.

As a gesture of solidarity during this difficult time, the DC assured the families of all possible support from the administration for the proper treatment and recovery of the injured.

International Labour Day observed at GDC Shopian

Labour Department registers over 25000 workers

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: International Labour Day was Thursday observed at Government Degree College (GDC) Shopian, with a focus on the dignity, rights, and welfare of the labour class.

Assistant Labour Commissioner Shopian, Dr. Nida Yousuf, while addressing the gathering, highlighted the significance of Labour Day as a tribute to the invaluable contributions of workers across all sectors, including construction, industries, and services.

She emphasized that the day is dedicated to recognising the efforts of labourers and ensuring that their dignity is upheld in society.

Dr. Nida also elaborated



on the role of the Labour Department in safeguarding workers' rights and ensuring their welfare through various schemes and legal provisions. She stressed that the department remains committed to improving

working conditions and extending financial and social support to registered labourers.

Deputy LADC, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Shopian, Dawood Khan, spoke about the role

of DLSA in addressing labour related grievances. He highlighted that the authority plays a crucial role in resolving disputes, providing legal assistance, and ensuring justice for the labour class. He informed that issues related to labour disputes can be reported through the toll free helpline number 15100.

District Information Officer Shopian, Showkat Husain Ganie, while speaking on the occasion, underlined the importance of maintaining dignity and respect for every worker and employee. He stated that empathy and human concern must precede legal frameworks in ensuring justice and harmony in society.

The programme also

featured awareness on the ongoing 'Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhayan'. Speakers emphasized the need for youth to focus on education and career and highlighted the role of parents and teachers in guiding them away from substance abuse.

Officials from the Labour Department detailed various labour laws, including the Payment of Wages Act and the Gratuity Act, explaining how these provisions protect workers' rights and ensure financial security. They also highlighted the J&K Building and Other Construction Workers (JKBOCW) Welfare Scheme, including its registration process, eligibility criteria, and benefits.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM KASHMIR
 TRC, Srinagar, Kashmir. 190001 Tel/ Fax 0194-2502279, 81.
 e-mail. dirtourism-kashmir@jk.gov.in

Sub: - Commercial White-Water Rafting in River Sindh, Ganderbal.

NOTICE

All the Eligible Adventure Tour Operates having valid registration certificate in Rafting Activity intending to operate commercial White-Water Rafting in River Sindh (Mammer to Wussan and Wussan to Wayul Bridge stretches) at Ganderbal for summer Season 2026 are intimated through this notice to apply on company letter Head to undersigned and should reach this office within 07 days of publication of this notice clearly mentioning the spot so that the slots are allotted in favour of eligible Adventure Tour Operators for operation of Commercial White-Water Rafting.

The application should be accompanied with the copy of valid Registration Certificate.

The application (s) received after the cut-off date shall not be considered.

No. DTK/Rec/91/142.
 Dated. 30.04.2026.

DIPK-920-26
 DT: 30/04/2026

Dy. Director Tourism,
 Recreation.

Northern Railway officials discuss roadmap to strengthen transportation of fruits from Kashmir

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Senior officials of Northern Railway on Thursday held three-hour discussions with fruit growers and traders to strengthen the transportation of horticultural produce from Kashmir to markets across the country and modernize rail-based cargo logistics in the Valley.

According to the details available, the high-level delegation of the railway officials travelled in an arranged inspection coach from Srinagar to Baramulla via Budgam, covering key stations including Pattan and Sopore. The visit was aimed at assessing infrastructure gaps and identifying ways to ensure seamless movement of fruits and vegetables.

The meeting was attended by Principal Chief Commercial Manager Parveen Pandey, ACM Jammu-Srinagar Jaswant Singh, and other senior officials. The fruit growers' delegation was led by Bashir Ahmad Basheer, President of the



New Kashmir Fruit Association (NKFA), along with key representatives of the trade.

A major focus of the interaction was the introduction of temperature-controlled (AC/refrigerated) cargo trains to transport highly perishable produce such as apples, cherries, pears, plums, and walnuts.

Stakeholders stressed that such facilities are essential to maintain qual-

ity and reduce post-harvest losses, particularly during peak export seasons.

The proposal also includes improving inbound logistics to ensure timely supply of essential commodities like onions, potatoes, mangoes, and melons into the Valley.

To streamline bulk handling, Sopore Railway Station and Baramulla Railway Station have been identified for development of yard-based loading facil-

ities. Additionally, phased development of cargo infrastructure has been proposed at Anantnag, Awantipora, and Pampore. Operational bottlenecks at Budgam and Srinagar stations were also highlighted, with traders urging swift intervention to resolve issues impacting loading efficiency.

Growers and traders raised concerns over last year's challenges, including lengthy security checks, restricted access, and delays in handling consignments. To address these issues, the delegation proposed installation of modern security infrastructure such as high-sensitivity scanners and sensor-based systems, which would reduce manual intervention and speed up cargo processing.

The delegation noted that a Parcel Van (VP) service currently operates five days a week from Katra to Mumbai for cherry consignments. Railway officials informed that the service is under consid-

eration for expansion to a seven-day schedule, a move expected to significantly benefit growers dealing with highly perishable produce.

The joint team also visited orchards in Tangmarg to understand production patterns and align logistics planning with on-ground realities.

Railway officials assured that proposals for AC cargo services, upgraded infrastructure, and improved handling systems will be examined on priority.

Fruit traders expressed optimism that enhanced rail connectivity would improve efficiency, reduce transportation costs, and boost the competitiveness of Kashmir's horticulture sector.

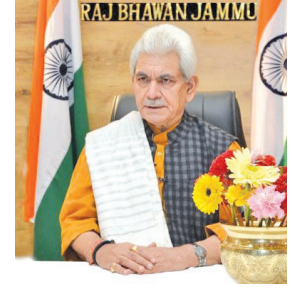
The delegation also appreciated the continued support of the Ministry of Railways under Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, and welcomed improved connectivity initiatives such as the Vande Bharat Express on the Jammu-Srinagar route—(KNO)

LG Sinha greets people on Buddha Purnima

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha Thursday extended his greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima, which is being observed tomorrow.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor has said: "On the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima, I extend my greetings and good wishes to all. The timeless wisdom of Lord Buddha, rooted in compassion, non-violence and



equality, continues to illuminate humanity's journey toward spiritual salvation and lasting peace.

In a world of great change, we are remind-

ed not only of the challenges before us but also of the immense strength that lies in our unity. On this auspicious festival, I pray that through solidarity and shared resolve, we may continue our steadfast journey toward the welfare of all humankind.

May the celebrations on Buddha Purnima awaken within us the resolve to walk the path of enlightenment shown by Lord Buddha, and inspire a collective pursuit of universal harmony and peace."

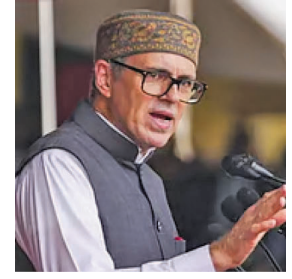
CM greets people on Buddha Purnima; calls for compassion, harmony

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday extended warm greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima.

In his message, the Chief Minister recalled the teachings of Gautama Buddha and said they continue to guide humanity towards the path of peace, compassion and non-violence.

He said that Buddha's



message of love, tolerance and service to mankind is of timeless relevance and holds special significance

in the present times, when the world seeks harmony and mutual understanding.

Highlighting the importance of communal harmony, he said that the occasion is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to peaceful coexistence, brotherhood and respect for diversity.

The Chief Minister prayed for peace, prosperity and well-being of the people of Jammu & Kashmir and the entire country.

Satish Sharma meets Union MoS; pushes for NFSA cap removal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, IT, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Thursday held a detailed meeting with Union Minister of State for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, B. L. Verma and raised a comprehensive set of demands aimed at strengthening the Public Distribution System (PDS), enhancing food security and addressing the key welfare concerns in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister strongly pressed for lifting the cap on NFSA food grain allocation, stating that the existing restriction has stalled the bifurcation of ration cards and is adversely impacting the families whose size has increased over time. He urged the Union Government to revise and enhance Jammu and Kashmir's allocation quota to facilitate issuance of new and bifurcated ration cards. He also sought sanction of additional food grain quota to meet genuine demand, particularly in remote, border and tribal areas.

Highlighting Jammu and Kashmir's preparedness, Sharma requested expedited approval for new ration card applications, noting that e-KYC processes and database cleansing are nearing completion.

Focusing on systemic strengthening, the Minister called for a special infrastructure grant for PDS in difficult terrains, citing challenges in high-



altitude, snowbound and border areas. He also sought an increase in FPS dealer margins to ensure sustainability and reduce attrition and proposed introduction of additional commodities such as pulses, edible oil, and millets through FPS with central support.

The Minister highlighted Jammu and Kashmir's achievement in implementing the SMART PDS framework and sought performance-linked incentive funding, noting the region's early adoption of digital systems including RCMS, SCMS and route optimization.

Addressing the vulnerable sections, Sharma raised the issue of Kashmiri migrant ration card integration and sought continued support to ensure uninterrupted entitlements. He also advocated for special ration provisions for border and nomadic communities, including Gujjars and Bakewals with flexible e-KYC norms.

With Reference to Consumer Affairs, the Minister called for modernization of Legal Metrology infrastructure, including advanced testing equipment and manpower support, particularly for

remote districts. He also sought enhanced funding under CCPA for consumer awareness campaigns in rural and semi-urban areas.

Under social justice initiatives, Sharma emphasized the timely release of PM-AJAY and DA&DBT funds, including scholarships for SCs, OBCs and EWS categories. He further urged for expedited action on inclusion of Pahari and other deserving communities in central OBC/deprived lists. He called for sanction of additional hostels under Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana in districts like Jammu, Samba, Udhampur and Rajouri.

On administrative and financial matters, the Minister requested the release of pending central assistance and CSS instalments and sought capacity-building support for FCS&CA officials in areas like data analytics, supply chain management and enforcement.

Sharma reiterated the commitment of the Jammu and Kashmir government to ensure efficient service delivery and inclusive welfare and expressed confidence that the Union Government would extend full support in addressing these critical issues.

Srinagar traffic plan issued for Nasha Mukta Rally on May 3

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Srinagar City Ajaz Ahmad Bhat on Thursday shared a detailed traffic advisory for the Nasha Mukta Rally scheduled to be held on May 3.

Sharing details while addressing the media in Srinagar, SSP Bhat, said, "The 100-Day Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan event is expected to witness large participation and elaborate arrangements have been put in place."

He said the rally will be flagged off by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha from the Synthetic Turf Football Ground (opposite Radio Kashmir) and will culminate at Lal Chowk.

Bhat said vehicles from South Kashmir will be parked at Rajbagh, while those from North Kashmir and Downtown areas will be accommodated at Jehangir Chowk.

He added that additional parking facilities have been designated at Gindun Park, Cluster University, Indoor Stadium, and SP College (rear side).

Roadside parking, especially along the Bund stretch, has been strictly prohibited, he said.

SSP Bhat said vehicles from South Kashmir will

move via Rajbagh and deboard at Gindun Park, while vehicles from North Kashmir and Downtown will proceed via Jehangir Chowk, LD Hospital, and Jawahar Nagar.

He said participants will then reach the venue through designated footbridges.

He added that movement of heavy vehicles will remain restricted between LD Hospital and Abdullah Bridge during the event.

He said special arrangements have also been made for the NEET examination scheduled on the same day, with around 4,000 candidates appearing at centres along MA Road.

He said admit cards will be treated as valid passes to ensure smooth movement of students.

SSP Bhat added that students from far-flung areas will be allowed early passage, while parents have been advised not to park vehicles on MA Road and instead use SP College parking.

He said the traffic restrictions will come into force from 7:00 AM on May 3 and will remain in effect till the conclusion of the programme.

He further urged people to cooperate with traffic personnel for smooth conduct of both the rally and examination—(KNO)

Nauman Shah brings laurels to Nagarjuna college in state-level hackathon

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BENGALURU: In a proud moment for Nagarjuna College, a team of bright students has secured the 3rd position at a highly competitive state-level hackathon held across Karnataka. The winning team comprised Nauman Shah, Sahil Khan, Saliq Rizwan, and Sudanshu Chhibber.

The event witnessed participation from over 140 colleges, showcasing innovation and technical excellence from young minds across the state. The team's outstanding performance and innovative approach earned them a top spot among hundreds of participants, bringing recognition and honor to their institution.

Their achievement



reflects not only their individual dedication and collaborative spirit but also the growing emphasis on technological innovation at Nagarjuna College.

College authorities and faculty members congratulated Nauman Shah, Sahil Khan, Saliq Rizwan, and Sudanshu Chhibber for their remarkable suc-

cess. In a joint statement, they said that such accomplishments inspire other students to excel and contribute meaningfully in the field of technology.

The entire Nagarjuna College community has extended its heartfelt appreciation to the team for making the institution proud on a state-level platform.

J&K RERA inspects Residential Projects in Jammu to ensure statutory compliance

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Continuing its crackdown on unregulated real estate practices, the team of the Jammu and Kashmir Real Estate Regulatory Authority (JKRERA) conducted a series of comprehensive inspections across various ongoing and completed residential flat developments in Jammu.

The inspections, led by the Authority's enforcement team, targeted nine prominent locations to verify compliance with the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA) and the Unified Building Bye-Laws (UBBL).

The Authority visited and inspected the progress on Trikuta Apartments, Trikuta Nagar (Sector-4), Nidesh Apartments, Trikuta Nagar (Sector-1), Royal Nest Apartments, Trikuta Nagar, Florence Apartment, Trikuta Nagar, Dream Home Apartments, Greater Kailash, Preety Day Apartment, Sainik Colony Extension (Chowdhi Road), Shanti Kunj Apartments, Sainik Colony (Near Ford Workshop), Imperial Apartment, Channi Himmat and Aerobera Resident Welfare Society, Channi Himmat (Sector-1).

During the site visits, the promoters and representatives were directed to submit all project-related documentation to the JKRERA office immedi-



ately. The Authority issued strict instructions for the developers to abide by the Unified Building Bye-Laws (UBBL), obtain necessary layout approval and secure Environmental Clearances as required by law. The developers were reminded that once statutory formalities are met, registration with JKRERA is mandatory for all eligible projects.

Further, in a move to ensure transparency, the RERA team interacted directly with the residents of the apartments to understand the practical challenges and grievances they face. JKRERA has issued a public appeal to all the prospective homebuyers to invest only in RERA-approved projects to safeguard their financial interests and ensure legal protection.

The Authority also addressed the role of digital marketing in the real estate sector. Content creators and

influencers present during the proceedings were explicitly directed to abstain from advertising any projects that are not registered with RERA. Furthermore, the Authority mandated that all such creators must register themselves as Real Estate Agents with JKRERA before promoting or facilitating the sale of any property.

Chairman J&K RERA, Satish Chandra, reiterated that any violation of the RERA Act or the Rules framed thereunder will attract strict penal action. He said that the Authority remains steadfast in its mission to foster accountability, protect homebuyers and develop the real estate sector in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Deputy Secretary Esha Chib, Town Planner JKRERA, Vitasta Raina along with other officials of JKRERA conducted the inspections.

Sakeena Itoo visits Zainapora, expresses solidarity with Showkat Hussain

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Minister for Health & Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Thursday visited Zainapora to offer her heartfelt condolences and express solidarity with MLA Showkat Hussain Ganie on the demise of her mother.

During the visit, Minister Sakeena also interacted with the bereaved family members, sharing their grief and expressed solidarity with them. She



prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and strength to the family to bear the irreparable loss.

The Minister conveyed her deepest sympathies with the grieving family

during this difficult time. She expressed profound grief over the loss and also joined in prayers, hoping that the departed soul attains the highest place in Jannah.

Senior JKAS Officers accorded warm send off on superannuation

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: A grand send off ceremony was organised Thursday to accord an affectionate adieu to two senior JKAS officers; Naresh Kumar, Joint Director, Hospitality and Protocol Jammu and Kartar Singh, Additional Secretary, Rural Development Department on their superannuation.

Senior officers from the Civil, Police and Accounts services of the 2004 batch attended the event, including the Director Industries Jammu, Director Education Jammu and Director Hospitality and Protocol.

The speakers highlighted the contribution

of both the officers during their postings as DSWO, BDO, SDM and Joint Directors. Their work for the welfare and development of people in Jammu in particular, and Jammu and Kashmir in general, was highly appreciated. Their roles in the Revenue Department, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and other developmental departments also drew praise.

The speakers said that their illustrious careers spanning over 20 years will remain a guiding force for the young officers.

On the occasion, the retiring officers were felicitated with mementos as a mark of respect.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Protecting The Ambition Of Our Youth

The recent awareness program led by SKIMS Medical College under the Nasha Mukta Abhiyan wasn't just another government seminar; it was a vital intervention. It addressed a growing crisis in Kashmir—the vulnerability of students who, in their search for stress relief, might inadvertently walk into the life-altering trap of substance abuse. The most powerful takeaway from the session came from the trainee doctors themselves—individuals who were in these students' shoes only a few years ago. Their message was clear: Smoking and drugs are not coping mechanisms; they are complications. When a student turns to a cigarette or a substance to "calm their nerves" before a competitive exam, they aren't solving stress. They are trading a temporary feeling of anxiety for a permanent cycle of dependency. As Professor Ashfaq poignantly noted, addiction is a trap with an easy entrance but a nearly impossible exit. By labeling smoking as the "gateway," the program hit a nerve that needs to be felt across all households: prevention starts with the very first puff. Beyond the physical damage, Clinical Psychologist Kaunsar Sidiq brought the human element to the forefront. Addiction doesn't just happen to a person; it happens to a family. It erodes: Emotional Stability: Turning a focused student into a shell of their former self. Relationships: Replacing trust with secrecy and isolation. Future Aspirations: Clouding the "clarity of purpose" that trainee doctor Zaid emphasized as the best defense against drug use. While SKIMS Medical College and the Nasha Mukta J&K campaign are doing the heavy lifting of education and clinical support, the responsibility extends to the rest of us. Parents and Teachers: Need to create environments where students feel safe discussing their failures and anxieties without the fear of judgment. Peers: Need to foster a culture where saying "no" is respected and where "struggling" is seen as a normal part of the journey, not a reason to self-destruct. The commitment shown by Principal Prof. Dr. Fazlul Qadir Parry and his team is a beacon of hope. However, a 100-day campaign is only the beginning. To truly safeguard Kashmir's "collective future," we must ensure that the dialogue started in that coaching center continues in every home. We owe it to these 130 students—and the thousands like them—to ensure that their only "high" comes from achieving their dreams, not from a substance that will eventually steal them.

Living In A Digital World

Opportunities, Risks, And The Changing Reality



MOHAMMAD HANIEF

The world today stands firmly in the grip of a digital revolution that continues to redefine the way societies function. What began as a technological advancement aimed at simplifying communication and information sharing has evolved into a powerful force shaping economies, governance, education, and personal lives. As of 2026, the digital ecosystem is not merely a support system—it has become central to human existence across regions, from advanced urban centers to remote rural landscapes. The rapid expansion of digital technologies has created unprecedented levels of convenience. Everyday tasks such as banking, shopping, and communication can now be performed instantly through smartphones and internet-enabled devices. The rise of digital payments and e-commerce platforms has transformed consumer behavior globally. In countries like India, mobile-based financial systems and unified payment interfaces have enabled millions to participate in formal economic activities, bridging gaps that once excluded large sections of society. One of the most defining features of the current digital age is the widespread integration of artificial intelligence. AI has moved beyond theoretical applications and is now embedded in daily life. It powers recommendation systems, automates customer service, assists in medical diagnostics, and even generates content. Industries across the world are adopting AI to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance productivity. Governments are also increasingly relying on data-driven systems for governance, planning, and service delivery. However, this rapid technological advancement has also led to significant shifts in the global job market. Automation is replacing repetitive tasks, altering the nature of work across sectors. While new opportunities are emerging in technology-driven industries, traditional roles are diminishing or evolving. This transformation is particularly challenging in developing regions, where access to digital skills training remains uneven. The need for reskilling and adapting to new forms of employment has become urgent, as digital literacy increasingly determines economic participation. Education has undergone a parallel transformation. The expansion of online learning platforms and virtual classrooms has made education more accessible than ever before. Students in remote areas can now access lectures, courses, and educational resources that were once limited to elite institutions. Hybrid learning models have become a lasting feature even after the disruptions caused by the pandemic years. Yet, this progress is not evenly



distributed. Rural areas and underserved communities continue to face challenges such as poor internet connectivity, lack of devices, and limited digital literacy. The healthcare sector has also experienced significant digital transformation. Telemedicine has become a practical solution for delivering healthcare services to remote populations. Patients can consult doctors without the need for physical travel, and wearable technologies allow continuous monitoring of health conditions. Artificial intelligence is assisting in early disease detection and improving diagnostic accuracy. These developments have the potential to make healthcare more inclusive and efficient. However, they also raise concerns about data privacy and the security of sensitive medical information. Despite these advancements, the digital world presents a range of challenges that are becoming increasingly complex. Among the most pressing issues is the spread of misinformation. Social media platforms have made it possible for information to travel rapidly across the globe, but they have also enabled the widespread circulation of false and misleading content. The emergence of AI-generated media, including deepfakes, has made it even more difficult to distinguish between truth and fabrication. This has serious implications for public trust, democratic processes, and social harmony. Privacy concerns have intensified alongside the growth of digital services. Every online interaction generates data, which is often collected, analyzed, and monetized by companies. Many users remain unaware of how their personal information is being used. Data breaches, unauthorized surveillance, and targeted advertising have raised ethical and legal questions worldwide. While some countries have introduced data protection laws, the enforcement of these regulations varies significantly across regions. Another growing concern is the impact of digital technology on mental health. The constant exposure to screens, social media pressure, and the need for online validation have contributed to rising levels of anxiety and stress, particularly among young people. The phenomenon of digital fatigue is increasingly common, as individuals struggle to balance their online and offline lives. Reduced

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has created unprecedented levels of convenience. Everyday tasks such as banking, shopping, and communication can now be performed instantly through smartphones and internet-enabled devices.

face-to-face interaction has also affected social skills and emotional well-being. Cybersecurity threats have become more sophisticated and widespread. Individuals, businesses, and governments are all vulnerable to cyberattacks, ranging from financial fraud to large-scale breaches of critical infrastructure. As societies become more dependent on digital systems, the risks associated with these threats continue to grow. Strengthening cybersecurity frameworks has become a priority, but challenges persist due to the rapidly evolving nature of digital threats. Environmental concerns linked to digital growth are also gaining attention. Data centers that power cloud computing and online services consume vast amounts of energy, contributing to carbon emissions. The increasing demand for electronic devices has led to a surge in e-waste, much of which is improperly disposed of in developing regions. This creates environmental and health hazards, highlighting the need for sustainable practices in the technology sector. The digital divide remains a critical issue that limits the benefits of technological progress. While some regions are advancing with high-speed internet and next-generation technologies, others still lack basic connectivity. This disparity reinforces existing inequalities, particularly in education, employment, and access to information. Bridging this gap

requires investment in infrastructure, affordable technology, and digital literacy programs. In response to these challenges, governments and international organizations are taking steps to regulate the digital space. Policies focusing on data protection, platform accountability, and ethical use of artificial intelligence are being developed. There is a growing demand for transparency in how digital platforms operate, particularly in relation to algorithms that influence user behavior. However, the pace of regulation often struggles to keep up with the speed of technological innovation. At the individual level, there is an increasing need to adopt responsible digital practices. Digital literacy is no longer optional; it is essential for navigating the complexities of the modern world. Understanding how to identify misinformation, protect personal data, and manage screen time are critical skills. Encouraging mindful use of technology can help mitigate its negative effects while maximizing its benefits. The relationship between humans and technology is also undergoing a shift. There is a growing awareness that technology should serve as a tool rather than dominate daily life. Efforts to reduce screen dependency, promote offline engagement, and maintain a healthy balance are becoming more important. Families, educators, and communities all play a role in shaping how individuals interact with digital technologies. Looking ahead, the digital landscape is expected to evolve even further. Emerging technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and advanced AI systems are gradually becoming part of mainstream life. Workplaces are likely to become more automated, education more immersive, and communication more integrated into digital environments. These developments hold immense potential but also require careful consideration of their social and ethical implications. The future of the digital world will ultimately depend on how it is managed. Ensuring that technology benefits society as a whole requires a collective effort involving governments, industries, and individuals. Inclusivity, sustainability, and ethical considerations must guide digital development to prevent the deepening of existing inequalities. Living in a digital world today is both an opportunity and a challenge. It offers unparalleled access to information, services, and global connections, while also presenting risks that demand awareness and responsibility. The choices made in how technology is used and regulated will shape the trajectory of future societies. As the digital age continues to unfold, one thing remains clear: technology itself is neither inherently good nor bad. Its impact depends on how it is designed, implemented, and used. By fostering a balanced approach—one that embraces innovation while addressing its risks—society can harness the power of the digital world to create a more equitable and sustainable future.

Author is a senior analyst, environmentalist and can be mailed at m.hanief@gmail.com (Twitter / X: @haniefmha)

Beyond Right Or Wrong: The Future Of India's Reservation Policy



DR. SATYAVAN SAURABH

The debate over reservations in India is not new, but from time to time, the issue returns to the forefront due to new circumstances and events. Recent controversies surrounding the University Grants Commission (UGC) regarding higher education and institutional policies have further intensified this discussion. While there are those who believe that caste-based reservations have lost their relevance, a significant minority still considers them essential for social justice and equal opportunity. To understand this complex debate, it is essential to move beyond emotional reactions and seriously consider its historical, social, and economic dimensions. First, we must understand the underlying spirit of reservation. Indian society has grappled with deep social inequalities for centuries. Certain sections of society were systematically deprived of education, resources, and a dignified life. This was not just a question of economic deprivation, but also of social exclusion and inequality of opportunity. Against this backdrop, the framers of the Constitution enacted reservation as a temporary measure to bring the disadvantaged sections of society into the mainstream and provide them with equal opportunities. However, today's India is vastly different from the India of 70-75 years ago. Education has expanded, urbanization has increased, and new doors of opportunity have opened up for the new generation. This is why some question whether the same policies enacted decades ago should remain in place. They argue that people from all castes are now employed in various fields, so caste should not be the sole basis for reservation. They also point out that even within the upper caste community, there are a significant number of



economically disadvantaged people, for whom the lack of opportunities is just as real. This argument is not entirely unfounded. In fact, economic inequality has become a major challenge in Indian society today. Many families do not fall into any reserved category, but due to financial constraints, they are unable to provide their children with adequate resources for higher education or preparation for competitive examinations. This raises the demand that economic status be the basis for reservation or assistance, so that assistance can reach those truly in need. In keeping with this philosophy, the government has also established reservations for the economically weaker sections (EWS). This can be considered an important step, as it acknowledges that poverty is not limited to a single social class. However, the question remains: will providing reservations based solely on economic conditions be sufficient? On the other hand, a strong argument in support of reservation is that social discrimination and inequality have not yet been completely eliminated. Numerous studies and social experiences show that some sections of society still lag behind in terms of education, employment, and social acceptance. Even though some people have progressed economically, the experience of discrimination based on social identity has not completely ended. This is why reservation for Scheduled Castes

(SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) is seen not only as a form of economic support, but also as a form of social representation. Another important issue arises here—that of the "creamy layer." This system applies to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), under which economically advantaged families are denied reservation benefits. Many demand that this principle be applied to SC/ST categories as well, so that reservation benefits reach those truly in need. However, there is disagreement on this issue, as some experts believe that the impact of social discrimination among these classes is so profound that it cannot be ignored even if the economic situation improves. Concerns are often raised about reservations in medical and technical fields, claiming that they could impact quality. This is a sensitive issue, as these fields directly involve human life and safety. However, it should also be noted that ultimate competence and proficiency in any profession are determined by training, hard work, and experience. All students in medical colleges and other institutions undergo the same curriculum, examinations, and evaluation processes. Therefore, questioning quality based solely on reservations may be a biased approach. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the education system needs reform. If all students receive equal quality education at the primary and secondary levels, unequal-

ity in higher education may automatically decrease. Even today, there is a significant quality gap between government and private schools, which further creates a competitive imbalance. Therefore, alongside the debate on reservations, it is important to pay equal attention to improving the education system. Another aspect is representation. In any democratic society, it is crucial that all sections of society receive fair representation in decision-making bodies. Reservations serve as a means to this end. If certain sections of society are consistently left behind, it is detrimental not only to them but to society as a whole, as it increases discontent and inequality. The most important conclusion of this entire debate is that reservation cannot be reduced to a simple dichotomy of "right or wrong." It is a complex policy that demands changes according to time, society, and circumstances. A balanced approach would be to periodically review the current reservation system and ensure that its benefits reach those who truly need it. Additionally, it is essential to strengthen scholarships, affordable education, coaching facilities, and other support schemes for economically weaker sections. This can ensure that no talented student is left behind simply due to a lack of resources. Ultimately, the debate on reservations isn't just a question of policy, but it shapes the kind of society we want to build. Do we want a society where everyone has equal opportunities, or one where historical inequalities continue to impact new generations? The answer isn't easy, but it's clear that the solution lies not in one extreme, but in balance. It's time to rise above prejudices and consider this issue. Abolishing reservations altogether is not an immediate solution, nor is continuing it indefinitely without any changes. What's needed is a policy that strikes a balance between social justice, economic equality, and quality. Only then can we envision an India where opportunities are truly equal and everyone can advance according to their potential.

(Dr. Satyavan Saurabh, PhD (Political Science), is a poet and social thinker.)

IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

■ Gautama Buddha

The Eternal Voice Of Peace, Balance, And Inner Awakening

LALIT GARGG

In the history of human civilization, there have been a few Great personalities whose lives transcend the boundaries of time and continue to illuminate the path of humanity across ages. Gautama Buddha stands as one such eternal beacon, whose message of compassion, non-violence, and self-awakening remains as relevant today as it was over 2,500 years ago. The sacred occasion of Buddha Purnima is not merely a remembrance of a historical figure, but a profound opportunity to reconnect with the timeless ideals of self-realization, equality, and inner peace, values that are urgently needed in today's conflict-ridden and restless world.

This day is uniquely significant, as it marks three pivotal events in the life of Buddha, his birth, enlightenment, and Mahaparinirvana. Born in Lumbini (in present-day Nepal) as Siddhartha, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya and eventually reached Nirvana in Kushinagar. Thus, Buddha Purnima symbolizes the completeness of life, awakening, fulfillment, and liberation. Across the world, in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Korea, and India, this day is celebrated with deep reverence under various names and traditions. In Sri Lanka, it is observed as "Vesak," a festival of lights and compassion, marked by devotion and joyous spiritual expression.

Gautama Buddha is a radiant light-house whose light does not merely illuminate the outer world but also enlightens the inner realm of human consciousness. He is revered as one of India's greatest spiritual philosophers, a divine personality, a realized sage, a social reformer, and a religious teacher. In Hindu tradition, he is also regarded as the ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, making him universally revered across faiths. Buddha can rightly be called a pioneer of both spiritual and intellectual revolution. His teachings not only challenged



religious dogmas and social distortions but also inspired transformative change in countless lives. Witnessing the suffering of society, ritualistic ignorance, social inequality, the humiliation of women, and oppression of the marginalized—his heart was stirred with deep compassion. His efforts to uplift humanity were monumental and transformative. According to Buddha, conquering oneself is far greater than winning thousands of external battles.

Born as Prince Siddhartha, he renounced royal luxuries at the age of 29 after encountering the harsh realities of life, old age, sickness, and death. In his quest for truth, he undertook intense austerities, only to realize that neither indulgence nor extreme asceticism leads to liberation. He then propounded the doctrine of the Middle Path, a balanced way of living grounded in awareness, moderation, and equanimity. His first sermon at Sarnath, known as Dharmachakra Pravartan, laid the foundation of his teachings. The Four Noble Truths, suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation, offer a profound diagnosis and remedy for human suffering.

Today's world is grappling with war, terrorism, intolerance, and psychological stress. In such a context,

Buddha's message of compassion and peace becomes profoundly relevant. He declared: "Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love." This is not merely a moral teaching but a universal principle for social and global harmony. If individuals, societies, and nations internalize this truth, many conflicts could be resolved. A touching episode from Buddha's life exemplifies his boundless compassion. A man who constantly insulted him met with an accident and lay suffering. Buddha personally attended to him, treated his wounds, and instructed his disciples to care for him. Overwhelmed by this unexpected kindness, the man's heart transformed, and he sought forgiveness. This incident teaches that true greatness lies not in revenge, but in forgiveness and compassion, the strongest force that unites humanity.

Buddha opposed not only physical violence but also the subtler violence of the mind, jealousy, anger, greed, and ego. He emphasized that one who conquers the self is the true victor. Even a conqueror of countless battles stands inferior to one who has mastered the mind. He also challenged social evils like caste discrimination, untouchability, and gender inequality. He proclaimed that a person's worth is determined not by birth, but by action. His Sangha represented an ideal egalitarian society where people from all backgrounds were welcomed equally. This made his movement not only a religious awakening but also a powerful social revolution.

Born in Lumbini (in present-day Nepal) as Siddhartha, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya and eventually reached Nirvana in Kushinagar. Thus, Buddha Purnima symbolizes the completeness of life, awakening, fulfillment, and liberation.

Later, B. R. Ambedkar embraced Buddha's egalitarian philosophy and guided millions towards dignity and social justice, demonstrating the timeless relevance of Buddha's teachings. One of Buddha's most powerful messages is: "Appo Deepo Bhava" Be a light unto yourself. This teaching encourages self-reliance, inner awakening, and freedom from external dependencies. Buddha's philosophy invites us to look within, purify

the mind, and cultivate virtues like compassion (karuna), friendliness (maitri), joy (mudita), and equanimity (upeksha). True peace, he taught, resides within us, not in the external world.

In today's fast-paced life, dominated by material pursuits and technological distractions, this message calls us back to inner awareness. Mental peace and contentment arise not from external achievements, but from inner clarity and mindfulness.

Buddha emphasized living in the present moment. He taught that attachment to the past and anxiety about the future disturb the mind. One who learns to live fully in the present experiences true joy. The modern concept of mindfulness, now widely practiced across the world, finds its roots in Buddha's teachings, proving their timeless and universal appeal. Humanity today faces numerous crises, environmental imbalance, war, social fragmentation, and mental health challenges. These cannot be solved by technological advancement alone. What is needed is the restoration of human values. Buddha's message of compassion, non-violence, equality, and self-discipline provides a path toward resolving these challenges. If individuals cultivate compassion within, peace and harmony will naturally flourish in society.

Buddha Purnima is not merely a festival, it is an invitation to introspection. It compels us to ask whether we are truly living the teachings of Buddha or merely commemorating them ceremonially. The need of the hour is not just to worship Buddha, but to live Buddha, to embody his values in our daily lives. When every individual awakens the "Buddha" within, a peaceful, balanced, and harmonious world will naturally emerge. This is the true message of Buddha Purnima, and the path toward a brighter future for humanity.

The author can be mailed at lalitgarg11@gmail.com

■ Service Above Sect

Reclaiming The Moral Core Of Religious Identity

MOHD AMIN MIR

In an era increasingly marked by polarization, identity politics, and the persistent temptation to divide communities along religious lines, stories of unity are not merely comforting, they are essential. They serve as reminders of what societies are capable of at their best. Among such stories, the lives and work of Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan stand out as powerful examples of how individuals can transcend religious boundaries to embody a shared moral vision rooted in compassion, dignity, and human solidarity. Their contributions are not confined to a region or a moment in history; rather, they represent a universal template for coexistence and mutual respect.

This article seeks to explore their enduring legacy, not merely as individuals, but as symbols of a deeper, more resilient idea: that Hindu-Muslim brotherhood is not an abstract aspiration but a lived reality, sustained by courage, empathy, and ethical conviction. To understand the significance of figures like Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan, one must first appreciate the cultural and historical context in which they lived and worked. Kashmir, often described as a paradise on earth, has long been a meeting ground of diverse spiritual traditions. From the mystical teachings of Sufism to the philosophical depth of Shaivism, the region has historically nurtured a syncretic culture known as Kashmiriyat, a term that encapsulates communal harmony, tolerance, and a shared cultural ethos.

Yet, this harmony has not been immune to disruption. Political turmoil, conflict, and social fragmentation have periodically strained the bonds between communities. It is precisely in such moments of fracture that individuals like Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan become vital. They do not merely preach unity; they practice it, often at personal cost.

While their religious identities differed, what united Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan was a profound commitment to service. Both were respected in their respective fields, known not only for professional excellence but for their unwavering dedication to the welfare of others.

Dr Ali Jan was widely admired for his humility and his deep sense of responsibility toward all segments of society. He believed that service to humanity was the highest form of faith, a principle deeply embedded in Islamic teachings. Yet, his interpretation of faith was inclusive,

expansive, and devoid of sectarian boundaries.

Similarly, Dr Susheel Razdan exemplified the ethical ideals of compassion and selflessness that lie at the heart of Hindu philosophy. His work transcended religious identity, focusing instead on alleviating suffering and fostering understanding. Together, they represented a rare but powerful alignment: two individuals from different religious traditions, united by a shared moral compass.

What distinguishes the relationship between Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan is not merely mutual respect, but a deep, lived brotherhood. Their association was not symbolic; it was practical, visible, and deeply rooted in everyday interactions. They collaborated, supported one another, and stood together during times of crisis. Their friendship sent a clear message: unity is not achieved through declarations but through consistent, meaningful engagement.

In a world where interfaith dialogue often remains confined to conferences and statements, their example demonstrates the power of lived relationships. They showed that trust is built not in grand gestures but in small, consistent acts of solidarity.

The lives of Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan invite us to reconsider the ethical foundations of communal harmony. Too often, discussions about Hindu-Muslim unity are framed in political or strategic terms. While such perspectives are important, they risk overlooking the deeper moral dimensions of coexistence. At its core, unity is an ethical commitment. It requires individuals to see beyond labels, to recognize the inherent dignity of others, and to act with empathy and fairness. Both men embodied these principles in their daily lives.

Their actions remind us that religious traditions, when understood in their true spirit, are not sources of division but reservoirs of ethical wisdom. Islam and Hinduism, despite their differences, share common values: compassion, justice, humility, and a commitment to the welfare of others.

In contemporary discourse, narratives of conflict often dominate. Media coverage, political rhetoric, and social media amplification tend to highlight divisions rather than bridges. In such an environment, the stories of Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan serve as a crucial counter-narrative. They challenge the assumption that religious identities are inherently antagonistic. Instead, they demonstrate



that these identities can coexist, interact, and even enrich one another.

Their lives also expose the limitations of simplistic narratives that reduce complex social realities to binary oppositions. By embodying unity, they complicate these narratives, forcing us to confront the possibility that coexistence is not only possible but natural. The legacy of Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan is particularly relevant for younger generations. In an age shaped by rapid technological change and global connectivity, young people are exposed to a wide range of ideas and influences. This exposure can be empowering, but it also carries risks, including the spread of misinformation and divisive ideologies.

Their example offers several important lessons:

- **Unity Requires Effort:** Harmony is not automatic; it must be cultivated through conscious effort and sustained engagement.
- **Relationships Matter:** Personal connections can transcend ideological divides. Building friendships across communities is one of the most effective ways to counter prejudice.
- **Ethical Consistency is Key:** Values must be reflected in actions. Integrity and consistency are essential for building trust.
- **Courage is Necessary:** Standing for unity often requires courage, especially in environments where division is normalized.

While individual efforts are crucial,

they must be supported by broader societal structures. Educational institutions, civil society organizations, and media platforms all have a role to play in promoting narratives of unity. The stories of Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan should be integrated into curricula, public discourse, and cultural initiatives. By doing so, society can ensure that their legacy is not forgotten but actively transmitted to future generations.

Moreover, policymakers must recognize that social cohesion is not merely a moral imperative but a practical necessity. Stable, harmonious societies are better equipped to address challenges, foster development, and ensure the well-being of their citizens.

Although rooted in the specific context of Kashmir, the message embodied by Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan has global relevance. Around the world, societies grapple with issues of identity, diversity, and coexistence. From Europe to the Middle East, from Africa to the Americas, the challenge of building inclusive communities remains pressing. In this context, their example offers a universal lesson: unity is not achieved by erasing differences but by embracing them within a framework of mutual respect. Their lives demonstrate that diversity, when approached with empathy and openness, can be a source of strength rather than conflict.

One of the most effective ways to preserve and propagate the legacy of figures

like Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan is through storytelling. Narratives have the power to shape perceptions, influence attitudes, and inspire action. By telling their stories, accurately, thoughtfully, and repeatedly—society can create a cultural memory that values unity over division. Such narratives can counteract the influence of divisive rhetoric and provide alternative models of behavior.

Importantly, storytelling must go beyond idealization. It should capture the complexities, challenges, and sacrifices involved in living a life of ethical commitment. This approach ensures that their legacy remains relatable and actionable.

It would be incomplete to discuss Hindu-Muslim unity without acknowledging the challenges and critiques that often arise. Skeptics may argue that individual examples, however inspiring, cannot address systemic issues or deeply entrenched divisions. This critique has merit. Structural inequalities, political conflicts, and historical grievances cannot be resolved solely through individual actions. However, dismissing the importance of such examples would be equally misguided.

Figures like Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan do not claim to offer complete solutions. Rather, they provide a moral foundation upon which broader efforts can be built. Their lives demonstrate what is possible, setting a standard for both individuals and institutions. The legacy of Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan is not meant to be admired from a distance. It is a call to action, a challenge to each of us to reflect on our own attitudes and behaviors.

Are we willing to engage with those who are different from us? Do we actively challenge prejudice and discrimination? Are we committed to building relationships based on trust and respect? These questions are not abstract; they have practical implications for how we live our daily lives.

In the final analysis, the significance of Dr Ali Jan and Dr Susheel Razdan lies not only in what they achieved but in what they represent. They are symbols of a possibility that is both fragile and resilient, the possibility of genuine human connection across divides. Their lives remind us that unity is not a distant ideal but a tangible reality, shaped by choices, actions, and relationships. In a world often defined by its divisions, their example offers a different vision: one of shared humanity, mutual respect, and enduring brotherhood.

The author can be mailed at miramin354@gmail.com

SKIMS expands critical care network within hospital

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: In a major overhaul of its patient care system, the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) on Thursday announced a plan to decentralise critical care by establishing Intensive Care Units (ICUs) and High Dependency Units (HDUs) across wards, ensuring critically ill patients receive immediate intervention without delays caused by transfers.

The decision, announced by Director Dr Mohammad Ashraf Ganie during an interaction with faculty and media, is part of a broader infrastructure upgrade at the institute, which includes equipping around 40 wards

with life-saving devices and expanding diagnostic services to every floor.

Dr Ganie, said the initiative aims to ensure that critically ill patients receive immediate intervention within their wards. "Each ward will be equipped with a small ICU or HDU so that patients who turn critical can be managed promptly without shifting them elsewhere," he said.

To support the rollout, SKIMS has procured essential critical care equipment, including ventilators, infusion pumps, defibrillators, and patient monitors. The installation will be carried out in phases.

Other key additions include a portable isolation

unit for kidney transplant patients, advanced neonatal care equipment, and a hemodiafiltration machine for nephrology services. Surgical departments, including neurosurgery and plastic surgery, have been upgraded with advanced operative systems, while a 3D 4K visualisation platform has been installed to support complex procedures such as transplants and minimally invasive surgeries.

Critical care and anaesthesia units have also been strengthened with fibre optic bronchoscopes, while cardiovascular and thoracic surgery services have received ultra-high-definition imaging systems—(KNO)

J&K misses groundwater monitoring targets

Parl Panel Flags Arsenic Contamination At 11.76%

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir has missed several key groundwater monitoring targets even as concerns over contamination and dam safety preparedness persist, according to the latest report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources on Demands for Grants (2026-27).

The report accessed notes that against a target of 95 groundwater monitoring units, the Union Territory achieved only 75, indicating a shortfall in assessment efforts. Similar gaps were observed in geophysical surveys, where 285 surveys were completed against a target of 325, reflecting challenges in data collection across difficult terrain.

It further states that the water level monitoring network in Jammu and Kashmir comprises 236 stations, suggesting limited coverage in view

of the region's complex geography.

According to the findings, the North Western Himalayan Region (NWHHR), based in Jammu, analysed 7,599 groundwater samples over the past five years. While this reflects ongoing monitoring, it also underscores the scale of work required.

On groundwater quality, the report presents mixed trends. No samples were found exceeding permissible limits for electrical conductivity or fluoride. However, around 9.31 per cent of samples recorded nitrate levels beyond acceptable limits, while 11.76 per cent showed arsenic contamination. Iron contamination was also detected in a smaller proportion of samples, indicating localised concerns over water quality.

The report also draws attention to district-level contamination, stating that several areas across Jammu and Kashmir have been partly affected by

nitrate and heavy metal pollution in recent years, signalling increasing environmental strain.

In terms of infrastructure, the Union Territory has nine major dams; however, only eight have updated design inflow flood data available on the national portal, and just two have undergone revised flood assessments. This points to gaps in preparedness amid rising extreme weather risks.

On the hydropower front, projects like Kishanganga are operational and equipped with early warning systems. Major projects such as Pakal Dul and Kiru, currently under construction, have also integrated similar safety measures, while Upper Sindh-II is still in the process of implementing these systems.

The Committee has further noted delays in the installation of Digital Water Level Recorders (DWLRs) in

Jammu and Kashmir and other states, despite set targets under national groundwater monitoring schemes. It has urged the Ministry to accelerate the installations, particularly in sensitive and water-stressed regions.

The report also flags flood risks linked to upstream water releases, observing that sudden discharges from dams, especially in neighbouring Punjab, combined with local rainfall, have intensified flooding in parts of Jammu and Kashmir. It calls for better coordination and stronger flood management mechanisms in downstream areas.

The Central Water Commission has also identified glacial lakes in the Himalayan regions, including Jammu and Kashmir, as potential hazards. These lakes, formed due to glacier melt, pose the risk of sudden outburst floods, threatening downstream populations and infrastructure—(KNO)

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

CM Hails Jmu-Sgr Rail

to the rail service, he said the demand has grown so significantly that the train's capacity has been expanded from 8 coaches to 20 coaches, increasing passenger capacity from around 500 to nearly 1,400 in a single journey. With two such trains operating, nearly 2,800 passengers will now be able to travel daily between Jammu and Srinagar, significantly easing travel and enhancing convenience.

"The success of this railway is not merely in passenger travel," the Chief Minister remarked, underlining its growing role in freight movement. He pointed out that the rail network has already begun facilitating the transportation of goods, including cement, food supplies and vehicles, into the Valley. Notably, automobiles are now being transported directly to Srinagar by rail, marking a significant logistical breakthrough.

Equally important, he added, is the outbound movement of goods from Jammu and Kashmir. "Our fruits, milk and dairy products are now reaching markets outside J&K efficiently through this rail network," he said, stressing that this enhanced connectivity will strengthen local industries and open new economic avenues for farmers and producers.

In a forward-looking appeal, the Chief Minister urged the Railway Minister to consider establishing an inland dry port in Jammu and Kashmir. He said such a facility would enable customs clearance and streamline export processes within the region, eliminating the need to route goods through other cities. "This will not only benefit our businesses but also contribute to the country's overall economic growth," he asserted.

Calling the day historic, the Chief Minister said that for the first time, people of Jammu and Kashmir can seamlessly travel between Jammu and Srinagar by train, reducing dependence on road transport and significantly improving accessibility.

"This is the day we had been waiting for years," he said. "Today, a dream has been realized. With this rail link, Jammu and Kashmir is more connected than ever before."

Narco-Smuggling No

80 days, a whole-of-government effort must confront and dismantle the web of drug addiction. This requires a change in mindset. Sometimes people say this is not my problem. This attitude must change. Drug smugglers thrive on public indifference and silence. We must remember: a drug-free society is built by those who resist this menace even when they are not directly affected. Every family must recognize that prosperity is not measured by economic growth alone, but by the vigilant and responsible choices of its citizens," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted that with the public support, in just the last 20 days around 350 FIRs were registered and 440 drug traffickers were arrested. He also called upon schools, colleges, social organizations, and the media to join this campaign.

"When communities stay alert, they can resist infiltration. When society is vigilant, addiction cannot spread," the Lieutenant Governor said.

J&K To Witness Rain,

or two spells of light to moderate rain or thundershower at many places is expected from May 3 to 5, accompanied by thunder and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph at a few locations," the department said. From May 6 to 9, the weather is expected to turn generally dry again, with isolated brief showers possible.

The MeT department issued an advisory asking farmers to suspend farm operations during May 3-5 in view of the expected rain and gusty winds.

Meanwhile, day temperatures across the Valley remained below normal on Wednesday. Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 20.0°C, which is 3.1 degrees below normal, while the minimum settled at 9.9°C, slightly above normal by 0.4 degrees.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 20.2°C, 2.2 degrees below normal, and a minimum of 7.2°C. Pahalgam saw a high of 15.2°C, 5 degrees below normal, while the minimum was 7.4°C, 2.8 degrees above normal.

Kupwara recorded a maximum temperature of 19.5°C, 4.2 degrees below normal, and a minimum of 11.3°C. Kokernag registered a high of 20.6°C, while Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 10.8°C.

In the Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 35.5°C, close to normal, and a minimum of 22.1°C. Banihal and Batote recorded maximum temperatures of 21.0°C and 19.1°C respectively, both below normal, while Katra recorded a high of 30.3°C.

The MeT department said light rainfall was

recorded at several places, with Pahalgam receiving 8.2 mm rain during the day, followed by Gulmarg at 2.4 mm and Kupwara and Qazigund at 0.8 mm each—(KNO)

Centre Approves

officials of Samagra Shiksha, J&K.

During the meeting, the Board reviewed the financial and physical progress made under the scheme in the previous year. Out of 200.11 crore available for 2025-26, 194.53 crore was utilized and released to executing agencies, including PWD (R&B), mainly for civil works and allied activities.

The Board appreciated the significant academic improvement in the UT, especially the 10 percent increase in Board Examination results at the secondary and higher secondary levels. It also commended the overall financial and physical progress achieved by Jammu and Kashmir under the scheme.

The Ministry of Education, Government of India, assured continued support for effective implementation of the plans in the coming years. At present, the PM SHRI scheme is being implemented in 396 schools across J&K, mostly at the high and higher secondary levels.

The officials also clarified that reports in certain sections of the media about meagre expenditure under the scheme are false.

Counter-Terror Drill

operational readiness by identifying potential gaps, strengthening response capabilities through practical training and reinforcing collective vigilance and synergy among all airport security stakeholders," said an official—(KNO)

Vande Bharat Extended

essential goods such as milk and salt are now being transported efficiently by rail.

He said train services remained operational even during heavy snowfall and landslides, reflecting system reliability. The trains are equipped with advanced electronics suited for high-altitude and extreme winter conditions, including temperatures up to minus 10°C.

The Railway Minister said efforts are underway to further enhance capacity through automatic signalling and additional crossing stations. He added that a proposal to extend the rail line from Baramulla to Uri is under consideration, while survey and design work is in progress for connectivity to Rajouri and Poonch.

"The next focus is doubling the Qazigund-Srinagar stretch to allow more trains on the route," he said, adding that modern railway technologies on par with European standards are being implemented in J&K.

Vaishnav further said that Jammu railway station is being developed into a modern facility, with multiple stations across the Union Territory undergoing upgrades.

On the occasion, CM Omar Abdullah said the increase from 8 to 20 coaches will enable nearly 1,400 passengers to travel per trip, terming it a major boost to connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar.

He said Pankaj Gangwar, Principal Chief Security Commissioner, Railway Protection Force, said CORAS commandos have been deployed to secure Vande Bharat trains on the Katra-Srinagar route.

"We have implemented a 'one plus twenty' guard system led by an inspector, with RPF commandos ensuring security along the route," Omar said.

SSP Railways J&K Waseem Qadri said comprehensive security arrangements are in place, with around 3,000 CCTV cameras monitoring the track and guard rooms established along the route.

"Drone surveillance and peripheral guarding have been deployed across all stations. Passengers, including tourists, need not worry as robust security measures are in place," he said, adding that the system will be strengthened further.

Meanwhile, senior Congress leader and AICC General Secretary Ghulam Ahmad Mir has urged Ashwini Vaishnav to consider introducing a halt for the Vande Bharat Express at Anantnag Railway Station.

Mir said Anantnag serves as a major commercial and tourism hub of South Kashmir, catering to a vast population across several districts. The absence of a scheduled stop, he said, is causing inconvenience to passengers, including students, traders, patients, and tourists.

"A halt at Anantnag would improve regional connectivity, promote tourism, ease congestion at nearby stations, and support local economic

growth," Mir, an MLA from Dooru, said. He expressed hope that the Railway Ministry will give due consideration to this genuine public demand in the larger interest of the people—(KNO)

CS Inaugurates SOC To

assessment, and security analytics. It will also coordinate closely with national agencies, including CERT-In, for effective cyber incident management.

Senior Director, NIC, Anil Kumar Sharma delivered a detailed presentation on the functioning and capabilities of the JK SOC.

Senior officers from the IT Department, Divisional Administration Jammu, and technical experts were also present at the inauguration.

India Treats Terrorists,

would not be sufficient unless its ideological and political backing is also addressed.

"Terrorism survives on ideological support and political patronage. These roots must be dismantled to end the threat effectively," he said.

Singh also highlighted the role of India's defence manufacturing ecosystem, saying it has developed the capacity to support both peacetime requirements and rapid wartime mobilisation. He said the country now possesses strong "surge capacity" to scale up operations when required.

"Our military-industrial framework has proven capable of meeting sudden demands. It is equipped to sustain operations in challenging situations," he said.

Without naming specific incidents, Singh reiterated that India's response mechanisms are no longer limited to conventional approaches and have adapted to emerging security challenges.

He maintained that India's security forces remain vigilant and capable of responding decisively to any future threats, reiterating the government's policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism—(KNO)

'Kashmir Food Safety

lakh out of Rs 736.84 lakh in 2022-23 and Rs 614.10 lakh out of Rs 621.73 lakh in 2021-22.

Regarding inspections, the reply states that figures show a fluctuating trend over the years. While 13,201 inspections were conducted in 2021-22, the number declined to 10,920 in 2025-26. The figures stood at 12,068 in 2022-23, 11,873 in 2023-24 and 12,204 in 2024-25.

The RTI also reveals limited sampling in certain categories. "Only 29 egg samples were collected, all of which were found conforming to standards. However, in meat quality checks carried out during 2025, 104 samples were lifted, out of which 30 were found substandard, unsafe or with labelling defects," it reads. It added that action was taken under relevant provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

As per the RTI, 1,011 civil cases are pending as of February 28, 2026, with Rs 1.16 crore in fines imposed.

Additionally, 84 criminal cases have been registered, with fines amounting to Rs 4.46 lakh. The department has also issued 1,499 challans, collecting around Rs 18.89 lakh in penalties.

The reply further states that over the past five years, 1,145 civil cases have resulted in convictions, while only 7 criminal cases have ended in conviction, indicating low conversion in criminal enforcement.

The RTI states that the Kashmir division currently has only one functional food testing laboratory at Dalgate Srinagar, along with six mobile food testing vans. Samples are also sent to national-level laboratories for advanced analysis.

Notably, the department has disclosed that 'no Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared or submitted so far for establishing modern food testing laboratories or strengthening monitoring systems.

Officials said that district-level food safety offices are operational across Kashmir, headed by designated officers and supported by field staff. However, the existing manpower shortage continues to affect enforcement on the ground—(KNO)

J&K Records Historic

has seen significant formalisation, with Udyam registrations increasing from 0.24 lakh in 2021 to 6.16 lakh in FY 2025-26. The total number of registrations is expected to reach 7.1 lakh within the current financial year.

On ease of doing business, J&K has been ranked

5th nationally under the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) 2024, based on independent stakeholder feedback. Reform implementation has improved from just 0.30 percent in 2016 to 100 percent compliance.

The data further shows that nearly 79 percent of over 8.11 lakh applications received through the single-window system have been approved, with 89 percent cleared within stipulated timelines, while rejection rates remain below 5 percent.

The startup ecosystem has also witnessed rapid expansion. A total of 1,305 startups have been registered with the J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) till FY 2025-26, compared to just 69 in 2020. Notably, 816 startups were registered in FY 2025-26 alone. The New Startup Policy 2024 is currently operational, with funding support extended to 25 startups and four incubators.

To enhance industrial competitiveness, the UT is offering highly subsidised industrial land at premiums ranging between Rs 2.5 lakh and Rs 8 lakh, even in areas where market rates run into several crores. This, coupled with low power tariffs, has created a cost-competitive environment for investors.

Key reforms include the introduction of a single certificate of in-principle approval based on self-declaration to reduce procedural delays, and the revival of sick MSMEs by extending incentives at par with new units under the existing policy framework and RBI guidelines.

The government has also introduced systemic measures such as the first MSME Health Clinic to support stressed units and signed an MoU with the National Stock Exchange to facilitate access to capital markets. The MSME Facilitation Council, Jammu, has received the MSEFC Excellence Award from the Government of India for effective dispute resolution.

J&K's performance under flagship central schemes has further strengthened its position. Under PM Gati Shakti, the UT ranks among the top five, with 676 GIS layers integrated and 51 major infrastructure projects mapped with an outlay of Rs 5,000 crore.

Under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative, J&K has secured the National Gold Award for the second consecutive year in 2024, reaffirmed in 2025, reflecting sustained progress in value-chain development and artisan support.

In the past five years, 73,524 units have been established under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), with J&K ranking first for three consecutive years in both employment generation and margin money utilisation, while exceeding FY 2025-26 targets.

Similarly, under PM Vishwakarma, the UT has topped all Union Territories in registrations, skill training and loan disbursement—(KNO)



RAHI ADVERTISERS

Contact Us for

Newspaper Designing

Advertising

Social Media Post Designs

Tabloid Designing & More...

For Further Details

7006034174

rahijaz786@gmail.com

Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner inspects Migrant ration depots

Reviews implementation of Special Relief Ration Scheme

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), J&K Dr Arvind Karwani, accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Relief Vijay Sharma; Deputy Director Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Jammu Sham Abrol and field officers from Relief Organization and FCS&CA, on Thursday visited Migrant ration depots to take stock of the ration distribution in terms of the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants, notified by the J&K Government recently.

While interacting with a large number of migrant beneficiaries at Migrant Camp Purkhoo, the team informed that ration distribution is being carried out by the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department in accordance with the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants



notified vide Government Order No. 15-JK(FCS&CA) of 2026 dated 05.03.2026, from all 32 designated ration depots in District Jammu and that migrant can get ration from any nearest ration depot. "All Relief Ration Card holders, whether PHH, NPHH, or Special Category, will continue to receive 11 kg of free ration per person per month along with 1 kg of sugar, while migrants under the non-relief category, such as pensioners, categorized as NPHH, are entitled to ration at government-approved NFSA rates," they were informed. It was further clarified

that those migrant ration card holders who may not be able to collect the ration during the current month (April) may collect the two-month ration (April and May) next month, after immediately completing e-KYC formalities. People were asked to beware of elements who are frustrated with reforms in ration distribution introduced by the integration of migrant ration cards into the NFSA database and are spreading rumours on social media about the discontinuation of migrant status after integration into the NFSA database. "More than 450 migrant families

have already availed the benefits of social security and welfare schemes after this integration, in addition to the relief benefits," they were told.

Dr Karwani reiterated that the integration of migrant ration cards into the NFSA database is being done in compliance with relevant Government Orders and rules.

"Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and National Informatics Centre is working in tandem with the Relief Organization and the department is committed to fully operationalize the new scheme to all migrants within the shortest time period," he assured. He appealed to all eligible migrants to immediately fill online applications to avail benefits of social sector schemes, which they were not eligible to avail earlier due to migrant cards being non-digitalized and not integrated with NFSA database.

SKIMS Medical College Reaches Out to Students with Anti-Drug Awareness Drive

SRINAGAR, APRIL 30: In a continued push under the Nasha Mukti J&K campaign, SKIMS Medical College on Tuesday organised an awareness and sensitisation programme at a coaching centre in Srinagar, engaging nearly 130 students in discussions on substance abuse, stress, and healthy coping strategies.

The session opened with trainee doctors Zara and Farhaan addressing the intense pressure faced by students preparing for competitive examinations. They urged students to adopt positive ways of dealing with stress instead of turning to harmful habits. They noted that while exam pressure is real, using substances like drugs or tobacco only worsens the situation and can derail long-term goals.

Professor Ashfaq from the Department of Community Medicine spoke candidly about the dangers of addiction, calling substance abuse "a trap that is easy to fall into but extremely difficult to escape."



He encouraged students to take a firm stand against smoking, describing it as the first step toward preventing drug dependency. Adding a psychological perspective, clinical psychologist Kaunsar Sidiq

highlighted the far-reaching impact of substance abuse on mental health, relationships, and future prospects. Drawing from her experience at the addiction treatment facility in Bemina, she shared real-life insights into how addiction disrupts not just individuals but entire families.

The programme also included an interactive question-and-answer

session, where students openly discussed their concerns related to stress, mental health, and addiction. Experts responded with practical advice and evidence-based guidance, making the session both informative and engaging.

Concluding the programme, trainee doctor Zaid emphasised the importance of staying focused and purpose-driven. He said that young people who remain clear about their goals are far less likely to fall into substance abuse.

The organisers reiterated their commitment to expanding such outreach initiatives across educational institutions in the region. The programme was conducted under the guidance of Principal Prof. Dr. Fazlul Qadir Parry, as part of broader efforts to strengthen awareness and prevention under the anti-drug campaign.

DC Anantnag reviews Census-2027 preparations

Calls for strict adherence to guidelines, procedures

GMK NEWS NETWORK

A N A N T N A G : Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, who is also the Principal Census Officer of the district, Thursday chaired a comprehensive meeting to assess the preparations and progress achieved on the Census 2027 so far.

ADC, Dr. Muzamil Maqbool (District Census Officer), ACR, Tariq Ahmad Malik (District Nodal Officer), Master Trainer, Field Trainers besides other officials and census functionaries attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the ADC briefed the chair about the administrative framework and measures, timelines, digital tools, and roles and responsibilities of various census functionaries. He highlighted key aspects including the two phases of Census 2027 viz. House Listing and Housing Census Operation (HLO) and Population Enumeration as well as the use of digital platforms such as mobile applications and the Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS) for efficient data collection and monitoring. He informed that charge officers and field trainers have been appointed and trained while the appointment and training of supervisors and enumerators as mandated by the guidelines will be done soon.

Reviewing the preparations, the DC directed for early formation and mapping of Houselisting Blocks (HLBs), appointment of enumerators and super-

visors, and readiness of logistics and digital infrastructure. He stressed for strict adherence to the notified dates and ensuring completion of all preparatory activities within the stipulated timeframe.

Emphasizing the significance of Census as a vital exercise for planning and policy formulation, the DC directed that accuracy, completeness, and transparency in data collection through close monitoring of field-level tasks be ensured by all census functionaries. He noted that various key aspects of development of a district are projected on the basis of population and other census parameters.

On the occasion, Dr. Bilal instructed to devise a comprehensive schedule for training of enumerators and supervisors to ensure they are adequately trained and equipped before the commencement of field operations. He called for proper utilization of the CMMS Portal for real-time monitoring and reporting, and asked officers to ensure seamless coordination among all stakeholders. Directions were also issued to impart wide publicity to the procedures and crucial dates so that the whole process is completed in a fair, smooth and successful manner.

As per the timelines of Census-2027, Phase I (HLO) will commence on 1st June 2026 with self enumeration exercise scheduled from May 17 to 31, 2026 while the Phase II (Population Enumeration) will start in February 2027.

DC Kulgam visits Kund area, reviews developmental works

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Thursday visited the Kund area to review ongoing developmental works and assess public needs.

During the visit, the DC inspected the famous tourist destination Vasak Nag, a seasonal spring of significant local importance. He stressed the need to further develop the site by enhancing infrastructure and providing better facilities to attract more tourists and generate employment opportunities for local youth.

CORRECTION

I have changed my name from (Old name) Mukhtar Ahmad to (new name) Mukhtar Ahmad Sofi. In future i will be known as (son name) Mukhtar Ahmad Sofi son of Gh Hassan Sofi. If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact passport office, Srinagar within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained after that.

'Wandd Cxali Sheen Gali, Bie E Bahaar' B'la temple doors reopen after 36-yr, sees revival of pre 1989 religious gathering

WARIS FAYAZ

BARAMULLA: Kashmiri Pandits on Thursday returned to the historic Ganesh Temple at Kachua Muqaam in Baramulla in North Kashmir after nearly 36 years, reviving a pre-1989 tradition that once drew large gatherings from different communities.

Located around 15 kilometres from Baramulla town, the temple used to host annual congregations on April 29 and 30. However, the practice had stopped in 1990.

On Thursday morning, devotees assembled at the Temple and performed Hawan as part of Ganesh Utsav, marking a significant moment for the community. The event saw participation and support from local Muslim residents, who helped facilitate the gathering.

Members of the Pandit community described the return as emotional and symbolic. "We are happy to be back in our village," they said, adding that the visit carries hope for a larger return in future. Calling it a beginning rather than

a full return, they said the moment reflects a deeper longing. "It is a trial. It is not ghar vapasi yet, but by God's grace we are here. Wandd Cxali Sheen Gali, Bie E Bahaar. We hope for that Bahaar when we will be back permanently," they said.

Community members also acknowledged the role of local Muslims, district administration and security agencies in ensuring smooth conduct of the event.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Syed Fakhruddin Hamid, termed the reopening of the temple a sign of normalcy. He said it reflects unity and brotherhood on the ground and congratulated both Muslim and Pandit communities for the occasion.

He said suggestions from the community have been received and will be examined. The DC added that the district administration plans to construct a Yatri Niwas at the site and will facilitate renovation of the temple. He also said that efforts will be made to promote Kachua as a destination for pilgrimage and religious tourism—(KNO)

GMC organize Annual Road Race from Duck Park to Nishat

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Department of Sports, Gandhi Memorial College, Srinagar, organized its Annual Road Race for both boys and girls Thursday.

The event saw the participation of more than one hundred students. The race, commenced at Duck Park, was flagged off by the Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Masood Ahmad Malik, and concluded at Nishat.

In the boys' category, the first, second, and third positions were secured by Irfan Shafi (4th Sem), Farhaan (6th Sem) and Mohd Atif (4th Sem) respectively, while in the girls' category, Syed Hooriya (8th Sem), Umaisa (6th Sem), and Ulfat (6th Sem) took the first, second, and third spots. During the valedictory ceremony, the winners were honored with trophies for their outstanding performance.

In his address at valedictory function, Prof. (Dr.) Masood Ahmad Malik lauded the efforts of all participants. He highlighted the pivotal role of sports in maintaining physical health and mental well-being and further encouraged the students to make physical activity a consistent part of their academic life.

Asian Paints unveils their latest corporate campaign 'Rangon Ki Warranty'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In India, addresses and directions are not always about street names or pin codes. They are often built on memory. Whether navigating or reminiscing, there is usually a strong visual cue that anchors the conversation — turn left after the blue house; the red house where guests visit every festive season; the yellow building everyone knows. In a country where colour is everywhere, when it comes to homes, it stops being just paint on a wall. It becomes a marker of familiarity, a silent identifier, a way to belong.

Building on this deeply rooted insight of 'Rang hi asli pata hai', Asian Paints has unveiled its latest corporate campaign, 'Rangon Ki Warranty' — a natural progression of the conversation it began last year with 'Asian Paints Ki Warranty, India ka Har Doosra Ghar Kehta Hai.'

Set to a warm, evocative track, the film captures Indian homes adorned in Asian Paints' colours become a part of everyday memory and community life. The colours last long enough Through simple, relatable moments, the narrative brings alive how, even as life continues to evolve, colours remain unchanged

— transforming into more than just paint and becoming lasting markers of recognition. By showcasing easy, familiar moments between homes and their residents, the film reiterates that Asian Paints' long-lasting colours don't just stay on walls; they stay in people's minds, becoming the true addresses of homes over time.

The campaign is a testament to what 'warranty' has always meant to Asian Paints. Beyond durability and performance, it represents an emotional promise — to protect not just walls, but the memories, recognition, and familiarity built around them.

For over eight decades, Asian Paints has been a part of homes and hearts across India, spanning small towns and metros, first homes and dream homes built across generations. Last year's campaign brought this legacy of trust to life, capturing how homeowners across the country have consistently relied on Asian Paints' warranties across categories. Over the year, this message was further strengthened through multiple interventions — from print executions such as 'Decades of Trust' to cultural moments like the Warranty Countdown during the Asia Cup.

'Rangon Ki Warranty' is a natural evolution of this narrative, viewed through the lens of colour — a space the brand owns through deep emotional connection with Indians.

Speaking on the campaign, Amit Syngle, Managing Director & CEO, Asian Paints, said, "For over eight decades, Asian Paints has been adding colour to Indian homes - but more importantly, has become a part of their identity. We believe our promise of warranty is reflected on walls that don't just stand firm, but stay vibrant - holding warmth, shared rituals, and memories that grow more valuable with time. When colour lasts long, it becomes memory translating to the address of a home - instantly recognizable, deeply remembered. 'Rangon Ki Warranty' is an ode to this enduring bond, where paint doesn't merely adorn a surface but stays intact to become a lasting marker of a home's legacy & pride. For us, warranty is not just a product assurance; it is a commitment built on trust and an unwavering confidence in long lasting performance. That is why 'Asian Paints Ki Colour Warranty' has become 'India Ke Har Dusre Ghar Ka Pata' - a quiet but powerful sign of

homes that endure, colours that stay, and stories that continue."

Launched during the Indian Premier League, where Asian Paints is an Associate Broadcast Sponsor on television, the campaign finds a natural cultural intersection. Cricket, much like homes, is deeply intertwined with emotion and identity in India. It is also a celebration of colours — team colours, city pride, and shared moments. Asian Paints seamlessly integrates this context, connecting the colours we rally behind with the colours we live with, making the narrative intuitive and deeply relatable.

Speaking on the creative idea, Suresh Nayak, Chief Creative Officer, Ogilvy India, said,

"Across India, a home's vibrant, lasting colour often becomes its true identity. This campaign reflects how enduring product performance weaves itself into the very fabric of our consumers' lives."

Simple, familiar, and deeply rooted in everyday behaviour, the campaign transforms a functional promise into something far more human. A colour that lasts does more than stay on a wall - it stays in people's hearts.(PR)

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE SEED PATHOLOGIST
 Agriculture Production & Farmer's Welfare Department, Lal Mandi Srinagar

PATHOLOGICAL ADVISORY FOR THE MONTH OF MAY-2026

S. No.	Crop	Disease/Problem	Pathological Advisory
	Mustard and Brown Sarson	Aphid attack	Maintain proper drainage in standing Rabi crops. Once the weather improves, Keep a close vigil on brown sarson crop for any insect attack especially aphids, if there is infestation of Aphids then spray the crop with Dimethoate 30% EC@ 1ml/litre of water or Quinalphos 20 EC 1ml/litre of water.
1.	Paddy	Seedling blight/ Blast/Brown Spot	In case, any disease symptom is observed in nursery immediately spray with Hexaconazole 5EC @ 5 ml per 10 litre of water or Carbendazim (12%) + Mancozeb (63 %) 75 WP @ 2.5 gms per litre of water.
2.	Maize	Cutworm Damage	For any cut worm damage of the germinated plants of Spray Quinalphos 20 EC 1ml/litre of water or Carbaryl 50 WP @ 2gms per litre.
3.	Solanaceous Vegetables (Tomato, Chillies, Brijnal & Potato)	Damping off/ Wilt/ Early blight	Adopt proper field sanitation. Dip Seedling roots for 30 minutes in the suspension of Carbendazim 50 WP @ 1gm per litre of water before transplanting. Spraying of following fungicides should be started at the initiation of early blight disease and repeat at an interval of 10 to 15 days if needed. The fungicides recommended are as follows: Ziram 80 WP @ 2 gms per litre of water or Mancozeb 75 WP @ 3 gms per litre of water or Copper-oxychloride 50 WP @ 3 gms per litre of water or Hexaconazole 5EC @ of 5ml per 10 litres of water.
4.	Bulb Crops (Onion, Garlic)	Downy Mildew/ Stemphylium Blight	Ensure proper drainage and avoid water logging in the field. Two to three foliar sprays with Metalaxyl MZ 72 WP @ 2.5 g/litre of water at an interval of 10-14 days. When Stemphylium blight is anticipated, spray the crop with Hexaconazole 5 EC @ 5ml per 10 litres of water at 8-10 days interval. Spraying of Thiamethoxam 25WG @ 0.4 gm per litre of water will keep the population of thrips under check and helps in reducing the dissemination of pathogen through vectors. Avoid flood irrigation and light irrigation should be given when need arises.
5.	Leguminous Vegetables (Beans, French Beans, Garden Pea)	Leaf Spot/ Root Rot/Ascochyta Blight/Powdery Mildew	Drench the soil with Carbendazim 50 WP @ 2 gm per litre of water in case symptoms are observed. In case of Ascochyta blight, spray the crop with chlorothalonil 75 WP @ 2.5 g or Carbendazim 50 WP@1gm per litre of water. When powdery mildew is anticipated, spray the crop with Hexaconazole 5 EC @ 5 ml per 10 litres of water or Sulphur 80 WP @ 3 g per litre of water.

Sd/= Seed Pathologist Kashmir Division Lal Mandi Srinagar

DIPK-927-26
DT: 30/04/2026

'Back to Bachpan' Brings Generations Together Through Traditional Games



AZHAR HAJINI

JAMMU: In an effort to pull young people away from digital screens and reconnect them with their cultural roots, the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) J&K organised the vibrant 'Back to Bachpan' 2026 festival at Dussehra Ground, Gandhi Nagar.

The event turned into a lively meeting ground for three generations—children, parents, and grandparents—who came together to relive the charm of traditional games and shared memories.

Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, who attended as the Chief Guest, praised the initiative and called it more than just a nostalgic exercise. "Traditional games are the heartbeat of our heritage; they shape character in ways gadgets

cannot," he said, stressing the need to preserve such practices for a healthier and more grounded future generation.

Earlier, Director General DYSS Anuradha Gupta welcomed the gathering, highlighting that understanding the future of society begins with remembering its roots. She said reviving these games is key to restoring the spirit of grassroots sports.

The festival was formally inaugurated by senior citizen and former Director of Tourism, S.M. Sahni, while the event also saw active participation from the Rotary Club of Jammu. Adding to the experience, organic food stalls were set up to promote healthy eating habits.

The venue came alive with traditional games like Gilli-Danda, Pithu, Stapu, Kancha, Langdi, and rope-jumping. In a heartwarming sight, grandparents

guided children on the field, passing down skills and stories, and naturally bridging the generation gap.

Beyond sports, the festival celebrated local culture through folk songs, street plays, and traditional art forms. A special highlight was the unveiling of the official DYSS mascot 'Dabbu', which will represent the department in future outreach programmes.

The initiative also aligns with the broader goal of building a drug-free society under the Nasha Mukta J&K campaign, encouraging youth to engage in healthy, community-based activities.

Several senior officials, including Joint Director (Jammu) Vinakshi Koul, Deputy Director (Activities) Megha Baogia, and Accounts Officer Sunil Kotwal, were also present on the occasion.

Iran will participate in World Cup, confirms football chief Infantino, despite their absence from FIFA Congress

IANS

MUMBAI: FIFA president Gianni Infantino has confirmed that Iran will be participating in the upcoming 2026 World Cup, which the United States is co-hosting with its neighbours Mexico and Canada, despite the recent armed conflict with Israel and the USA.

Infantino confirmed that Iran will send its team to the World Cup during his inaugural address at the 76th FIFA Congress in Vancouver, Canada. FIFA put out on social media a video showing portions of the FIFA President's address to the Congress in which he made the above comments.

In his opening remarks, FIFA President Infantino highlighted football's unique power to build bridges in a divided world as all 48 Participating Member Associations get ready to shine at this year's FIFA World Cup and convey a powerful message



of unity.

"I should say, confirming straight away for those who maybe want to say something else or want to write something else, that of course Iran will be participating in the FIFA World Cup 2026. And of course, Iran will play in the United States of America. And the reason for that is very simple, dear friends, because we have to unite," said Infantino on Thursday.

On the occasion, Infantino highlighted football's

ability to promote peace and unity, claiming that football unites the world.

"We have to bring people together. It is my responsibility, it is our responsibility. Football unites the world, FIFA unites the world, you unite the world, we unite the world. And we always have to remember to be positive.

"We have to be smiling, we have to be happy. There are enough problems around the world; there are enough people who try to

divide all over the world. If nobody tries to unite, what will happen to our world? We have to do it, and we have this opportunity, we have it at the FIFA Congress, we have it with the FIFA Series, we have it, of course, with the FIFA World Cup, we have it with the power and the magic of all of you united because together we are unbeatable," said the FIFA president.

Iran had earlier announced that it would not send its men's team to

the United States to participate in the 2026 FIFA World Cup in June-July 2026 as a protest after it was attacked by Israel, backed and supported by the United States.

The uncertainty over Iran's participation in the World Cup continued as Iran did not send its delegation to Canada for the FIFA Congress.

According to the BBC, Iranian football federation officials, including its president Mehdi Taj, had been due to attend the 76th FIFA Congress in Vancouver, but it was the only one from 211 member associations not present at the venue.

The Iranian news agency Tasnim had earlier reported that its delegation turned back at the border control, citing their treatment by Canadian immigration authorities. The BBC report said that Canada's foreign affairs minister, Anita Anand, said her understanding is that there was a "revocation" of the permission to enter the country.

IPL 2026: 'Restricting them under 160 was tremendous,' says Gill after GT win

IANS

AHMEDABAD: Gujarat Titans (GT) captain Shubman Gill expressed satisfaction over his team's all-round effort, lauding both the bowling unit and improved fielding display in their four-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in Match 42 of the Indian Premier League 2026 at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Thursday.

After being put in to bat, RCB were restricted to 155 in 19.2 overs, a total Gill believed was below par on the surface.

"Feels very satisfy-



ing. On a wicket like this, restricting them to under 160 was a tremendous job

by the bowlers," Gill said after the match. Gujarat Titans' bowling

attack was led by Arshad Khan (3-22), with Rashid Khan and Jason Holder picking up two wickets each, ensuring RCB never built sustained momentum despite contributions from Devdutt Padikkal (40) and Virat Kohli (28).

Gill also highlighted the team's improvement in the field, an area he admitted had been inconsistent in the ongoing season. "Our fielding was one of the things in phases; we have not fielded well. Energy in the field was very nice, and how we came back together after the second over was pleasing," he noted. Chasing 156, Gill led

from the front with a blistering 43 off just 18 balls, setting the tone early in the innings with an aggressive Power-play. "I was just feeling I was in the zone. On the first ball, I got a bit lucky, but on the second ball, I got into my zone. Felt it was my day and wanted to take the bowlers on," he said.

Despite a few wickets falling in the middle overs, the Gujarat Titans maintained control of the chase, eventually reaching 158/6 in 15.5 overs. Jos Buttler (39) provided crucial support, while Rahul Tewatia remained unbeaten on 27 to see the team home.

La Liga: Barcelona one step away from glory, Madrid under pressure

IANS

MADRID: The La Liga title race could be almost decided this weekend. Fans could see FC Barcelona crowned champions, while the battle for Champions League spots and the fight to avoid relegation also reached crucial stages.

FC Barcelona will win the title if they beat Osasuna on Saturday and Real Madrid loses to Espanyol on Sunday.

Barcelona will play without young star Lamine Yamal, but players like Raphinha could return. Osasuna, currently ninth and fighting for a European spot, will miss Victor Munoz due to injury, according to Xinhua.

Espanyol face Real

Madrid after a poor run of form, with no wins in 2026 so far. Madrid will also miss key players like Eder Militao, Arda Guler, and Kylian Mbappe due to injuries. With the title almost out of reach, some players may focus on staying fit for upcoming tournaments.

If the title is not decided this weekend, it could be settled in the big clash between Barcelona and Real Madrid on May 10.

In another important match, Villarreal CF plays Levante. Villarreal need just one point to confirm Champions League qualification, while Levante are fighting to move out of the relegation zone.

Villarreal could also secure a top-four finish if Real Betis fail to beat bottom-placed Oviedo. The round starts on Friday with Girona facing Mallorca in a key relega-

tion battle. A loss for Mallorca could push them into the bottom three.

Valencia can almost ensure safety with a win against Atletico Madrid, whose coach, Diego Simeone, may rest players ahead of their Champions League match against Arsenal.

Alaves take on Athletic Club in a Basque derby, with both teams needing points to stay safe.

Elche, boosted by their first away win of the season, will face Celta Vigo, while Getafe meets Rayo Vallecano, who are also preparing for a European semifinal.

The round ends on Monday with Sevilla hosting Real Sociedad. Sevilla are currently in the relegation zone, while Sociedad have already secured a Europa League spot and have less pressure going into the match.

ISL 2025-26: Jamshedpur FC, FC Goa eye first place in high-stakes showdown

IANS

JAMSHEDPUR: Jamshedpur FC will host FC Goa in a high-stakes Indian Super League (ISL) 2025-26 encounter at the JRD Tata Sports Complex in Jamshedpur on Friday.

With the title race beginning to take shape, both sides arrive with momentum and a clear opportunity to move to the top of the table. Jamshedpur FC sit fifth with 18 points from 10 matches, but a win would take them to first place, ahead of current leaders Mohun Bagan Super Giant (20 points). FC Goa, second with 19 points, can also climb to the summit

with victory, setting up a finely poised contest.

Historically, FC Goa hold a slight edge in this fixture. In 16 previous meetings, they have registered eight wins compared to Jamshedpur's six, with two matches ending in draws. The most recent encounter, however, went Jamshedpur's way, as they secured a 3-1 victory in February 2025.

Both teams come into the match on the back of strong performances. Jamshedpur FC were clinical in their 4-1 win against Chennaiyin FC, with Mohammed Sanan scoring twice, alongside goals from Raphaël Messi Bouli and Nikola Stojanović.

FC Goa, meanwhile, secured a controlled 2-0 victory against NorthEast United FC, with Dejan Dražić and Mohammad Yasir on the scoresheet.

The contest sets up an intriguing tactical battle. Jamshedpur's fluid attacking unit will look to break down a well-organised FC Goa defence that has conceded just six goals this season, the joint-best record in the league. The partnership between Messi Bouli and Sanan has been central to Jamshedpur's attacking threat, while Madih Talal's creativity and Stojanović's influence in midfield provide balance and progression.

Movies Schedule

Friday, 1 May



Raja Shivaji (U/A16+)
Hindi - 06:15 PM



The Devil Wears Prada 2 (A)
English with English Subtitles
02:30 PM, 07:40 PM



Michael (U/A 13+)
English with English Subtitles
05:00 PM



Ek Din (U/A13+)
Hindi - 04:10 PM, 06:45 PM



Bhooth Bangla (U/A16+)
Hindi - 03:00 PM

INOX SRINAGAR

Call: 95416 13868 | For assistance with tickets