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# “We Will Build Fully Drug-Free Zones Through Community Action”: LG Sinha

Launches two major anti-drug initiatives in Baramulla

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday announced two major community-driven initiatives to combat drug abuse, asserting that the administration aims to transform vulnerable areas into completely drug-free zones through public participation and sustained awareness efforts.

The announcement was made during the Drug-Free Jammu and Kashmir campaign march in Baramulla, where the Lieutenant Governor joined citizens and interacted with participants as part of the ongoing anti-drug movement across the Union Territory.

Addressing the gathering, Sinha unveiled the “Community Immunization Program against Drugs” and the “Family Fortress Initiative,” describing them as the next phase of the administration’s intensified campaign against



narcotics over the coming 69 days. “Just as communities are protected against diseases through vaccination, we will work with religious leaders and social organisations to create a strong community-based shield against drugs in high-risk areas of every

Turn on Page 2

## LG Visits Vibrant Village Uran Bowa in Baramulla

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today visited Vibrant Village, Uran Bowa in Baramulla, reviewed ongoing schemes and addressed a public gathering. The Lieutenant Governor said, under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, border villages’ distance from Delhi has reduced. They are connected to the mainstream of development and it is commitment of the Government of India to ensure that border villages become symbol of inclusive

Turn on Page 2

## “Responsible Nations Must Reflect On Supporting Terror Infrastructure”: India To China

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12:** India on Tuesday delivered a strong message to China over reports of its support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, stating that nations aspiring to be seen as responsible global powers must reflect on whether backing attempts to shield terrorist infrastructure damages their international credibility and standing.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal made the remarks while responding to questions regarding Chinese official media reports claiming that Beijing

had provided technical assistance to Pakistan during the four-day military conflict with India in May 2025.

“We have seen these reports that corroborate what was known earlier. Operation Sindoor was a precise, targeted and calibrated response to the terrorist attacks in Pahalgam, aimed at destroying state-sponsored terrorist infrastructure operating out of Pakistan and at its behest,” Jaiswal said during a press briefing in New Delhi.

“It is for nations who consider themselves responsible to reflect whether supporting

Turn on Page 2

## “Strict Action Will Continue Against Drug Traffickers”: Srinagar Police

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** Intensifying its campaign against narcotics trafficking, Srinagar Police on Monday attached a residential property worth nearly Rs.1.2 crore belonging to an alleged drug peddler in the Gasoo Hazratbal area of the city.

Turn on Page 2

## Army Foils Infiltration Bid Along LoC, Intruder Killed In Poonch

M S NAZKI  
HT- DEFENCE DESK

**POONCH, MAY 12:** The Indian Army on Tuesday thwarted an infiltration attempt along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir’s Poonch district, killing one intruder during a gunfight in the Krishna Ghati sector, officials said.

According to the Army, the infiltration attempt was detected in the forward area of Krishna Ghati when troops noticed suspicious movement nearly 300 metres inside Indian territory at around 4 pm.

In a statement, the White Knight Corps said troops acting on “persistent surveillance” swiftly engaged the infiltrators after challenging them, leading to an exchange of fire.

“Suspicious movement was detected approximately 300 metres inside own territory in the general area of Krishna Ghati Sector, Poonch, along the LoC at around 4 pm today,” the Army said, adding that troops responded immediately and successfully foiled the infiltration bid.

The Army confirmed that one intruder was neutralised during the

Turn on Page 2

## “Zero Tolerance Against Anti-Social Elements Will Continue”: SSP Jammu

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAMMU, MAY 12:** Senior Superintendent of Police Jammu,

Joginder Singh on Tuesday reiterated the police department’s “zero tolerance” policy against anti-social elements while chairing a

high-level review meeting to assess the prevailing security situation and strengthen intelligence mechanisms across the district.

The meeting focused on evaluating the district’s security preparedness, improving intelligence coordination and reviewing ongoing

efforts to tackle drug trafficking and other unlawful activities. Addressing officers and

## MeT forecasts rain, hailstorm, gusty winds across J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** The Meteorological Department on Tuesday forecast more spells of rain and thundershowers across most parts of Jammu and Kashmir, while warning of hailstorms, lightning and gusty winds at isolated places during the next 24 hours.

According to the Meteorological Centre Srinagar, generally cloudy weather with spells of rain and thundershowers was witnessed across several areas of Kashmir and Jammu

Turn on Page 2

## “212 Mineral Blocks Auctioned, 36 Operationalised In One Year”: Piyush Goyal

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** The Union Government on Tuesday launched the second tranche of e-auction of 12 limestone blocks in Jammu and Kashmir, with Union Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Piyush Goyal, asserting that the Centre is committed to



unlocking the Union Territory’s mineral potential and accelerating industrial growth through transparent and sustainable mining practices.

Addressing the inaugural session of the auction launch in Srinagar, Goyal said India has witnessed a major transformation in the

Turn on Page 2

## CS reviews implementation of PM-JAY SEHAT in J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired the Governing Council Meeting of the State Health Agency (SHA), during which a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) and AB PM-JAY

SEHAT scheme across Jammu and Kashmir was undertaken.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Commissioner Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department; Commissioner Secretary, Planning; Secretary, Information Technology; Director, SKIMS; Principal, Government Medical College, Sri-

nagar/Jammu besides other concerned officers.

During the meeting, Chief Executive Officer, State Health Agency, Ananth Dwivedi, delivered a detailed presentation highlighting the achievements registered under the scheme, its financial performance during the current policy

Turn on Page 2

## India has 2-month fuel stock: Puri

Says OMC losses may hit Rs 1 lakh Cr

HT NEWS NETWORK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12:** With two months of fuel stockpiles, India faces no supply concerns despite disruptions to global energy flows, Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Tuesday said, while warning that state-run fuel retailers face losses of as much as Rs 1 lakh crore in a single quarter if elevated crude prices persist and retail fuel prices remain unchanged.

He said that at some stage an assessment needs to be made on how long retailers can sustain losses from selling petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG below cost, but refused to speculate if rates would be raised anytime soon.

“We have no supply-side problems,” the minister said at CII’s Annual Business Summit here, adding that India began the crisis with “more than enough” crude oil and LPG inventories and had since ramped up domestic LPG production to 54,000 tonnes per day from about 36,000 tonnes previously.

Turn on Page 2



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**CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....**

**“We Will Build.....**

district,” the Lieutenant Governor said. He appealed to schools, mosques, temples, gurdwaras and non-governmental organisations to dedicate one hour every week for awareness programmes aimed at preventing addiction and identifying vulnerable areas before they turn into major hotspots.

According to the Lieutenant Governor, the initiative would function as an early warning mechanism while helping authorities and communities convert affected localities into fully drug-free zones. The second initiative, the “Family Fortress Initiative,” focuses on strengthening family and community engagement in preventing substance abuse among youth.

Sinha said every school, college and place of worship across Jammu and Kashmir should organise weekly family discussions on drug abuse during the next 69 days to encourage open dialogue and identify gaps in local anti-drug efforts.

Highlighting the scale of the campaign, the Lieutenant Governor said more than 235,000 awareness and outreach programmes had been organised across Jammu and Kashmir during the last 31 days.

He said over 44,000 patients had received treatment through outpatient services, while nearly 700 drug smugglers and peddlers had been arrested during the crackdown against narcotics networks.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that authorities had intensified action against the financial networks of drug traffickers by seizing properties worth crores allegedly created using proceeds from drug trafficking.

He added that nearly 300 driving licences and more than 400 vehicle registrations linked to drug smugglers had been recommended for cancellation across the Union Territory.

Sinha also said enforcement agencies had inspected over 3,300 drug stores, suspending around 150 licences for violating regulations.

Nearly 3,000 surveillance cameras have been installed in medical stores across Jammu and Kashmir to strengthen monitoring, while more than two dozen smugglers have been detained under the PIT-NDPS Act, he added.

The Lieutenant Governor said the campaign had evolved into a mass public movement with unprecedented participation from citizens across regions.

He further revealed that close to 3,000 calls had been received through Tele-MANAS counselling and support services over the past month.

Emphasising a humane approach towards addiction, Sinha said drug dependence must be addressed scientifically and without social stigma.

“We do not shame patients suffering from serious illnesses. In the same way, individuals battling addiction must be treated with dignity, compassion and rehabilitation so they can return to the mainstream of society,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor urged government agencies, civil society groups and citizens to work collectively to create drug-free villages and towns across Jammu and Kashmir.

**LG Visits.....**

development. “The people of our border villages, especially farmers, youth and women shoulder an extraordinary responsibility in serving the nation.

Under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, border villages’ distance from Delhi has reduced. They are connected to the mainstream of development and it is commitment of the GOI to ensure that border villages become symbol of inclusive development,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

It is pertinent to mention that under the Vibrant Villages Programme, the Government of India has rolled out a structured initiative for inclusive development in all border villages selected under the programme. At its core are four key areas that will lay the foundation for a new era in border regions. The first is ensuring all-weather road connectivity, household electrification, telecom connectivity and television connectivity.

“I truly believe that roads unlock new possibilities. All 18 villages covered under the Vibrant Villages Programme are now linked by all-weather roads. The process to connect all 83 border villages of Baramulla has been expedited and very soon every border village of Jammu Kashmir will be integrated into the economic mainstream and linked to other key cities of the country. Before 2019, telecom and digital coverage in those 18 strategically vital Villages was under 40%. Under the Hon’ble Prime Minister’s leadership, we have ensured 100% 4G and 5G connectivity in these critical spots,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor assured the residents of border villages that the digital revolution won’t stop at city limits and the administration is committed to strengthening digital infrastructure and delivering reliable mobile and internet services to every frontier hamlet. He also said that youth and women are being empowered and entrepreneurship is being promoted in border areas for a prosperous society.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated that the Administration is working on three key parameters—improving literacy rate, ensuring economic growth and providing Livelihood generation opportunities for the youth of villages like Urn Bowa.

“Youth and women in border areas now have self-employment opportunities, increased education infrastructure provides vocational training for the next generation, and border tourism, new revolution in agriculture and allied sectors have ignited prosperity across all 18 vital villages,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor inaugurated and laid foundation stone for various development projects

worth Rs 94 crores under different sectors and key infrastructure projects in 83 Vibrant Villages under Vibrant Villages Programme -II.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor handed over appointment orders to SPOs, computer tabs to students and sanction letters to various youth of the village and beneficiaries under HADP, Mission Yuva and other schemes. He also unveiled the jersey and trophy for the upcoming SPANDAN League 2026, North Kashmir Football Championship, to be organised by BSF.

Dr Sajjad Shafi, Member Legislative Assembly from Uri; Shri Nalin Prabhat DGP; Shri S.J.M.Gillani, Special DG Coordination PHQ; Shri Sarhad Hafeez, Commissioner Secretary Social Welfare, Shri V K Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Shri Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Shri Syeed Fakhrudin Hamid, Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla; senior officials of BSF, Police and civil administration, prominent citizens and people from different walks of life in large numbers were present.

**“Responsible.....**

attempts to protect terrorist infrastructure affects their reputation and standing,” he added.

The remarks followed reports by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV confirming that China had extended on-site technical support to Pakistan during the conflict. According to the report, Zhang Heng, an engineer associated with the Aviation Industry Corporation of China’s Chengdu Aircraft Design and Research Institute, provided technical assistance to Pakistan during the hostilities.

The development was also reported by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post, which cited the CCTV interview.

Pakistan’s air force currently operates Chinese-manufactured J-10CE fighter aircraft produced by a subsidiary of the Aviation Industry Corporation of China.

Operation Sindoor was launched by India following the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack, with Indian authorities describing it as a targeted operation against terror infrastructure allegedly operating from Pakistani territory.

**“Strict Action.....**

Officials said the attached assets include a double-storeyed residential house and adjoining land owned by Maqsood Hussain Khan, son of Abdul Majeed Khan, originally a resident of Bandy Lane Hazratbal and presently residing at Gasoo Hazratbal.

The action was carried out by Police Station Nigeen under Section 68(F)(1) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, in connection with two separate cases registered under the NDPS Act at Police Stations Nigeen and Ganderbal.

According to investigators, the property was found to have been acquired through proceeds generated from alleged drug trafficking activities during the course of investigation.

Police said the attachment order bars the owner from selling, leasing, transferring, altering, or creating any third-party interest in the property.

Reaffirming its resolve to combat the drug menace, Srinagar Police stated that stringent measures would continue against individuals involved in narcotics smuggling and distribution. The police also urged the public to assist law enforcement agencies by sharing information related to drug trafficking activities to help create a drug-free society.

**Army Foils.....**

operation and said there was no breach of the LoC. Security forces have continued domination of the area while maintaining heightened operational preparedness across the sector.

Officials said the infiltrator is suspected to be associated with the Lashkar-e-Taiba terror outfit and was attempting to cross into the Indian side near Bicho Post in the Mankote area of Poonch district.

The incident comes amid continued high alert along the LoC, with security agencies intensifying surveillance to prevent infiltration attempts from across the border.

**“Zero Tolerance.....**

field personnel, the SSP stressed the importance of Human Intelligence (HUMINT), saying that effective policing depends heavily on a strong ground-level presence and a dependable network of local sources. He said that while technology has become an important policing tool, real-time intelligence from the field remains vital in identifying and preventing emerging security threats.

Singh directed officers to further strengthen grassroots connectivity and ensure timely sharing of intelligence inputs to prevent anti-social and anti-national activities. He urged police personnel to continue working with commitment to maintain a safe, secure and drug-free environment in the district.

A major portion of the review meeting was dedicated to the ongoing campaign against drug trafficking in Jammu district. The SSP appreciated the role of the District Special Branch in identifying narcotics networks and assisting police in recent breakthroughs against drug syndicates.

Officials said proactive intelligence inputs have played a significant role in curbing the drug menace and maintaining communal harmony and peace in the district.

**MeT forecasts.....**

divisions. The MeT department informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that there is a possibility of hailstorms, thunder and gusty winds with speeds of 50-60 kilometres per hour at a few

places in both divisions.

Authorities have advised people to suspend boating and shikara rides during the afternoon and late afternoon hours in view of the possibility of strong winds and thunderstorms.

Farmers have been advised to suspend farm operations till May 13 due to the prevailing weather conditions.

The department said weather conditions are likely to remain partly to generally cloudy with brief showers from May 13 to May 17, while scattered areas may receive light rain or thundershowers on May 18. Similar partly cloudy conditions are expected to continue till May 21.

Meanwhile, several parts of Kashmir and Jammu divisions recorded below-normal temperatures along with rainfall during the past 24 hours.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 24.4 degrees Celsius, slightly above normal, while the minimum settled at 12.5 degrees Celsius. The city received 1.9 mm of rainfall during the last 24 hours, officials said.

Pahalgam, one of the coldest tourist resorts in Kashmir, recorded a minimum temperature of 8.4 degrees Celsius, while Gulmarg recorded 4.8 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 33 degrees Celsius, which was over four degrees below normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 21.9 degrees Celsius.

Batote received the highest rainfall in the Jammu division at 10.8 mm, while Bhandarwah recorded 13.8 mm of rainfall during the past 24 hours, according to the MeT data.

The weather office urged people, particularly those living in vulnerable areas, to remain cautious during thunderstorms and avoid unnecessary movement during periods of intense weather activity—(KNO)

**“212 Mineral.....**

mining sector, with 212 mineral blocks auctioned and 36 operationalised during 2025–26 alone, marking a significant increase over previous years.

“Today, we have started the auction process of the second tranche of 12 limestone blocks in Jammu and Kashmir. Many of these blocks are large and resource-rich, and we expect strong participation and successful outcomes,” he said.

The Secretary said the auction process has been designed to ensure transparency, fair participation and efficient utilisation of limestone resources across key districts of the Union Territory. He added that the Ministry of Mines is working closely with the Jammu and Kashmir administration to accelerate mineral-led economic development.

Officials said the limestone blocks opened for bidding are located across Anantnag, Rajouri and Poonch districts and are expected to attract strong interest from the cement and infrastructure sectors.

Highlighting national achievements in mining reforms, Goyal said the number of operational mines has also risen sharply. “From 2015 to 2024, only 58 mineral blocks became operational in ten years. In 2025–26 alone, 36 blocks were operationalised,” he said.

He further stated that greenfield mining projects have increased substantially, with 28 of the 36 operationalised mines this year falling under the greenfield category.

The Secretary said India recorded nearly eight percent growth in limestone and iron ore production, while the overall mining sector registered around 5.5 percent growth despite global economic uncertainties.

Goyal also underlined the Centre’s focus on critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, graphite and vanadium, describing them as essential for the country’s green energy transition and strategic industries. He said 46 critical mineral block auctions have been completed successfully over the last two years, while 19 additional blocks are currently under auction.

Emphasising environmental safeguards, he said sustainable mining remains a top priority and warned that environmental clearance norms must be followed strictly.

“There is no question of environmental degradation. Environmental clearance conditions must be followed in letter and spirit,” he said.

He added that the Indian Bureau of Mines has introduced a mandatory star-rating mechanism for mines to encourage sustainable operations, with non-compliant mines facing closure if they fail to secure the minimum required rating within three years.

Addressing concerns over illegal mining, Goyal stressed the importance of technology-driven monitoring systems, including drone surveys, RFID-based gate passes and real-time mineral analysis systems, to strengthen transparency and prevent unlawful extraction.

Officials said the auction is being conducted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015.

During the technical session, presentations were delivered by Mineral Exploration and Consultancy Limited, SBICAP Securities and MSTC Limited on geological potential, auction procedures and the e-bidding framework.

Authorities said the sale of tender documents will begin on May 18, while the pre-bid conference is scheduled for June 5. The last date for purchase of documents is July 15, and bid submissions will close on July 21, 2026.

**CS reviews.....**

period and the proposed modalities for ensuring its continued and sustainable implementation across the Union Territory in the months to come.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary observed that Jammu and Kashmir has emerged as one of the leading regions in extending universal healthcare coverage under the PM-JAY SEHAT scheme, significantly improving access to quality and cashless healthcare services for the people.

He remarked that the scheme has enabled lakhs of beneficiaries, particularly from economically weaker and vulnerable sections of society, to avail specialized treatment free of cost in both public and empanelled private healthcare institutions, thereby providing substantial economic relief along with quality medical care.

Emphasizing the importance of the scheme in protecting households against catastrophic healthcare expenditure, the Chief Secretary stressed the need for maintaining transparency, ensuring timely settlement of claims and strengthening monitoring mechanisms.

He called for sustained efforts to further reinforce public healthcare institutions, improve beneficiary outreach and ensure seamless delivery of healthcare services under the PM-JAY SEHAT framework.

The presentation revealed that during the current Policy Period-8, spanning from April 17, 2025 to April 16, 2026, more than 4.08 lakh pre-authorizations were approved under the scheme involving a financial outgo of nearly Rs 775 Cr. It was informed that over 3.86 lakh claims were submitted under the programme, reflecting the extensive utilization of healthcare services by beneficiaries across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Governing Council was also apprised that public sector hospitals continue to play a dominant role in implementation of the scheme, accounting for a major share of treatments and financial transactions. It was added that more than Rs 515 Cr worth of pre-authorizations were approved in public hospitals during the ongoing policy period, demonstrating the growing capacity and strengthening of government healthcare institutions in delivering advanced treatment under the flagship healthcare programme.

While reviewing the future roadmap, the Chief Secretary was informed about various reforms and financial restructuring measures being contemplated for the upcoming Policy Period-9 to ensure long-term sustainability of the scheme without compromising the quality of healthcare services being extended to the people.

The presentation further outlined comparative projections between Insurance Mode and Trust Mode for implementation of the scheme. It was informed that under the Trust Mode, based on present expenditure trends, the expected annual expenditure is projected to remain substantially manageable while ensuring uninterrupted healthcare coverage to all eligible beneficiaries.

The Governing Council was also informed that certain changes approved in the Health Benefit Package by the competent authority are expected to rationalize expenditure and improve operational efficiency during the next policy cycle. The proposed measures include optimization of package rates in select specialties while safeguarding critical and high-end healthcare services.

The meeting concluded with detailed deliberations on future strategies aimed at preserving the gains achieved under PM-JAY SEHAT while making the scheme financially sustainable, more efficient and increasingly responsive to the healthcare needs of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

**India has.....**

At the same time, the minister acknowledged growing fiscal stress from keeping retail fuel prices unchanged.

“My oil companies are losing Rs 1,000 crore a day,” he said, adding that cumulative under-recoveries had climbed to nearly Rs 1.98 lakh crore and that a single quarter of losses of Rs 1 lakh crore could wipe out the sector’s annual profits.

Since the war broke out in West Asia 10 weeks ago, state-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) have ensured uninterrupted supplies of petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG at rates that are way below the cost, unlike many global energy systems that imposed rationing or passed through steep price increases.

This has resulted in the three OMCs – Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) – running record-high under-recoveries (the difference between benchmark international cost and retail selling price).

Puri said the combined under-recovery on petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG is about Rs 1.98 lakh crore for the current quarter, while the actual loss is about Rs 1 lakh crore.

The losses in one quarter, he said, are enough to wipe out profits that oil companies earn in the entire year.

Without saying if widening losses could result in a price increase anytime soon, he said, “How long will the oil companies be able to take it (losses)... frankly, that’s something that worries me”.

Puri said there has been no increase in petrol and diesel prices in the last four years. “Today, we are in a situation where we don’t know how long the blockades or counter-blockades will continue. But I can tell you

categorically that today, we are in a situation where, unlike other countries in the world which have had to either face problems in terms of availability and supply or where prices have gone rampant, we have had stable prices and supplies.”

Despite a 50 per cent surge in input crude oil prices, petrol and diesel continue to be priced at a two-year-old rate of Rs 94.77 a litre and Rs 87.67 per litre, respectively.

Domestic cooking gas LPG prices were raised in March by Rs 60 per cylinder, but they are still way lower than the actual cost. The oil companies are currently losing Rs 14 per litre on petrol, Rs 42 a litre on diesel and Rs 674 a litre on cooking gas LPG.

Puri termed Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s call for moderation in energy consumption as a “visionary” long-term approach rather than signalling imminent restrictions.

“It’s not that any lockdown is going to happen tomorrow,” he said.

“But if this (disruption due to war in West Asia) continues, we have to start thinking about measures to lessen the fiscal strain.”

He urged industries and households to accelerate the shift from LPG to piped natural gas where possible, saying India was rapidly expanding gas pipeline infrastructure and LNG availability.

“We have no shortage of pipe gas,” he said. “It is cleaner, cheaper and helps us scale up the energy transition.”

The government is also reassessing strategic energy storage policies after the current crisis exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains, the minister said, adding that India would need to build larger reserves over time.

“The experience since February 2026 means you have to rethink everything,” he pointed out.

Modi had on Sunday urged for fuel conservation and lower imports as surging global energy prices pressure India’s foreign exchange reserves, while also calling for restraint in gold purchases to ease external vulnerabilities.

“The Prime Minister’s statement is very visionary. It looks to the future – that if this (war) were to continue, we also have to (see) what we can do in terms of life changes,” Puri said.

“There are certain activities which we can curtail.”

This, he said, does not mean any drastic thing like lockdown or rationing was to happen. “There is absolutely no cause for anxiety.”

The minister said India has done well in managing the situation, considering the large magnitude of dependence on Gulf supplies that it had in the pre-war era.

These had been quickly replaced with sourcing from alternate places without any disruption or dryouts.

“We have done very well, and I have no reason to believe that we will not do well in the future. But, we should (curtail) certain activities” that can help reduce consumption, he said.

Puri said India had turned the crisis “into an opportunity”, ensuring uninterrupted fuel supplies even as geopolitical tensions raised concerns over the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 20 per cent of global energy supplies transit.

India, the world’s third-largest oil consumer, is also the third-largest refiner and fourth-largest exporter of refined products, he said, pushing back against what he described as “false narratives” around shortages, import disruptions and possible lockdowns.

“There are no shortages anywhere,” he said. “Every petrol pump in the country has had petrol and diesel. LPG supply is more than enough.”

The minister said India had not raised fuel prices in the last four years despite global energy shocks and elevated crude prices, describing it as an unprecedented achievement among major energy-importing economies.

“Tell me one country where prices have remained the same, and there has been no shortage anywhere,” he said.

The remarks come as global crude prices surged amid uncertainty over shipping disruptions and escalating regional conflict.

The minister said around 60 per cent of India’s LPG imports had previously moved through the Strait of Hormuz, while 88 per cent of the country’s crude oil requirement is imported.

He said the government and state-owned oil companies had been conducting continuous “war-room” reviews of supply and refining operations, with officials monitoring the situation “hour by hour”.

India currently holds around 60 days of crude oil supplies, 60 days of LNG inventories and 45 days of LPG reserves, he said, adding that there was “absolutely no cause for anxiety”. Fuel demand has remained resilient during the crisis, with petrol consumption rising around 6 per cent, while LPG demand has moderated to about 75,000 tonnes per day from nearly 90,000 tonnes earlier, partly because of seasonal factors.

The minister said refiners had increased LPG output while supplementing supplies through kerosene and biofuels, helping India reduce dependence on imported cooking gas.

“We are no longer import-dependent on our refineries, and that is where our strength has come from,” he said. (Agencies)



# Sakeena Itoo distributes appointment orders among CPWs at Srinagar

Reiterates Govts. commitment to merit based opportunities

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today said that Omar Abdullah led Government is committed to ensuring fair opportunities based on merit and transparency to the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as merit-based promotions to employees for institutional growth and effective public service delivery.

The Minister stated this while distributing the appointment orders among Twenty-five Contingent Paid Workers (CPWs) of School Education department (SED) regularized as Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS), as well as promotion orders among fourteen Laboratory Assistants promoted as Teachers, at SCERT Auditorium Bemina here today.

Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani; Chairman JKBOSE, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh; Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani; Joint Director School Education Central Kashmir, Syed Shabir Ahmad; senior officers of school education department and other concerned officers were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister reiterated the government's commitment to ensuring fair opportunities based on merit and experience. She stated



that nearly 3,000 CPWs have been regularized over the past one half years, reflecting sustained efforts to provide employment security and career advancement.

The Minister highlighted that employees are the backbone of any institution and their dedication plays a vital role in achieving the larger goal of delivering quality education to students.

She emphasized that transparent and merit-based promotions not only recognize the hard work of employees but also motivate them to contribute more effectively towards institutional growth and public service delivery.

She said that several reformative measures are being undertaken to strengthen educational infrastructure, improve

learning outcomes and address the genuine concerns of teaching and non-teaching staff.

Congratulating the employees, the Minister urged them to continue working with sincerity, dedication and a sense of responsibility for the betterment of the education sector and the future of students. She also assured that the government will continue to take necessary ini-

tiatives aimed at employee welfare, career progression and institutional development.

Addressing the gathering, Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani expressed satisfaction over the initiative and observed that several employees had been waiting for more than 25 to 27 years for regularization.

He stated that the government has initiated a systematic and phased approach to resolve long-pending cases and added that similar orders have been issued in recent months in both Jammu and Srinagar.

He reiterated that the government is prioritizing the education and healthcare sectors to ensure improved public service delivery and to meet the legitimate expectations of employees.

In his welcome address, Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani highlighted the department's continued commitment to employee welfare and strengthening of education system. Joint Director School Education Central Kashmir, Syed Shabir Ahmad delivered vote of thanks, while as Fayaz Ahmad Fayaz conducted the proceedings of the event.

Earlier, Minister Sakeena Itoo and Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani also distributed the bicycles among the meritorious students as well as students belonging to BPL families, who had excelled in exams of various classes.

## Every child holds talent; every competition builds confidence

HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, MAY 12:** Under the ambitious initiative "NMBA@100 Days, District Level Competitions" of "Essay Writing, Painting, and Singing" were organised with great enthusiasm at BHSS Ganderbal. The event witnessed active participation of students from different educational zones of the district.

The competitions were conducted in a phased manner from "School Level to Zonal Level, and today the Zonal Level toppers" showcased their talent and creativity at the district platform. The programme reflected the energy, confidence, and immense potential of young students, who expressed powerful messages against drug abuse and in favour of a healthy and responsible society through art, writing, and music.

Meritorious students securing top positions in



different categories were awarded and appreciated for their outstanding performances. The programme aimed not only at promoting talent and healthy competition among students but also at spreading awareness regarding the importance of a drug-free society under NMBA@100 Days.

The event was organised by the office of the Chief Education Officer Ganderbal in collaboration with District Social Welfare Office Ganderbal.

The programme was graced by the presence of the Chief Guest, Dr. Sheikh Salah-Ud-Din (JKAS), Assistant Commissioner Revenue Ganderbal, who appreciated the efforts of the Education Department in channelising the creativity and energy of students towards constructive and meaningful activities. CEO Ganderbal and DSWO Ganderbal.

The dignitaries highlighted that such programmes play a vital role in building awareness, confidence, discipline, and social responsibility among the younger generation and reaffirmed the collective commitment towards the vision of a progressive and drug-free society.

## CRPF Personnel Save Civilian Suffering Cardiac Arrest on Srinagar-Jammu Highway

FAROOQ RATHER

**ANANTNAG, MAY 12:** In a swift and life-saving humanitarian intervention, personnel of the 90 Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force rescued a civilian who suffered a cardiac emergency along the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway in South Kashmir on Tuesday.

According to an official press release, the incident occurred at around 9:30 AM near the Airstrip/Yatri Niwas area on NH-44 when Bilal, a resident of Srinagar employed at the Marhama Coca-Cola Depot, developed severe chest pain while driving.

Officials said the victim, sensing symptoms of a heart attack and unable to communicate properly, managed to stop his vehicle near Mile Stone 246-246.100 before collapsing inside the vehicle. An alert Road Opening Party (ROP) of F Company, 90 Battalion CRPF, led by Inspector/GD Tajdar Khan, immediately rushed to the spot after noticing the emergency situation.

During the crucial "Golden Hour," Head Constable/GD Vinod Kumar and Head Constable/GD Navin Kumar administered emergency first aid to the patient, including Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and emergency medication such as Ecosprin and Sorbitrate.

The CRPF personnel then shifted the patient in an official vehicle to Sub-District Hospital Bijbehara for advanced medical treatment. Doctors at the hospital later confirmed that the timely response and immediate medical assistance provided by the CRPF team played a crucial role in stabilizing the patient and saving his life.

## Social Activist Muzamil Mehmood Conducts Anti-Drug Pledge at Govt. Boys Model Middle School Beerwah under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BEERWAH, MAY 12:** As part of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, Social Activist & Youth Leader Muzamil Mehmood conducted an Anti-Drug Pledge programme at Govt. Boys Model Middle School Beerwah to raise awareness among students about the growing menace of drug abuse.

During the awareness session, he highlighted the importance of education and spoke in detail about the harmful effects of drugs, their serious social and health consequences, and the urgent need for collective action to eradicate drug abuse from society. He encouraged students to stay focused on their studies, adopt positive values, and become ambassadors of a drug-free society.

The programme witnessed active participation from students and teaching staff, who collectively took a pledge to stay away from drugs and support the mission of building a healthy, aware, and responsible society under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.



## Milad Educational Institute Organises Grand Anti-Drug Campaign and Mother's Day Celebration in Srinagar

"Every Mother is the First Teacher & Foundation of A Civilised Society": B.A. Shah, PRO (PSA)

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** In a strong message against drug abuse and in support of social awareness, Milad Educational Institute on Tuesday organised a meaningful programme under the nationwide Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan at its campus on New Secretariat Neelam Road, Srinagar.

The awareness campaign was led by Principal Ms. Gul Rukaya and Administrator Parvaiz Ahmad. A large number of students, along with staff members, ac-



tively participated in the anti-drug awareness movement.

The awareness rally highlighted the growing need to protect youth from the menace of substance abuse and to build a

healthier and responsible society. Speaking on the occasion, the organisers stressed that schools have a vital responsibility in guiding students towards a disciplined, positive and drug-free

future.

Later, the institution also celebrated Mother's Day with great enthusiasm and respect. The programme was presided over by Chairperson Ms. Tasleema Hilal, who appreciated the efforts of the students and staff for organising both socially significant events in a meaningful manner.

PRO Private Schools' Association (PSA), B.A. Shah, who attended the function as Guest of Honour, spoke about the unmatched importance of mothers and their role in shaping families, society and the future of children.

He said "Mother is the first teacher, strongest support system and the foundation of moral values in every society. Respecting and honouring mothers is the responsibility of every generation."

Shah also congratulated Milad Educational Institute for successfully organising the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan rally and the Mother's Day programme, stating that such initiatives help in spreading awareness, strengthening moral values and encouraging positive social change among students and youth.

## Kulgam Police Demolish Illegal Structures of Repeat NDPS Accused in Major Anti-Drug Crackdown

FAROOQ RATHER

**KULGAM, MAY 12:** In a major action under the ongoing "War on Drugs" campaign and the "Nasha Mukht Jammu Kashmir" initiative, Kulgam Police on Tuesday demolished illegal structures allegedly raised on State land by a notorious drug peddling accused in village Drien Dawlatabad of South Kashmir's Kulgam district. The demolition drive was carried out jointly by Kulgam Police and the Revenue Department on Survey No. 197 in Drien Dawlatabad, where two illegally constructed shops belonging to Zahoore Ahmad Sheikh, son of Mohammad Jamal Sheikh, a resident of Drinen, were razed in accordance with law. Police said the accused is involved in multiple cases registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and has been identified as a habitual offender. The accused is facing trial in four NDPS-related FIRs, including FIR No. 150/2018, FIR No. 251/2020, FIR No. 87/2020 and FIR No. 101/2023. Besides narcotics-related offences, he is also allegedly involved in five other local and stone-pelting related cases.

Senior Superintendent of Police Kulgam, Anayat Ali Choudhary, while speaking on the occasion, said that Kulgam Police remains fully committed to dismantling the entire ecosystem of drug trafficking and criminal activities operating in the district. He stated that strict action against drug peddlers, repeat offenders and individuals involved in illegal encroachments over State land will continue in close coordination with the civil administration.

The SSP further said that the anti-drug campaign launched by the district police is aimed at protecting the younger generation from the growing menace of narcotics and ensuring a peaceful, secure and drug-free society.

Appealing to the public for cooperation, the SSP urged community elders, youth and civil society members to come forward with information regarding drug peddling and other unlawful activities. He assured that the identity of informants would be kept strictly confidential.

The action has been widely viewed as part of the intensified drive by Kulgam Police against narcotics networks and illegal activities across the district.

# DC Anantnag reviews preparations for Holy Adhikmas Kumbh 2026

Directs seamless, smooth facilities for convenience of devotees

HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner (DC), Anantnag Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat today chaired a comprehensive meeting at DC Office, to review and finalise the arrangements for smooth observance of upcoming Holy Adhikmas Kumbh, scheduled at Mattan from May 17 to June 16, 2026.

The meeting was attended by SE Hydraulics, ADC, CPO, ACR, DySP HQ, Tehsildar Mattan, AD FCS&CA, Exen PDD, CEO MCA, President SMTT besides officials from Tourism, MVD, Traffic Police and other concerned departments.

At the outset, President SMTT briefed the chair about the religious and cultural significance of the event which is expected to draw huge participation from different places of the country. He informed that the devotees will participate in the month long Kumbh both at Temple and the nearby river as per their faith and devotion.

Reviewing the preparations and arrangements, the DC



so the pilgrims leave with pleasant and lasting memories, he remarked.

Addressing the meeting, the DC said it is essential the devotees are duly facilitated so they have an enriching experience during their stay. He issued directions to officers of PDD and PHE to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply at the venues, stressing the ease and convenience of the devotees.

To extend necessary medical facilities to the pilgrims, the Health Department was directed to set up dedicated medical camps with adequate staff and emergency medicines, while the Fire and Emergency Services Department was asked to deploy adequate number of fire tenders in close vicinity of the venue and to maintain a high state of readiness.

Addressing the logistical needs of the month-long event, Dr. Bhat directed the Police and Traffic departments to implement a robust and streamlined security and traffic management plan to prevent congestion and

ensure the safety of commuters. He also tasked the ULB authorities to maintain proper sanitation standards near and around the Temple by installing adequate number of mobile toilets, conducting routine sanitation operations and augmenting pilgrim facilities as per the requirement.

ACR and Tourism Department were instructed to arrange the bedding including blankets for the devotees while FCS&CA Department was assigned the duty of ensuring adequate stocks of essential commodities and LPG in the area.

The chair issued directions to the departments that Nodal Officers for liaising with district administration be designated and respective plans be shared in advance, so the Kumbh is managed properly during the entire one month period.

Concluding the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner exhorted all concerned officers to work in close coordination, ensuring that the Holy Adhikmas Kumbh is conducted with the highest level of administrative efficiency and sanctity.

## KVK-Anantnag organizes awareness program; hundreds participate in anti-drug awareness rally

HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, MAY 12:** As part of the 100 Day Nasha Mukht J&K Campaign, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)-Anantnag, SKUAST-K on Monday organized an extensive awareness programme on drug abuse at its Dooru campus.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from senior officers from civil administration and police, government officials, students, civil society members, religious figures, farmers, academicians, and youth representatives who collectively pledged to contribute towards building a drug-free society.

Addressing the gathering, SDM Dooru Parvaiz Rahim, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion, emphasized the need for sustained community participation, grassroots awareness, and youth engagement to effectively combat the menace of drug addiction. He called for collective societal



action involving all stakeholders to eradicate substance abuse and safeguard the future generations.

Delivering a motivating lecture, the Senior Scientist KVK, Dr. Ishiyah Ahmad Khan advised the students and youth to follow the path of discipline and determination to save themselves from drugs and to develop into responsible citizens. He briefed about the evolution of the centre as a scientific and agricultural extension institution, adding the organization is addressing key societal concerns affecting rural communities and youth.

Speaking on the occasion, the SHO Dooru sensitized the participants regarding the legal implications of drug abuse and narcotics trafficking. He urged students, parents, and society to remain vigilant against drug peddlers so the youth don't fall victim to the addiction.

A pledge ceremony was also organized wherein all participants collectively resolved to work towards making the society, district and the country drug-free besides promoting disciplined and healthy lifestyles.

The programme concluded with a large awareness rally in which hundreds of participants marched from the campus to adjoining villages with great enthusiasm. They carried placards and raised anti-drug slogans like "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" to sensitize the general public about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

## Central Kashmir Excise Range destroys illegal poppy cultivation at multiple locations

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12:** Central Kashmir Excise Range intensified its crackdown against the illicit cultivation of narcotic crops under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan and destroyed illegal poppy cultivation at multiple locations across the Srinagar-Budgam-Ganderbal Excise Range in collaboration with Police, Revenue and Agriculture Departments.

During the enforcement drive, illegal poppy cultivation spread over different patches of land was identified and destroyed at various locations, including Khandah, Tehsil BK Pora in Budgam district.

Officials informed that FIRs were lodged under the relevant provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act at the concerned Police Stations. All legal formalities, seizure, sampling and on-spot destruction of the illicit crop, were completed as per procedure.

In this connection, Case, FIR No. 60/2026 under Section 8/18 of the NDPS Act, has been registered at Police Station Chadoora and investigation has been taken up.

The Excise Department reiterated its commitment towards curbing the illegal cultivation and trafficking of narcotic substances and ensuring strict enforcement of the law. The department said that such drives will continue across the region to eradicate narcotic crop cultivation and safeguard society from the menace of drug abuse.

The enforcement action was carried out under the supervision of the Excise Commissioner and Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive), Kashmir.

## DC Budgam reviews progress under Mission YUVA in District Calls for Strengthened Support to Aspiring Entrepreneurs

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a review meeting at the DC Office Budgam to assess the implementation and progress of Mission YUVA in the district.

During the meeting, a detailed review of various components of the Mission yuva was conducted, including enterprise development, capacity building, credit facilitation, awareness generation, training initiatives and market linkage support for aspiring entrepreneurs.

The DC emphasised the importance of Mission YUVA as a transformative initiative aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, self-

employment and sustainable livelihood opportunities among the youth. He stressed the need for coordinated efforts among all stakeholder departments, financial institutions and implementing agencies to ensure effective implementation of the programme at the grassroots level.

The DC directed officers to intensify awareness and outreach activities so that maximum eligible youth, women and self-help groups are motivated to avail the benefits under the Mission.

He further instructed concerned functionaries to ensure timely verification.

The DC called for strengthening training programmes and facilitating continuous guidance for benefi-

ciaries to help them establish sustainable enterprises. He stressed the need for improving coordination with banking institutions for smooth credit facilitation and timely disposal of cases.

The DC further instructed the concerned agencies to focus on market linkage opportunities and encourage entrepreneurs to explore digital platforms and innovative business models for wider outreach and business growth.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Budgam, Vivek Agarwal; ADC Budgam, CPO Budgam, All SDMs, ACR, ACD, AD Employment, LDM, officers of line departments, representatives of banks and officials associated with Mission YUVA implementation in the district.

## Shopian witnesses large-scale sports, awareness events under NMJKA

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, MAY 12:** In a significant push towards youth engagement & awareness and community wellness, a series of high-impact events were organized in Shopian today under the banner of Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan (NMJKA).

The initiatives spanned across sports, painting, seminars,

pledges poster distribution, and physical well-being, drawing massive participation from the local youth.

Some prominent events held today include Inter-School Sports Tournament at GHSS Kaprin which included Volley ball and Kabaddi tournament for under-14 girls.

The event saw young athletes showcasing exceptional skill and sportsmanship.



These competitions aimed to channelize the energy of the youth into constructive and healthy lifestyle choices.

A seminar at Polytechnic College Shopian was held to sensitize youth on menace of alarming drug abuse. The event was attended by Shabir Ahmad Kullay, MLA Shopian, who attended as the Chief Guest.

Addressing the gathering, MLA emphasized the importance

of community vigilance and the role of educational institutions in building a drug-free society.

Under 100 Day campaign, series of awareness, sports activities and Yoga sessions were held across various locations in the Shopian district. These activities are designed to promote mental health and physical fitness, reinforcing the message of a healthy, resilient and drug-free Jammu & Kashmir.

## District Admin Bandipora continues Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan Awareness Activities across Schools, Panchayats

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, MAY 12:** District Administration Bandipora on Tuesday continued activities under the 100-Day Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan across the district with awareness programmes, essay competitions, pledge ceremonies, IEC campaigns and Gram Sabhas organised in educational institutions and Panchayat Halqas.

Awareness and IEC pamphlet distribution programmes were conducted at HS Panar, HS Achoora, HS Ketson, Government High School Trigam, Government High School Ahamsharief, PM SHRI HSS Shadipora, HSS Nowgam, HSS Quilmuqam, HSS Chuntimulla and HSS Gadakhud to educate students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and promote a drug-free lifestyle.

Essay writing competitions on the theme "What Does Drug Addiction Mean to You" were



organised at Government High School Garoora, HSS Gadakhud and HSS PTL Gurez Bandipora, while Government High School Nadihal conducted pledge-taking and essay writing activities. PM SHRI Girls High School Sumbal organised an awareness programme and a short race to spread the message of a healthy and drug-free society.

Special Gram Sabhas and awareness activities under the Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan were also held at Panchayat Onagam-A, Panchayat C.A. Khan, Panchayat Halqa Sadunara-A in Block Hajin, Panchayat Ganastan-B, SK Bala Panchayat-B, Guzarbal Bonakoot and Braripora Bonakoot-C to raise awareness about substance abuse and promote a drug-free society.

The Excise Range North Kashmir organised an Anti-Drug Abuse Awareness Programme under the 100 Day Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan in collaboration with Baba Gani Public High School

Shadipora, Sumbal. The programme included pledge-taking, sports activities and an anti-drug rally to spread awareness against substance abuse. Teachers and excise officials sensitised students about the harmful effects of drugs and the importance of a drug-free life.

Awareness sessions on drug abuse and preventive measures were also organised by the AY-USH Department Bandipora. Medical Officer AHCW Banyari also conducted an awareness programme at Panchayat Sadunara-A and Government High School Banyari with participation of students, teachers and healthcare staff.

The programmes witnessed enthusiastic participation of students, teachers, Panchayat representatives and the public, reflecting the continued commitment towards successful implementation of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan across Bandipora district.

## Drug Control Department conducts inspection drive in far-flung areas of Kulgam

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, MAY 12:** Drug Control Department today conducted a comprehensive inspection drive across several far-flung areas of district Kulgam, including Chowgam, Khargund, Ruzloo, Nowbugh and Waripora Kund, to ensure strict enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. During the inspection drive, one medical shop namely Prince Medical Store at Ruzloo was closed on the spot for violations detected under the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. The inspection team also lifted three drug samples from different medical establishments for testing and analysis to ascertain their quality standards and regulatory compliance.

Besides, several medical establishments were inspected to verify maintenance of mandatory records, adherence to licensing conditions, installation of CCTV cameras and implementation of computerized billing systems as per prescribed norms.



Officials stated that such inspection drives shall continue on a regular basis to curb the misuse and illegal sale of scheduled and habit-forming drugs and to ensure the availability of safe and quality medicines to the public.

# DC Bandipora chairs Stakeholder Meeting on Draft GIS-Based Master Plan 2026-2046

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today chaired a stakeholder meeting to discuss the Draft GIS-Based Master Plan Bandipora 2026-2046 prepared by the Town Planning Organisation, Kashmir.

During the meeting, officials from the Town Planning Organisation presented the methodology for formulation of the GIS-based Master Plan and highlighted the objectives and importance of the Master Plan in addressing unplanned urban growth, infrastructure deficit, environmental concerns, population pressure and economic diversification in the district.

The meeting discussed various components of the draft plan including Local Planning Area (LPA)- delineation, social and demographic profile, population projections for 2046, traffic and transportation, physical infrastructure with focus on water supply, sewerage and solid waste management, and social infrastructure



including education and health sectors.

A detailed SWOT analysis covering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

of the district was also deliberated upon. The Vision 2046 framework and spatial strategy based on a polycentric and three-tier development model

were discussed in detail along with proposed land use and residential strategy for 2046. The meeting also deliberated upon strategic road net-

work development, identification of economic pillars including proposed IT/AI Park, agro-processing and medical sectors, and promotion of sustainable tourism in the district.

During the discussion, stakeholders emphasized sustainable development, balanced urban expansion and improved public infrastructure.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for inclusive and participatory planning and directed that the draft plan be kept open for public feedback and suggestions. She reiterated that inputs received from stakeholders and the public would be incorporated in the revised draft of the Master Plan.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Bandipora, Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Divisional Forest Officer, Chief Town Planner Kashmir, SE PWD (R&B) and KPDCI, ACD, ACP, Executive Engineers of various departments, officers of Municipal Committees, representatives of trade bodies and civil society members.

## DC visits fire injury victims at GMC Anantnag

HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat today visited Government Medical College (GMC), Anantnag and met the victims who sustained burn injuries during the unfortunate fire incident that occurred at a seminary located in main town during the intervening night of 11 and 12 May.

The DC was accompanied by ADC, AO GMC, Tehsildar Anantnag, MS AH GMC and other concerned officials.



During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with the injured and enquired about the status of their health and recovery besides the quality of treatment and health care services being provided to them.

He directed the medical staff to ensure the best possible healthcare facilities and proper medical attention for the patients so they recover soon.

On the occasion, Dr. Bilal expressed sympathy with the affected families and assured them of all possible support from the district administration. He prayed for the eternal peace of the soul of one victim who died in the tragic accident and speedy recovery of the injured persons.

In addition, the Deputy Commissioner inspected several sections of the hospital and interacted with the patients and their attendants. He enquired about the quality of healthcare services, the availability of essential medicines, and the punctuality of the medical staff.

The DC emphasized that providing seamless and patient-friendly healthcare is a top priority for the district administration. He took feedback from the public regarding hospital facilities and instructed the GMC authorities to maintain high standards of patient care and ensure that no patient faces any undue inconvenience.

## DC Kulgam visits accident-prone Manigam Crossing on NH-44; Reviews Road Safety Measures

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today visited the accident-prone Manigam Crossing on National Highway-44 to assess the prevailing situation and review the remedial measures required under road safety initiatives.

During the visit, the DC took a comprehensive stock of the existing infrastructure and safety arrangements at the site.

While interacting with the residents, the DC patiently listened to their concerns regarding the frequent road accidents at the location. The residents demanded the construction of a separate service road from Manigam Crossing to Nipora Crossing to streamline traffic movement



and improve commuter safety.

The Deputy Commissioner acknowledged the seriousness of the issue and directed the concerned engineering wings to conduct a detailed feasibility study and submit a comprehensive proposal for the development of a service road along the stretch.

He also stressed the need for immediate interim safety measures, including installation of proper signage, road markings, speed regulation mechanisms, and improved visibility arrangements to prevent further mishaps.

The Deputy Commissioner assured the public that all necessary steps would be taken on priority to minimise accident risks and ensure safer movement for commuters along the highway stretch.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Superintending Engineer (SE) R&B, Executive Engineer (Xen) R&B, representatives from NHAI and other concerned officials accompanied the Deputy Commissioner

## DC Budgam inspects progress of main Bridge Project on Nallah Sukhnag

Stresses timely completion for enhanced public connectivity

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan today visited Beerwah to inspect the progress of the Main Bridge being constructed over Nallah Sukhnag in Sub-division Beerwah. During the inspection, the DC took a detailed review of the ongoing works and was informed by the concerned executing agency that the project has achieved around 45 percent physical progress as on date. Officers and engineers present on the occasion briefed the DC about the current status of con-

struction, technical aspects of the project, and the timeline for completion. The DC directed concerned officials and executing agencies to ensure timely completion of the bridge so that the people of Beerwah and adjoining areas can benefit from improved connectivity and safer transportation facilities at the earliest.

During the visit, the DC stated that main bridge approved under NABARD XXX, is a vital infrastructure initiative aimed at strengthening the main connectivity corridor between Beerwah and Budgam, thereby improving transpor-

tation in the area.

The DC said, "bridge will play a crucial role in enhancing socio-economic activities in the region by facilitating better access to educational institutions, healthcare services, markets, and other essential public services". He said that the District Administration is committed towards accelerating developmental works and strengthening public infrastructure across the district. Besides, SDM Beerwah, Toufeeq Gazi, Executive Engineers, and other concerned officers accompanied the DC during the inspection visit.

# SAURABH BHAGAT REVIEWS DEVELOPMENT WORKS, SANJY-2026 PREPAREDNESS AT PAHALGAM

Conducts surprise inspection of dumping sites Chandanwari, Pahalgam Granaries

HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, MAY 12:** Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Saurabh Bhagat, today conducted an extensive tour of Anantnag to review development activities and preparedness of the department for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026.

He was accompanied by the senior officials of FCS&CA, TSOs and field staff.

During the visit, the Commissioner Secretary inspected the ongoing works related to augmentation of storage infrastructure, repair/renovation of departmental assets and other logistical arrangements being put in place for ensuring seamless supply of foodgrains and other essential commodities during SANJY-2026. He carried out a surprise inspection of the Chandanwari and Pahalgam Gra-

narries, which function as the main dumping sites for storage and dispatch of foodgrains for Yatra Langars, service providers and government establishments enroute the holy Cave.

Saurabh Bhagat also enquired about the stock position, quality control measures, fire-safety equipments and security of the premises. He emphasized strict adherence to quality norms, round-the-clock monitoring of stocks and maintaining adequate buffer stock to meet any exigency.

Expressing satisfaction over the arrangements, the Commissioner Secretary directed the officers to ensure 100 percent dumping of requisite foodgrains and petroleum products well before the commencement of Yatra. He instructed the field functionaries to work in close coordination with district administration, and other agencies to ensure



hassle-free services for the pilgrims as well as the local population.

Later, the Commissioner Secretary carried out inspection of various sale outlets in Pahalgam and also visited the office of Assistant Director FCS&CA. He directed the Assistant Director to identify land for establishing Research Institute which will function as a capacity building centre to enhance the skills and professional competence of the employees and workforce of department in the district.

"The institute will serve as a center of excellence for in-service training of employees on modern supply chain management, foodgrain quality control, e-POS operations, end-to-end computerization of PDS, grievance redressal mechanisms and best practices in public distribution," he remarked.

## DC Srinagar assesses implementation of Mission YUVA scheme in district

Directs prompt disposal of pending cases, expeditious loan disbursement to eligible entrepreneurs

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex to assess the implementation and progress of

Mission YUVA scheme in the District.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed, IAS Probationer, Al-

fred Thomas, General Manager DIC, Abid Hussain, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, SDM West, Irfan Bahadur, SDM East, Zubair Ahmad, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, Deputy Director Employment, Shubi Tabasum, Zonal Head Jammu and Kashmir Bank,

LDM (Banks), Officers of all line Departments and various branch heads of J&K Bank.

At the outset, the DC took a detailed review of applications at various stages under the scheme, including registration, verification, approval, sanction and loan disbursement.

Emphasizing the importance of the scheme, the DC stated that Mission YUVA is aimed at empowering youth and fostering a robust entrepreneurship ecosystem by providing financial assistance, mentorship and institutional support to them. He underscored the need for

close coordination among implementing agencies, financial institutions and line departments to ensure effective ground-level execution. He stressed the need for expeditious processing of applications, prompt loan sanctioning and swift disbursement by the Banks to

eligible beneficiaries.

The DC instructed the banks to expedite sanctioning and ensure timely disbursement of all approved cases so that eligible young entrepreneurs are able to access financial assistance without delay for establishing their ventures.

HT EDITORIAL

Regulate operation of private cabs, bikes in J&K

Over the past couple of days, the authorities of the transport department in Jammu & Kashmir have issued statements about the illegal operation of a famous cab and bike company in the union territory. The residents of Jammu & Kashmir have been advised not to hire cabs or bikes of the company. It has been made clear that in case anything untoward happens the government would not be responsible.

The statements have come very late since the mentioned company has been carrying out operations in the union territory for the past one year or so. The authorities should have acted as soon as they received the information about the operation of the company in the union territory. Acting after a year gives an impression that most of the people at helm especially in the transport department are not well aware about the ground situation. This does not go well with the overall governance model.

It is imperative that the various wings of the government work in close coordination and there should not be any confusion in this regard. As and when the government receives any complaint they should act on the same and there should not be any delay in acting upon the complaint. In this particular case there has been a long delay and it is more concerning since the issue pertains to the safety as well as security of the common masses.

Given the fact that the said company has been operating for the past one year one is forced to imagine what would be the response of the government in case some mishap took place. Who would have been held responsible in such a case and what about the victims if any. In this context it is important that the transport department keeps an eye about the developments taking place in the sector. The department should ensure that there is no compromise on the safety as well as security of the people.

Over the past few years there has been a mushroom growth of cabs in the Kashmir valley. The addition of this mode of transport has given an extra option to the people and they are feeling the change on the ground. In this regard too the government needs to act so that only registered cab drivers provide their services. The unregistered cab owners or drivers should be delisted and they should not be allowed to carry on with their services.

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Hejan Branwar: truly captivating place in district Budgam



SAHIL MANZOOR

Minds truly promote their function and soothe the whole body.

Mesmerizing Beauty of Haijjan Branwar Central Kashmir's Budgam district—renowned as the vegetable district and for its revered shrines—is home to some of the most serene and scenic locations in the Kashmir Valley. Among its crown jewels is Haijjan Branwar, a hidden gem surrounded by nature's splendour and rich cultural roots.

Budgam boasts iconic tourist destinations like Doodhpathri, a captivating expanse of meadows and pine forests, and spiritual sites like Charare-Sharief, the resting place of the mystic Sufi saint Sheikh Noor-ud-din Wali (RA), and the revered Shrine of Samad Mir at Nambalhar, Pakherpora. Yet, nestled quietly among these giants is Haijjan, a destination of raw, untouched beauty.

A Hidden Paradise Located approximately 45 kilometers from Srinagar, Haijjan Branwar is one of the most lush, peaceful, and enchanting locations in Budgam. The area is currently used by locals pri-

marily for grazing, but its stunning landscape—carpeted with meadows, dense with coniferous forests, and echoing with the sound of chirping birds—makes it an ideal spot for recreation and tourism.

Locals from surrounding villages and students frequently visit Haijjan for leisure activities. On weekends and holidays, it becomes a hub of cricket games and social gatherings in the lap of nature. The region is safe and secure for visitors and has immense potential for tourism development.

Nature Meets Adventure A short 20-minute walk across the Doodh Ganga River will lead you to its verdant valley, while a one-hour trek can take you to the famous Yousmarg—making Haijjan a prime trekking destination. The road from Jabbad to Haijjan, however, remains in a dilapidated condition and needs urgent upgrading to facilitate smoother and safer access for tourists and vehicles.

With its unique natural charm and accessibility, Haijjan is steadily emerging as a top trekking and picnic destination, holding the potential to generate local employment and catalyze economic growth in the region.

What Makes Haijjan Special? Haijjan is not just beautiful—it is resourceful. It serves as the main water source for the 7.5 MW Branwar Hydroelectric Power Project, a major energy initiative in the region. The area is also dotted with small mud-hut-like structures called "kothas" in the Gojri language, used by nomadic herders as temporary shelters during summer

grazing seasons. The meadows, adorned with crystal-clear streams, lush greenery, and serene surroundings, make Haijjan an eco-tourism hotspot waiting to be fully explored.

How to Reach Haijjan From Budgam: Route – Budgam > Raithan > Watred > Nego Branwar > Jabbad > Haijjan Via Chadoora: Route – Chadoora > Surasyar > Branwar > Jabbad > Haijjan

Ideal for Educational Tours Schools and educational institutions can plan eco-exploration trips to Haijjan. With proper safety guidelines, group formations of 8-10 students, and staff supervision, students can enjoy and learn from this natural setting. A guided visit to the Branwar Hydroelectric Power Project can offer practical insights into hydropower generation, making it an enriching academic tour for science and environmental studies.

Haijjan and its best Haijjan Branwar is not just a spot on the map—it's an experience waiting to be discovered. With its captivating landscapes, ecological significance, and potential for tourism and education, it deserves a prominent place on Kashmir's tourist map. With proper infrastructure and promotion, Haijjan could become one of Budgam's most visited and beloved destinations.

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Rise of Adventure Sports: Opportunity, Transformation, and Responsibility



MOHAMMAD HANIEF

Jammu and Kashmir, along with Ladakh, has long been synonymous with breathtaking landscapes, tranquil valleys, and a rich cultural heritage. For decades, tourism in the region revolved largely around sightseeing and leisure. Today, however, a quiet but significant transformation is underway. The region is steadily emerging as one of India's most promising hubs for adventure tourism, reflecting a broader shift in how travel is experienced across the country.

Adventure sports are no longer peripheral attractions; they are becoming central to the identity of tourism in the region. This evolution is shaped by a combination of improved infrastructure, better connectivity, changing traveller preferences, and a renewed emphasis on experiential tourism. Across Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh, each region is contributing in its own distinctive way to this growing narrative.

The Kashmir Valley has taken a leading role in this transformation. Known for its lush meadows, snow-covered mountains, and flowing rivers, it offers an ideal setting for a wide range of adventure activities. Gulmarg, in particular, has gained recognition as a premier destination for winter sports. Its expansive slopes and favourable conditions attract skiing and snowboarding enthusiasts, while its infrastructure continues to evolve to meet growing demand. Beyond winter, the Valley offers trekking routes through alpine landscapes, river rafting in fast-flowing streams, and opportunities for paragliding and mountain biking.

Destinations such as Pahalgam and Sonmarg are increasingly becoming centres for outdoor recreation. These areas, once primarily associated with scenic beauty, are now witnessing a steady influx of travellers seeking active engagement with nature. Camping, hiking, angling, and other outdoor pursuits are gaining popularity, supported

by local communities that are gradually adapting to the changing demands of tourism. This shift is not merely about adding new activities; it represents a deeper change in how the Valley is perceived and experienced.

Jammu, often seen through the lens of pilgrimage tourism, is also carving out a space for adventure sports. Its hilly terrains, forested landscapes, and relatively less crowded destinations offer unique opportunities for exploration. Places like Patnitop and Sanasar are emerging as important centres for activities such as paragliding, trekking, and camping. These locations provide an alternative to the more frequented destinations, appealing to travellers looking for quieter yet equally engaging experiences.

The rise of adventure tourism in Jammu is particularly significant because it complements the region's existing tourism profile. By combining spiritual journeys with outdoor activities, it broadens the appeal of the region and encourages longer stays. This diversification not only benefits tourists but also creates new avenues of income for local communities, helping to strengthen the regional economy.

Ladakh, with its stark and dramatic landscapes, represents a different dimension of adventure tourism. Known for its high-altitude terrain and rugged environment, it has become a magnet for thrill-seekers from across the world. Activities such as mountaineering, high-altitude trekking, river rafting, and long-distance motorbiking have come to define the region's tourism identity. The challenging conditions of Ladakh demand resilience and preparation, making it a destination for those seeking intense and transformative experiences.

The appeal of Ladakh lies not only in the activities it offers but also in the sense of remoteness and raw beauty that defines the region. Its growing popularity reflects a broader trend in adventure tourism, where travellers are increasingly drawn to destinations that offer authenticity and a connection with nature in its most unfiltered form.

Taken together, Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh form a comprehensive adventure tourism landscape. The diversity of terrain and climate allows for a wide spectrum of ac-

tivities, catering to different levels of experience and interest. From gentle recreational pursuits to extreme sports, the region offers something for everyone, making it a unique destination within India's tourism framework.

This growth is closely linked to wider developments across the country. India as a whole is witnessing a shift towards experience-driven travel, with adventure tourism playing an increasingly important role. From the Himalayan states to the Western Ghats and the Northeastern region, there is a growing emphasis on outdoor activities, eco-tourism, and sustainable travel. In this context, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh occupy a strategic position, offering some of the most diverse and compelling landscapes for adventure enthusiasts.

An important aspect of this transformation is the role of local communities, particularly the youth. Adventure tourism is creating new opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship, enabling people to engage directly with the tourism sector. Local guides, instructors, and small business owners are becoming key stakeholders in this evolving ecosystem. This not only enhances the visitor experience but also ensures that the benefits of tourism are more widely distributed.

However, the rapid expansion of adventure tourism also brings with it a set of challenges that must be addressed with care. The Himalayan region is ecologically fragile, and increased tourist activity can place significant strain on its natural resources. Issues such as waste management, unregulated construction, and overuse of popular sites are becoming increasingly visible. Without proper planning and regulation, the very landscapes that attract visitors could be at risk.

Safety is another critical concern. Adventure sports inherently involve risks, and ensuring the well-being of participants requires strict adherence to safety standards and the presence of trained professionals. The development of proper infrastructure, certification systems, and monitoring mechanisms is essential to maintain credibility and trust in the sector.

Climate change adds another layer of complexity. Changing weather patterns, variations in

snowfall, and environmental stress are beginning to affect the reliability of certain activities. Winter sports, in particular, are vulnerable to these changes, highlighting the need for adaptive strategies and long-term planning.

The path forward lies in adopting a balanced and sustainable approach. Growth must be guided by responsibility, with a clear focus on preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the region. Collaboration between government agencies, private stakeholders, and local communities will be crucial in building a resilient and inclusive tourism ecosystem.

Efforts must also be directed towards promoting responsible travel practices among visitors. Awareness campaigns, eco-friendly initiatives, and community participation can play an important role in ensuring that tourism development remains sustainable. Investing in skill development and training will further strengthen the sector, enabling it to meet global standards while retaining its unique character.

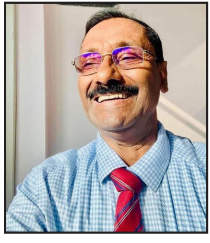
The rise of adventure sports in Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh represents more than just a shift in tourism trends. It reflects a broader transformation in how the region is evolving—towards a future that is dynamic, inclusive, and opportunity-driven. At the same time, it underscores the importance of thoughtful development that respects the delicate balance between growth and preservation.

As the region continues to embrace this new identity, it stands at a crucial juncture. The choices made today will shape the future of its tourism landscape. With careful planning, responsible practices, and a commitment to sustainability, adventure tourism can become a powerful force for economic growth and social development.

In the end, the true success of this transformation will not be measured solely by the number of visitors or the range of activities offered, but by the ability to preserve the essence of the region—its natural beauty, cultural richness, and ecological balance—while opening new pathways for progress.

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# Tagore Never Lost His Faith in Humanity



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

Rabindranath Tagore's faith in humanity remains one of the most radiant aspects of his intellectual and spiritual legacy. At a time when the world was shaken by colonial domination, global wars, rising nationalism, and the disillusionment of modern civilization, Tagore stood firm in his belief that mankind possessed an inner reservoir of goodness, creativity, and moral strength. His hope was not a fragile sentiment but a profound philosophical conviction, shaped by his understanding of the human spirit as inherently expansive, compassionate, and capable of renewal. Tagore saw human beings not as prisoners of their circumstances but as creators of meaning, capable of rising above fear and hatred through the power of imagination, love, and ethical courage. This unwavering hope in mankind is woven through his poetry, his educational experiments, his political reflections, and his global humanism, forming a vision that continues to inspire a world still struggling with division and despair.

At a time when the world was torn by colonial domination, racial hierarchies, and the rising storms of nationalism and war, Tagore dared to imagine a global civilization rooted not in fear, suspicion, or domination, but in hope, creativity, and mutual respect.

His world vision seems to resonate with an unflinching assurance "Fear out, hope in". "Where the mind is without fear" was not a slogan but a philosophical orientation, a poetic way of seeing the world by a philosopher who insisted on the possibility of harmony even in the midst of conflict. Tagore's world vision was not utopian in the naïve sense; it was grounded in the lived experiences of a poet who had witnessed both the beauty and the brutality of human history. Yet he refused to surrender to despair. Instead, he sought to cultivate a consciousness that transcended narrow identities and embraced the universal.

Tagore's global vision emerged from the soil of Bengal but reached far beyond it. Born into a family deeply engaged with reformist thought, Tagore inherited a tradition of openness to the world. The Brahmo Samaj, with its emphasis on universalism and ethical monotheism, shaped his early sensibilities.

But Tagore's universalism was not merely inherited; it was forged through his own encounters with diverse cultures, philosophies, and peoples. His travels across Asia, Europe, and America exposed him to the complexities of modernity,

the promises of science, and the perils of nationalism. These experiences deepened his conviction that humanity must seek a higher unity—one that does not erase differences but harmonizes them.

At the heart of Tagore's world vision lies his critique of fear. Fear, for Tagore, was the root of all forms of oppression—political, social, and psychological. Fear breeds narrowness, and narrowness breeds violence. In his famous poem from Gitanjali, he prayed for a world "where the mind is without fear and the head is held high," a world where knowledge is free and the clear stream of reason has not lost its way. This was not merely a poetic aspiration; it was a political and ethical demand. Tagore believed that societies governed by fear—fear of the other, fear of change, fear of freedom—inevitably descend into tyranny. Colonialism itself, he argued, was sustained by fear: the colonizer's fear of losing power and the colonized people's fear of asserting their dignity. To overcome such fear, Tagore insisted on the cultivation of inner freedom, a freedom that arises from self-knowledge, moral courage, and a deep sense of interconnectedness.

Tagore's hope was rooted in his deep sense of the unity of life. He believed that all human beings share a common spiritual essence, a divine spark that connects them to one another and to the universe. This belief was not abstract; it was a lived experience that shaped his worldview. In Gitanjali, he wrote of the "stream of life" that flows through all beings, a metaphor that captures his sense of interconnectedness. For Tagore, humanity was not a collection of isolated individuals or competing nations but a single, living organism. This spiritual unity gave him confidence that even when societies faltered, the deeper human spirit would eventually reassert itself. He trusted that the moral and creative capacities of individuals could overcome the forces of fear, ignorance, and violence that distort human relationships.

Tagore's encounters with suffering did not weaken his hope; they strengthened it. He lived through personal tragedies—the loss of his wife, children, and close relatives—and witnessed the brutalities of colonial rule, the horrors of World War I, and the rise of aggressive nationalism. Yet he refused to surrender to despair. Instead, he transformed his grief into a deeper understanding of the human condition. He believed that suffering, when met with courage and compassion, could become a source of spiritual growth. His poetry often reflects this transformation, turning sorrow into beauty and loss into insight. Tagore's hope was therefore not the denial of suffering but the affirmation of the human capacity to transcend it.

One of the most powerful expressions of Tagore's hope in mankind was his belief in education as a transformative force. He saw education not merely as the transmission of knowledge but as the cultivation



tion of the whole person—mind, heart, and spirit. At Santiniketan, he created an environment where students learned in harmony with nature, free from the rigidities of conventional schooling. He believed that children, when nurtured with love and freedom, would naturally grow into compassionate and creative individuals. His educational philosophy was grounded in trust—in the innate goodness of the child, trust in the power of curiosity, and trust in the ability of human beings to learn from one another across cultural boundaries. This trust was itself an expression of his hope in mankind. He believed that if education could awaken the moral imagination, humanity would choose harmony over conflict.

Tagore's global vision further illustrates his faith in humanity. He traveled widely across Asia, Europe, and America, engaging with thinkers, artists, and political leaders. These journeys deepened his conviction that cultures, despite their differences, share a common aspiration for truth, beauty, and freedom. He believed that cultural exchange enriches the human spirit and fosters mutual understanding. His dream of Visva-Bharati as a place "where the world meets in one nest" was a practical embodiment of this belief. Tagore envisioned a global community bound not by political alliances or economic interests but by shared values and mutual respect. His internationalism was not a rejection of cultural identity but an affirmation of the universal within the particular. He believed that every culture had something unique to offer the world and that humanity could achieve harmony through dialogue and cooperation.

Tagore's critique of nationalism also reflects his hope in mankind. He distinguished between a healthy love for one's country and the aggressive nationalism that seeks to dominate others. He warned that nationalism, when driven by fear and hatred, becomes a form of collective

egoism that stifles the moral imagination. Yet even as he criticized the excesses of nationalism, he did not lose faith in the people who were swept up in its tide. He believed that individuals, when freed from the pressures of political manipulation, would naturally choose compassion over cruelty. His hope was not in political systems but in the moral potential of ordinary human beings. He trusted that the universal human spirit would ultimately prevail over narrow identities.

Tagore's ecological sensibility also contributed to his hope in mankind. He saw nature as a teacher of harmony, balance, and interdependence. He believed that human beings, when attuned to the rhythms of nature, would learn to live in peace with one another. His writings often celebrate the beauty of the natural world and its capacity to inspire awe and humility. This reverence for nature was not merely aesthetic; it was ethical. Tagore believed that the destruction of nature was a symptom of a deeper moral crisis—a crisis of disconnection. By restoring our relationship with nature, he believed, we could also restore our relationship with one another. His ecological vision thus reinforced his faith in humanity's ability to choose a more harmonious path.

Tagore's hope in mankind was ultimately grounded in his belief in love as the highest moral force. He saw love as the foundation of all meaningful relationships—between individuals, between cultures, and between humanity and the divine. Love, for Tagore, was not sentimental; it was a form of moral courage. It required openness, vulnerability, and the willingness to see the world through another's eyes. Love dissolves boundaries, heals wounds, and reveals the unity beneath diversity. Tagore believed that love was the true basis of civilization and that without it, no society could endure. His faith in love was therefore inseparable from his faith in humanity. He believed that as long as human beings were

capable of love, they were capable of redemption.

In today's world, where fear often dominates public discourse and divisions seem to deepen by the day, Tagore's hope in mankind offers a powerful counter-narrative. His vision reminds us that despair is not destiny and that humanity possesses the inner resources to overcome its challenges. Tagore teaches us that hope is not a passive emotion but an active commitment—a commitment to creativity, compassion, dialogue, and moral courage. His life and work challenge us to look beyond the immediate crises of our time and to trust in the deeper currents of the human spirit. Tagore never lost hope in mankind because he saw humanity not only as it is but as it could be. He believed in the possibility of transformation, both individual and collective. He believed that the human spirit, when awakened, could rise above fear and create a world rooted in harmony. His hope was a gift to the world—a light that continues to shine across generations.

To embrace Tagore's hope is to believe in the power of the human spirit, to trust in the possibility of peace, and to work toward a future where the mind is without fear and the world is united in dignity and love. In today's world, Tagore's vision is more relevant than ever. We live in a time marked by polarization, conflict, environmental crisis, and the resurgence of aggressive nationalism. Fear once again threatens to dominate public life—fear of the other, fear of change, fear of the future. In such a world, Tagore's call to banish fear and embrace hope offers a powerful alternative. His insistence on dialogue, creativity, compassion, and global unity provides a framework for addressing the challenges of our time. Tagore reminds us that humanity's greatest strength lies not in its capacity for domination but in its capacity for imagination, empathy, and cooperation. Tagore's world vision is not a finished blueprint but an invitation—a call to participate in the ongoing creation of a more humane world. It challenges us to look beyond our narrow identities and to recognize our shared humanity. It urges us to cultivate inner freedom, to embrace diversity, to care for the earth, and to build bridges across cultures. It asks us to replace fear with hope, suspicion with trust, and conflict with harmony. In doing so, Tagore offers not only a critique of the present but a promise for the future.

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■ KHURSHID RESHI

## An End of an Era: Veteran Educator Manzoor Ahmad Dar Retires from Services

After rendering more than three decades of dedicated service in the Education Department, renowned English Lecturer, mentor, and eloquent orator Manzoor Ahmad Dar retired from his services, marking the end of a glorious era in the field of education.

Known for his exceptional command over language, inspiring teaching style, and disciplined personality, Manzoor Ahmad Dar earned immense respect among students, colleagues, and the academic community alike. His retirement has left an emotional moment for thousands of students whom he guided, mentored, and inspired throughout his remarkable career.

He began his professional journey in 1993 as a teacher and, through hard work, dedication, and academic excellence, steadily rose through the ranks. He was later promoted as Master and eventually appointed as Lecturer in English in 2017. Despite carrying pro-



fessional responsibilities, his passion for learning never diminished. He pur-

sued higher studies and completed his Master's in English in regular mode

from the University of Kashmir, further strengthening his academic credentials.

Throughout his career, he remained a symbol of sincerity, punctuality, and commitment. His classrooms were not merely places of learning but centres of inspiration where students learned confidence, discipline, and the importance of education. His ability to explain complex subjects with simplicity and his powerful oratory skills made him one of the most admired educators in the department.

Colleagues described him as a humble and visionary teacher who always prioritized the welfare and future of students. His contribution towards the academic and moral development of society will be remembered for years to come.

As he bids farewell to active service, students, colleagues, friends, and well-wishers extended heartfelt gratitude and best wishes for a healthy, peaceful, and prosperous retired life. Though he has retired from official duties, his legacy as a teacher and mentor will continue to live in the hearts of countless students and admirers.

# EPIDEMIC OF DIABETES



DR TASADUK HUSSAIN ITOO

**D**iabetes has emerged as one of the greatest global public health challenges of the 21st century. According to the World Health Organization, the number of people living with diabetes increased dramatically from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. In 2019, diabetes became the ninth leading cause of death worldwide, directly accounting for nearly 1.5 million deaths. The burden of the disease is rising rapidly, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where changing lifestyles, urbanization, and unhealthy dietary habits are contributing significantly to the epidemic.

India today stands among the countries most severely affected by diabetes. Reports published in The Lancet have estimated that India already houses more than 61 million diabetics, and projections suggest that the number could rise to nearly 100 million by 2030. While China remains the global capital of diabetes, India follows closely behind. Studies suggest that more than 70 percent of middle-aged Indians may develop non-insulin dependent diabetes during their lifetime. India alone contributes nearly one-sixth of the global diabetes burden.

The alarming rise in diabetes is largely linked to rapid lifestyle changes. Though the disease develops through a complex interaction of genetic susceptibility and environmental influences, increasing obesity remains one of the strongest contributors. Sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy eating habits, processed food consumption, lack of physical activity, stress, and sleep disturbances have collectively accelerated the epidemic. According to studies, the number of obese men in India increased from 0.4 million in 1975 to nearly 9.8 million in 2014, while obesity among women increased from 0.8 million to around 20 million during the same period. Severe obesity among

women has also risen substantially.

Diabetes is a disorder of the endocrine system in which the body either fails to produce adequate insulin or becomes resistant to insulin action. The pancreas is responsible for producing insulin, a hormone essential for regulating blood glucose levels. In Type 1 diabetes, the insulin-producing beta cells of the pancreas are destroyed, resulting in absolute insulin deficiency. In Type 2 diabetes, insulin is produced but the body develops resistance to its action. Over time, uncontrolled diabetes can damage nearly every organ system in the body. However, with early diagnosis, regular screening, timely intervention, and proper management, complications can largely be prevented.

The early warning signs of diabetes should never be ignored. Common symptoms include excessive thirst, increased appetite, frequent urination, unexplained weight loss, swelling of the feet, fatigue, delayed wound healing, frequent infections, nausea, and vomiting. Many individuals remain undiagnosed for years because symptoms may initially appear mild or nonspecific.

Among the organs affected by diabetes, the kidneys are particularly vulnerable. Long-standing uncontrolled diabetes may lead to diabetic nephropathy, one of the leading causes of chronic kidney disease and kidney failure. Regular monitoring of urine albumin, serum creatinine, and blood urea levels is essential. Diabetic patients should avoid indiscriminate use of painkillers and remain vigilant for symptoms such as swelling of feet, fatigue, weakness, and breathlessness.

Foot care is another crucial component of diabetes management. Diabetic neuropathy can reduce sensation in the feet, making injuries and ulcers go unnoticed. Patients should inspect their feet daily, including the spaces between the toes and the soles. Prop-

er footwear with ankle support, regular washing of socks, careful nail trimming, and early treatment of foot injuries are essential preventive measures. A significant proportion of lower limb amputations among diabetics are preventable with proper foot care and timely medical attention.

The eyes are also highly susceptible to diabetic damage. Diabetes can affect the retina and blood vessels of the eye, leading to diabetic retinopathy, one of the major causes of blindness worldwide. Symptoms may include blurred vision, visual disturbances, and gradual loss of eyesight. Diabetes also accelerates cataract formation. Therefore, regular ophthalmologic examinations are mandatory for every diabetic patient.

Research has increasingly highlighted a strong association between diabetes and mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety. Individuals with depressive disorders are at a higher risk of developing diabetes, while diabetes itself may contribute to psychological stress and reduced quality of life. Certain psychiatric medications may also increase blood sugar levels, emphasizing the importance of regular glucose monitoring in such patients.

Cardiovascular disease remains one of the deadliest complications of diabetes. Diabetics are at significantly higher risk of heart attacks, strokes, hypertension, and heart failure. Insulin resistance contributes to elevated cholesterol and triglyceride levels, promoting atherosclerosis and narrowing of blood vessels. Diabetes also increases blood clotting tendencies and may directly impair heart muscle function, leading to dilated cardiomyopathy and reduced cardiac pumping efficiency.

Given the rising prevalence of diabetes, preventive strategies are urgently needed. Early identification of pre-diabetes and timely lifestyle interventions can delay or even prevent

progression to overt diabetes. Preventive health check-ups, community screening programs, public awareness campaigns, and personalized health management approaches are essential. Healthcare services for diabetes must be strengthened at all levels to ensure universal access to diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care.

Public health measures should focus strongly on lifestyle modification. Regular physical activity, healthy dietary habits, weight management, smoking cessation, stress reduction, and improved sleep hygiene can substantially reduce the risk of diabetes. Creating awareness through education campaigns and community participation is crucial in combating this growing epidemic.

## SPECIAL TIPS TO BEAT DIABETES

- **Cut down sugar and refined carbohydrates:** Foods rich in refined carbohydrates and added sugars cause rapid spikes in blood glucose levels and increase diabetes risk over time.
- **Exercise regularly:** Physical activity improves insulin sensitivity, helps control weight, and reduces progression from pre-diabetes to diabetes.
- **Drink water as the primary beverage:** Water helps regulate blood sugar and insulin levels while reducing unnecessary calorie intake from sugary drinks.
- **Maintain a healthy weight:** Excess abdominal fat significantly increases diabetes risk. Even modest weight loss can have major health benefits.
- **Quit smoking:** Smoking is strongly associated with insulin resistance and diabetes-related complications.

related complications.

- **Reduce sedentary behaviour:** Prolonged sitting and physical inactivity contribute to obesity and metabolic dysfunction.
- **Consume a high-fiber diet:** Fiber-rich foods help regulate blood glucose and improve digestive health.
- **Limit processed foods:** Whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and legumes are healthier choices.
- **Optimize Vitamin D levels:** Adequate vitamin D may improve insulin sensitivity and metabolic health.
- **Drink coffee or tea in moderation:** Some studies suggest these beverages may improve insulin sensitivity and reduce diabetes risk.
- **Avoid large portion sizes:** Portion control helps maintain healthy blood sugar levels and prevents excessive calorie intake.

## CONCLUSION

Diabetes is not merely a disease of high blood sugar; it is a multisystem disorder affecting nearly every organ of the body. The growing burden of diabetes represents a major challenge for healthcare systems worldwide. However, through awareness, preventive strategies, healthy lifestyle choices, and early intervention, the impact of this epidemic can be significantly reduced. Prevention remains the most effective weapon in the fight against diabetes.

The author is a **CONSULTANT PHYSICIAN, MBBS FRCP FRSPH MACadMED IPPFH MRSB, Fellow, International Diabetes Federation, Academic Life Member, Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI)**

# Sleepless Nights of Modern Life



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

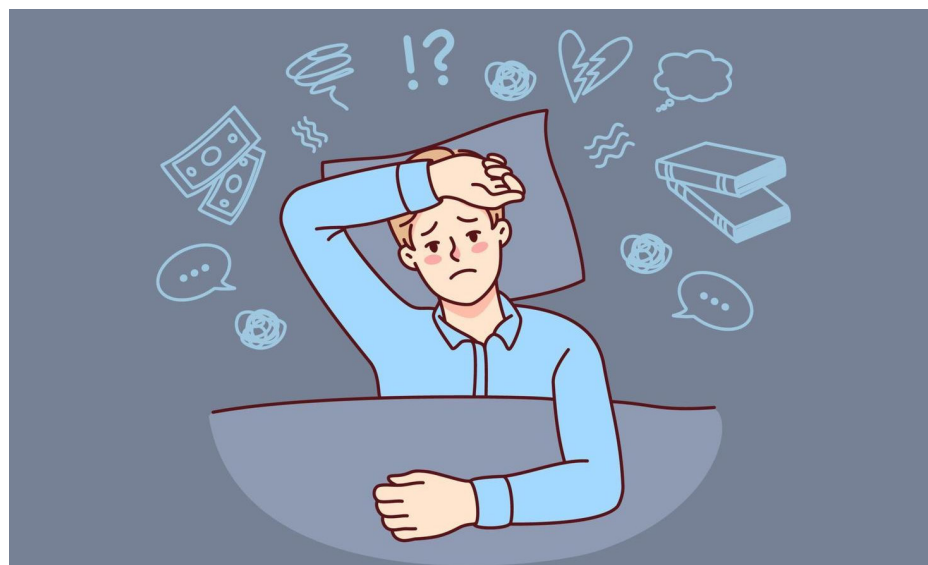
Insomnia has become one of the most common problems of modern life. It is a condition in which a person struggles to fall asleep or remain asleep for enough time to refresh the body and mind. Sleep becomes disturbed and incomplete, with frequent waking during the night. As a result, even after spending hours in bed, a person wakes up feeling tired, restless and mentally exhausted. Insomnia is not only about sleeping less; it is about poor-quality sleep that slowly affects health, mood and daily life.

One of the major causes of insomnia is stress and overthinking. When the mind remains occupied with worries, work pressure, financial problems or personal

issues, it becomes difficult for the body to relax. Thoughts continue running endlessly, preventing peaceful sleep. Modern lifestyle habits have also made the situation worse. Excessive use of mobile phones, scrolling through social media late at night and spending long hours in front of screens keep the brain active even during bedtime. Drinking tea or coffee at night and maintaining irregular sleep schedules further disturb the body's natural sleep cycle.

Health-related problems can also contribute to insomnia. Physical pain, illness and certain medicines often interrupt normal sleep patterns. In many cases, the surrounding environment also plays an important role. Noise, bright lights and uncomfortable sleeping conditions can make proper rest difficult.

The fast-moving modern lifestyle is increasing insomnia across all age groups. People today are constantly busy and mentally occupied. Social media has created a culture of endless comparison, where individuals compare their success, lifestyle and achievements with others. This pressure to earn more, achieve more



and appear successful creates stress and emotional exhaustion. Relationships also suffer because people spend less time in peace and more time in competition. All these factors together create a restless mind that struggles to sleep calmly. Insomnia is also closely connected

with depression. People suffering from depression often experience difficulty sleeping, while continuous lack of sleep can itself lead to depression. This creates a dangerous cycle where poor sleep affects mood and mental health, and low mood further worsens sleep problems.

In such situations, mindfulness can play an important role in improving sleep. Mindfulness means focusing on the present moment calmly without unnecessary overthinking. It helps in reducing stress, calming the mind and removing the fear or anxiety related to sleeplessness. Practices such as deep breathing before bed, short meditation sessions and focusing on the present moment can gradually improve sleep quality and help the body relax naturally.

Insomnia is not merely a sleep disorder; it reflects the imbalance of modern lifestyle. Today people take care of their work and ambitions but often ignore their mental peace. In the race for success, many lose the calmness that brings natural sleep. Healthy sleep returns when the mind becomes peaceful. Simple lifestyle changes such as reducing stress, limiting screen time and practicing mindfulness can help restore healthy and refreshing sleep.

The author is a **Faculty, Science Department Sri Amritsar Sahib, Punjab**

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir  
**Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri**

Subject: Application of FAYAZ AHMAD KHAM S/O AB HAMID KHAN R/O KOHLINA for the issuance of LEGAL HEIR certificate  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Regarding the subject cited above in this context a report sought from patwari halqa concerned and the Death certificate issued by the competent authority reveals that AB HAMID KHAN S/O AB REHMAN KHAN has passed away on 20/04/2015. The report of the patwari further depicts that the deceased has left behind following dependent as tabulated below

- 1... SARWAR JAN wife 74 years pensioner widow
- 2... PARVAIZ AHMAD KHAN son 52 years Labour married
- 3... HASEENA BEGUM daughter 50 years H/W married
- 4... TARIQ AHMAD KHAN son 47 years Govt employee married
- 5... SHAKEELA BEGUM daughter 30 years H/W married
- 6... FAYAZ AHMAD KHAN son 40 years Labour married

The applicant has applied for Issuance of Legal heir certificate in favour of Self

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

**Office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam**

It is hereby notified that Applicant Namely Intiyaz Ahmad Bhat S/o Habib ullah R/o yarigund District Budgam had applied for the insurance of Birth certificate of his son Intiyaz Ahmad Bhat S/o Habib ullah Bhat. The applicant intends to register the D O B of his son as per the school record 15\_11\_1984. If any body has objection in that regard. Contact within seven working days. After completion of said period, No objection will be entertained.

Dated 12/ 05/ 2026

**Office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam**

It is certified that the applicant namely Ghulam Hassan Rather S/o Abdul Samad Rather R/o Bazar mohalla tehsil Narbal District Budgam has applied for the insurance of Birth certificate of his son / Daughter namely Ghulam Hassan Rather S/o Abdul Samad Rather. The applicant intends to register the Date of Birth of his son / own / Daughter as per the school record/ vaccination card is 19\_11\_1955.

If anybody is having objection regarding the same. He / she may approach the office of undersigned within a period of seven days from its publication. After that no objection will be entertained.

Dated 12/ 05/ 2026

**Office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam**

It is notified for the general public that the applicant namely Ghulam Hassan Rather S/o Abdul Samad Rather R/o Bazar Mohalla Narbal tehsil Narbal District Budgam has applied for the insurance of Death Certificate of his Mother namely Mst Khatija D/o Mohd sultan Sofi. The applicant intends to register the death of his Mother as per record 01/07/2001.

If anybody is having objection regarding the same he /she approach the date of publication of this notice or else any such claim / objection shall not be entertained

Dated 12/ 05/ 2026

**Public Notice**

It is hereby notified that my Children's Mother's name spelling and DOB has been wrongly mentioned in school regard Aamina Iqbal DOB 08/01/2016 Annas Bin Iqbal DOB 26/05/2020 Mother's name spelling Ulfat Bano Father's name spelling Mohammad Iqbal instead of Aamina Iqbal DOB 08/01/2016 Annas Bin Iqbal DOB 25/05/2020 Mother's name Ulfat Iqbal Prantage Mohd Iqbal Chopan as per Aadhar record now I have applying for it's correction of the same if any person have any objection in this record may file the same to the office of the Hill Greengange Public School Handwara within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice After that no objection shall be entertained.

**AAMINA IQBAL DOB 08/01/2016 ANNAS BIN IQBAL DOB 25/05/2020 MOTHER'S NAME ULFAT IQBAL PRANTAGE MOHD IQBAL CHOPAN R/O HANDWARA TEHSIL HANDWARA DISTRICT KUPWARA**

**Public Notice**

I Mohammad Sultan Bhat Father of Nazir Ahmad Bhat resident of Bandipayeen District Baramulla want to inform the general public through this notice that our electricity bill is registered in my name bearing Consumer ID No.-0212040005009 and I want to register it in the name of my son, In this regard if anybody has any objection He/she may contact the AEE KPDC Sub Division Wagoora within seven days after that no objection will be entertained.

**Mohammad Sultan Bhat S/O:- Mohada Bhat R/O:- Bandipayeen Baramulla. KPDC Sub Division Wagoora.**

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**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on my Father's name GH ALI RESHI Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040001139 wants to be registered on my name MASOOD HASSAN RESHI S/O GH ALI RESHI If anybody have any objection in this regard He/ She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name....MASOOD HASSAN RESHI S/O...GH ALI RESHI BLOCK.... WATERGAM WAGOORA**

**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on my Father's name AB SALAM MALIK S/O WALI MOHD MALIK Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040006598 wants to be registered on my name MUDASIR AHMAD MALIK S/O ABDUL SALAM MALIK If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name....MUDASIR AHMAD MALIK S/O...ABDUL SALAM MALIK, BLOCK.... DOULATPORA**

**Public Notice**

This is for the information of the general public that in my service record, my father's name has been inadvertently recorded as "Ab Razaq Bhat", whereas his correct and actual name, as per my Aadhaar Card and other relevant documents, is "Abdul Razaq Bhat". I now intend to get the said error corrected in my service record. Therefore, if any person has any objection in this regard, he/she may submit the same before the concerned department within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained thereafter.

**Tauseef Ur Razaq, S/o Abdul Razaq Bhat R/o Mujgund, Parimpora Ghat District Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir - 190017**

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Yousfia Islamic English Medium School, Dangiwacha, Baramulla**

This is for the information of the general public that the following Management Committee has been proposed for running and managing the affairs of the institution as per the norms of the Directorate of School Education, Jammu & Kashmir.

S. No.	Name	Designation
1	Sadan Azad	Chairman / President
2	Umaya Hafiz	Principal / Secretary
3	Aasia Mohammad	Treasurer
4	Nazira Gani	Staff Member (Teacher)
5	Nusrat Nazir	Staff Member (Teacher)
6	Fahad Saleem Shah	Member (Social Worker)
7	Tawheed Ahmad Dhobi	Member (SC Community)
8	Mohd Rafiq Akhoun	Member (Parent)

If anybody has any objection regarding the above-mentioned Management Committee, he/she may submit the objection in writing within one week (07 days) from the date of publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned along with valid proof/ documents. After the expiry of the stipulated period, no objection shall be entertained.

**Sd/- Principal / Secretary Yousfia Islamic English Medium School Dangiwacha, Baramulla**

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

**FINAL NOTICE**

No: EED/538-42 | Dated: 12-05-2026

**Farooq Ahmad Bhat, S/o: Gh. Qadir Bhat R/o: New Theed Harwan Srinagar. Ph. No. 8491947627.**

Subject: Development of Tourist Park Verinag BWO Parking, fountain grill, fencing and landscaping. Reference: Allotment No. EED/3258-61 Dated: 30-11-2024.

The above subject work stands allotted to you vide above referred allotment no, wherein the time period for the said work was reckoned 01 Year but after lapsing considerable time period, you have failed to complete the work, However, several notices have been served upon you regarding the completion of the work vide this office letter no. EED/ 112-14 Dated: 08/04/2025, EED/786-88 Dated:28/05/2025, 1129-31 dated:25-06-2025 EED/1604-08 dated 02-08-2025 and EED/4851-54 dated 06-03-2026. Despite these repeated instructions issued by this office as well as by the concerned Assistant Executive Engineer you have failed to resume the work and did not pay any heed to these notices, adopted delaying tactics and have not completed the work within the stipulated time period which has been viewed very seriously by the intending department and is pressing hard for its immediate completion.

As such you are directed through the medium of this final notice to get your resources mobilized and restart the work within 02 days positively without any further delay as you have wasted the considerable time period for the said work If you fail, it shall be presumed that you are not serious about the completion of work and this office then left no option but to put the balance work to fresh tenders at your risk and cost and strict action shall be initiated against you under rules and as per the conditions of NIT/ allotment and your card shall be recommended for black listing.

**Sd/- (Er. Mohd Ashraf Khan) Executive Engineer R&B Division Dooru**

DIPK: 1247/26 | Dated: 12-05-2026

DEPARTMENT OF HORTICULTURE KASHMIR  
**ADVANCE CENTRE FOR HORTICULTURE DEVELOPOMENT. RAJBAGH SRINAGAR KASHMIR**

**AUCTION NOTICE**

It is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that the auction of perishable fruit crops due to early maturity namely Cherry, Apricot and Peach shall be conducted on 16-05-2026 at 10:30 A.M at the Centre of Excellence Zawoora Srinagar.

Interested bidders/participants are hereby invited to attend the auction proceedings before the auction committee on the scheduled date and time. The auction shall be conducted strictly as per the prescribed terms and conditions of the department. All concerned are advised to remain present well before the scheduled time for completion of necessary formalities.

**Sd/- (I.A. Wafai) Farm Manager ACHD Rajbagh/ COE Zawoora Srinagar**

DIPK: 1249/26 | Dated: 12-05-2026

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Admission (2nd Round)	10 June - 15 June 2026
Spot Round	18 June - 25 June 2026

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## Sexual Harassment Probe Committee, High Court of J&K, Ladakh, SPARSH organise awareness session on "Implementation of POSH Act, 2013 and UGC Regulations, 2015 in Colleges and Universities"

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MAY 12:** An awareness lecture session on "Implementation of POSH Act, 2013 and UGC Regulations, 2015 in Colleges and Universities" was today organized at GGM Science College, Jammu by the Sexual Harassment Probe Committee, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Jammu Wing, in collaboration with the Apex Body of SPARSH (Sensitization, Prevention and Redressal of Sexual Harassment), Cluster University of Jammu.

The program was organized under the visionary leadership of Justice Sindhu Sharma, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Chairperson of the Sexual Harassment Probe Committee, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Jammu Wing and patronage of Prof. K.S. Chandrasekar, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu, with the objective of creating awareness regarding the statutory framework governing prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment at workplaces and educational institutions.

The event witnessed par-

ticipation from faculty members, administrative officers, members of Internal Committees, research scholars, students and representatives from various constituent colleges of the University.

Registrar, Cluster University of Jammu, Ankur Mahajan graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

In her address, the Registrar CUJ highlighted the significance of establishing a safe, secure and gender-sensitive academic environment in educational institutions. She emphasized that implementation of the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, commonly known as the POSH Act, along with strict adherence to UGC Regulations, 2015, is imperative to ensure dignity, equality and protection of women at workplaces and educational campuses.

She further stated that educational institutions must remain proactive in spreading awareness and strengthening institutional mechanisms for prevention and redressal of complaints relating to sexual harassment.

The programme was pre-



sided over and coordinated by Dr. Vandana Khajuria, Chairperson, Apex Body of SPARSH, Cluster University of Jammu, who welcomed the dignitaries and participants. In her welcome address, she underscored the need for continuous sensitisation programmes to cultivate awareness regarding rights, duties and legal safeguards available under the POSH framework. She stated that such programmes play a vital role in promoting an atmosphere of mutual respect, inclusivity and accountability within

educational institutions.

The keynote lecture was delivered by Sonia Gupta, Special Judge, Anti Corruption, Jammu, who participated as the Resource Person. During the deliberations, the Resource Person elaborately discussed the objectives and salient features of the POSH Act, 2013, including the constitution and functioning of Internal Committees, procedural safeguards, timelines for inquiry, confidentiality requirements and responsibilities of institutions in ensuring compli-

ance with statutory mandates. The speaker also highlighted various judicial pronouncements and practical challenges faced in implementation of the law.

Special emphasis was laid upon the UGC Regulations, 2015 pertaining to prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions. The participants were sensitized regarding the obligation of universities and colleges to establish effective complaint redressal mecha-

nisms, conduct awareness campaigns and ensure gender sensitization at all levels.

During the interactive session, faculty members, students and participants actively engaged with the Resource Person and raised several queries relating to procedural aspects of complaint handling, rights of complainants, safeguards against victimization and the role of institutional authorities in ensuring fair inquiry proceedings. The queries were comprehensively addressed, making the programme highly informative and beneficial for the participants.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks, wherein gratitude was expressed to the dignitaries, participants and organising team for their valuable contribution towards the successful conduct of the awareness lecture. The organizers reiterated their commitment towards strengthening institutional awareness and ensuring strict compliance with the legal framework relating to prevention of sexual harassment at workplaces and educational institutions.

The programme was also attended by the Secretary,

High Court Legal Services Committee, Jammu, in the capacity of Ex-Officio Member Secretary/Presenting Officer. Sexual Harassment Probe Committee High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Jammu wing. During the programme, he actively participated in the proceedings and highlighted the objectives and significance of gender sensitization and prevention of sexual harassment at workplace.

He also deliberated upon the role of institutional mechanisms in ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, and emphasized the need for creating a safe, secure, and dignified working environment for women employees and students.

Role of Legal Services Authorities in providing legal aid to entitled persons including the women was also discussed and participants were informed about the remedies they can avail if provisions of POSH Act, 2013 read with UGC Regulations 2015 are not implemented by the authorities/employers/Organizations as mentioned in the Act.

### Multiple Awareness, Health, Enforcement Drives organised across Budgam under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan

#### HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, MAY 12:** As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA), a series of awareness, enforcement and public outreach activities were conducted across district Budgam today with the active participation of educational institutions, health authorities and enforcement agencies to strengthen the campaign against drug abuse and substance addiction.

At Shunglipora area of Khag, a Mega Health Camp was organised under the banner of NMBA with the objective of promoting awareness regarding the harmful effects of drug abuse and tobacco consumption. The programme focused on reaching rural populations through awareness activities and individual counselling sessions conducted by medical professionals and healthcare workers.

During the camp, the public was sensitised about the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and quitting tobacco at an early stage to prevent serious health complications.

Many OPD tickets were issued during the camp and free medicines were distributed among patients to ensure better healthcare support and encourage preventive healthcare practices.

Special emphasis was laid on counselling sessions where people were educated about the ill effects of substance abuse, tobacco addiction and the importance of mental and physical well-being. The initiative received an encouraging response from the local population.

The Health Administration Khag played a key role in the successful conduct of the camp and in spreading awareness regarding de-addiction and tobacco control.

Meanwhile, awareness activities under NMBA were organised at Government Higher Secondary School Budgam where students were educated about the harmful consequences of drug abuse and motivated to adopt a healthy and disciplined lifestyle. The programme aimed to create awareness among the youth and strengthen their role in building a drug-free society.

In another initiative, students and staff of Government Degree College Khansahib carried out a cleanliness and awareness drive by destroying wild bung growing in the vicinity of the college campus. The activity was conducted under the NMBA campaign to prevent misuse of narcotic substances and to promote a clean and safe environment.

Further, inspection drives of pharmacies were conducted at Bugam, Gowherpora (Chadoora) and SK Pora (Magam) to ensure strict adherence to prescribed norms and regulations related to the sale and distribution of medicines. The inspections were aimed at strengthening monitoring mechanisms and curbing the misuse of drugs and psychotropic substances.

The district administration reiterated its commitment towards making Budgam a drug-free district through sustained awareness programmes, enforcement measures and active public participation. People were urged to cooperate with authorities and collectively work towards building a healthier, drug-free and tobacco-free society.

## Nasha Mukht Abhiyan: Series of events held in Ganderbal to aware masses against substance abuse

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, MAY 12:** The District Administration Ganderbal, under the ongoing Nasha Mukht Abhiyan (NMBA@100), today organised a series of awareness and sensitization programmes across the district to promote the vision of a drug-free society and strengthen public participation against substance abuse.

Under this ambitious initiative, District Level Competitions of Essay Writing, Painting, and Singing were organised with great enthusiasm at BHSS Ganderbal. Zonal toppers from different educational zones of the district actively participated in the district-level event and showcased their creativity and talent.

Through art, writing, and music, students delivered powerful messages against drug abuse and advocated for a healthy and responsible society. Meritorious students securing top positions in various categories were felicitated and appreciated for their outstanding performances.

The programme was organised by the Office of the Chief

Education Officer Ganderbal in collaboration with the District Social Welfare Office Ganderbal.

As part of the campaign, an awareness programme was organised at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Ganderbal, wherein students from the Faculty of Horticulture, SKUAST-K, along with the staff members of KVK Ganderbal, actively participated. Besides the sensitization session highlighting the harmful effects of drug abuse, a rally was also carried out to spread awareness regarding the importance of building a healthy and drug-free society.

In another significant initiative under NMBA, Urine Drug Screening (UDS) of drivers from the Bus Stand and Sumo Stand of Kangan market was conducted at Sub-District Hospital Kangan in the presence of SHO Kangan.

The programme aimed at ensuring public safety, promoting responsible conduct among drivers, and creating awareness regarding the serious consequences of drug abuse.

Meanwhile, the Department of Cooperatives, District Gan-



derbal, organised an Anti-Drug Rally at Chountwaliar Lar with active participation from the students of Baba Mian Nizam-U-Din Cooperative Educational Institute, Chountwaliar Lar. The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and locals and focused on spreading awareness about the

harmful effects of drug addiction while encouraging youth to adopt a healthy and responsible lifestyle.

As part of the district-wide awareness drive, the Animal Husbandry Department Ganderbal also organised awareness programmes at different locations across the district under

the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan. The programmes were aimed at educating the general public about the ill effects of drug abuse and motivating communities to collectively work towards the creation of a drug-free society.

Also, a semi-weekly rally was organized at Kangan with enthusiastic participation from students, members of the general public, and traders.

The rally raised awareness against the growing drug menace and reaffirmed the collective commitment of the community towards building a drug-free society. Participants voiced strong support for the campaign and pledged to continue their efforts in promoting awareness, responsibility, and social harmony in the fight against substance abuse.

District Administration Ganderbal reiterated its commitment towards intensifying awareness activities under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan and called upon all sections of society, especially youth, to actively contribute towards the mission of a healthy, aware, and drug-free Ganderbal.

## DC Budgam chairs meeting on HADP, JKCIIP

Reviews PM-DAKSH, KGGs, e-KYC, Credit linkages

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, MAY 12:** Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Amir Khan chaired a meeting on Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIIP) to assess the physical and financial progress achieved under various agriculture and allied sector initiatives in the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Budgam Vivek Agarwal, PO ICDS Budgam, CPO Budgam, Chief Agriculture officer, Chief Horticulture officer, Chief Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, AD Fisheries, officers from Sericulture, Horticulture Planning & Marketing departments, NABARD and other concerned stakeholders.

During the meeting, a detailed presentation was given highlighting the status of applications, approvals, establishment of units, financial utilization, skilling initiatives under Daksh Kisan, Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs), credit linkage and project-wise achievements under HADP and

JKCIIP.

Reviewing the progress under Daksh Kisan skilling initiative, the DC was informed that over 34,000 farmers have enrolled in various courses so far in the District.

The DC also took stock of the functioning of Kisan Khidmat Ghars in the district.

While reviewing JKCIIP implementation, the DC emphasized the need for accelerating field-level execution of approved cases and ensuring that benefits reach genuine farmers within stipulated timelines.

Speaking on the occasion, DC Budgam said that HADP and JKCIIP are transformative initiatives aimed at strengthening the rural economy and improving livelihood opportunities for farmers and youth associated with the agriculture and allied sectors.

He stressed upon all departments to work in close coordination for achieving tangible outcomes on the ground.

"Focus must remain on timely establishment of approved units, saturation of beneficiary-oriented schemes and robust monitor-

ing through regular field verification," the DC said.

He further directed officers to intensify awareness campaigns at the grassroots level so that maximum eligible farmers can avail benefits under various schemes.

The DC also emphasized strengthening of Kisan Khidmat Ghars and ensuring better digital outreach, farmer registration and eKYC completion across the district. He directed officers to conduct regular inspections and maintain close coordination with field functionaries for effective implementation of schemes.

The DC designates Additional District Development Commissioner Budgam as District Nodal Officer for HADP to strengthen monitoring, verification and inter-departmental coordination at the district level.

The DC Said that the District administration is focused towards making Budgam a model district in implementation of agriculture and allied sector reforms through effective execution, transparency and farmer-centric governance.

## GDC Ramkote organises awareness lecture on POSH Act 2013, SHE Box Portal

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA, AMY 12:** The Internal Complaints Committee of Government Degree College Ramkote today organised an Awareness Lecture on Provisions of Prevention of Sexual Harassment at workplace (POSH Act 2013).

The programme was organised under the patronage of Principal, Dr. Rakesh Kumar.

The convener of ICC Prof. Pankaj Nandan addressed the students and explained the provisions of POSH Act 2013. Prof. Anu Sharma, Nodal Officer SHE Box Portal educated the participants about the procedure of lodging complaints of harassment/misbehavior on the college campus through Internal Complaints Committee.

The session included detailed discussion on SHE Box Portal, helping students understand how to report incidents of sexual harassment and seek support. She also highlighted the fact that timely reporting of such incidents help proper redressal of the grievances and create a safe, respectful and healthy environment within the institution.

The session concluded with an interactive session and students raising their doubts and queries that were addressed. Nearly 40 students and faculty participated in the event.

# Tata Sons likely to induct Tata Steel CMD Narendran to its board

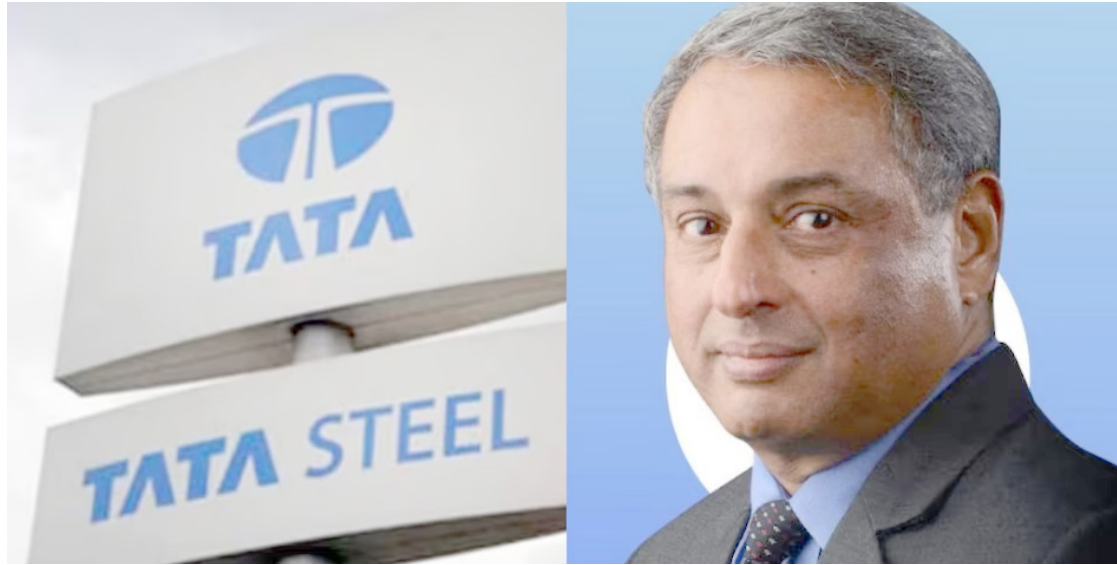
UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**MUMBAI, MAY 12:** Tata Sons, which is the principal holding company and promoter of the Tata Group of companies, is considering the induction of Tata Steel CEO & MD TV Narendran as a director to the Tata Sons board as early as next month, since Tata Sons is likely to hold its next board meeting on June 12, according to senior officials. The possibility of Narendran being inducted to the Tata Sons board comes at a time when there is lack of unanimity about key decisions like reappointing Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran, for a third term.

According to officials, appointing a senior executive to the Tata Sons board may boost the Tata group's ability to navigate tricky challenges such as losses at units like Air India and digital businesses, besides having a boardroom voice, who could deflect pressures from factional infighting.

Narendran joined Tata Steel after earning his MBA from the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta in 1988, after which he rose through the ranks and was appointed its CEO in November 2013.

His likely induction could



strengthen the representation of a top Tata Group executive to the parent's board, officials said.

Another likely candidate who could be inducted to the Tata Sons board is former Managing Director of Titan, Bhaskar Bhat, who is also a member of one of the key trusts which control the Tata empire. Bhat, and Neville Tata, son of Tata Trusts Chairman Noel Tata were appointed trustees at Sir Dorabji Trust last November.

The Tata trusts own a total of

around 66 per cent equity stakes in Tata Sons.

The June 12 board meeting could discuss the contentious matter of listing of Tata Sons as well as a proposal to re-appoint Chandrasekaran for a fresh tenure, beginning from February 2027.

Earlier, Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran's reappointment was deferred at the last board meeting, due to lack of unanimity among the directors, especially after Noel Tata expressed

his reservations at the February 24 board meeting.

Noel Tata had put certain conditions before he gave his assent to re-appoint Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran for a fresh term.

Noel Tata's demands also included an assurance that Tata Sons would remain a privately-owned firm and would not be listed. Another key Noel Tata demand was a plan from Tata Sons to turnaround loss making firms within the Tata Group. UNI

## Amazon Bazaar sees rapid growth in AP, Telangana: Sameer Lalwani

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, MAY 12:** Amazon Bazaar, the ultra-affordable shopping platform of Amazon, has witnessed significant growth in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, with orders and customer engagement increasing sharply over the past year, according to Sameer Lalwani, Head of Amazon Bazaar, Amazon India.

Addressing a press conference in Hyderabad on Tuesday, Lalwani said Amazon Bazaar was launched with the aim of combining Amazon's trusted shopping experience with affordability by offering products priced below Rs 600. He said over three crore products are currently available on the platform, with nearly two crore items priced below Rs 300.

He stated that the platform offers products across categories including fashion, beauty, home and kitchen, electronic accessories and personal care items, with free delivery and a seven-day return policy on all products.

Highlighting the growth of the platform, Lalwani said Amazon Bazaar recorded a 10-fold increase in orders nationally during 2025, while the first few months of 2026 have already seen a further four to five times increase compared to last year. In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the platform has registered nearly six-fold growth in orders and customers, he added.

He noted that Hyderabad has emerged as a major growth market, while customers from tier-2, tier-3 and tier-4 towns



across the two Telugu states are also increasingly shopping on the platform. Women's fashion, home and kitchen products, and electronic accessories are among the fastest-growing categories.

Lalwani said around 30,000 sellers are currently active on Amazon Bazaar across India, including nearly 1,200 sellers from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. He added that the platform is focused on supporting local sellers by offering zero selling fees and simplified listing processes.

He further said Amazon Bazaar is leveraging digital marketing, social media campaigns and AI-driven features to expand its reach and improve customer experience across the country. UNI

## Gem and Jewellery Council backs responsible gold consumption, calls for stronger gold monetisation scheme

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, MAY 12:** Rajesh Rokde, Chairman of the Gem and Jewellery Council (GJC), on Monday said India's economic strength must take precedence over individual preferences while supporting the Prime Minister's appeal for responsible gold consumption.

Addressing a public meeting in Hyderabad on Sunday, PM Narendra Modi urged citizens to avoid non-essential gold purchases for one year, defer unnecessary foreign travel, and adopt Covid-era efficiency measures such as work-from-home arrangements in national interest.

In a statement, Rokde said rising gold imports were exerting pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves and current account deficit, while India already possesses thousands of tonnes of idle household gold.

He said the long-term solution lies not only in reducing gold demand but also in unlocking the value of existing household gold through a transparent and regulated Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS). According to him, a revitalised and jeweller-integrated GMS could help mobilise idle household gold, reduce dependence on imports, strengthen the formal economy, improve transparency and traceability, and convert dormant gold into productive national capital.

"Nation First. Responsible Gold Ecosystem Next," he stated. Avinash Gupta, Vice Chairman of GJC, said gold has always shared a strong emotional and cultural connection with Indian households, but the country must also balance gold demand with broader economic stability.

Supporting the Prime Minister's vision, Gupta said a robust and regulated Gold Monetisation Scheme could emerge as a sustainable long-term solution for the country.

He said instead of remaining idle in households and lockers, gold could be channelled into the formal economy through GMS, helping reduce imports, ease pressure on the current account deficit, and strengthen India's financial ecosystem.

"The answer lies not only in consuming less gold, but in utilising existing gold more efficiently," he added. UNI

## Abbott launches minimally invasive TriClip Heart Valve Repair System in India

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, MAY 12:** Abbott, a global healthcare leader, today announced the launch of the TriClip transcatheter edge-to-edge repair (TEER) system in India for the treatment of tricuspid regurgitation (TR), commonly known as a leaky tricuspid valve.

The minimally invasive device is designed to repair the tricuspid valve without the need for open-heart surgery and is delivered through a vein in the leg using catheter-based technology, the company said in a release.

According to the company, the TriClip system works by clipping together portions of the valve leaflets to improve blood flow and reduce leakage.

The technology is based on Abbott's MitraClip platform used

for treating leaky mitral valves but has been specifically engineered for navigating the right side of the heart.

Abbott said most patients receiving the TriClip system require only one day of hospitalisation before returning home.

Tricuspid regurgitation occurs when the tricuspid valve fails to close properly, allowing blood to flow backward within the heart. The condition can lead to fatigue, breathlessness, atrial fibrillation and heart failure if left untreated.

The company said TR is increasingly being recognised as a common but under-diagnosed heart valve disorder in India, particularly among elderly patients and those with rheumatic heart disease, atrial fibrillation, pulmonary hypertension and other cardiac conditions.



Sudheer Mirajkar, Country Manager for Abbott's Structural Heart business in India, said the launch of TriClip represents

a significant advancement for patients with limited treatment options for tricuspid regurgitation.

He said the minimally invasive therapy could help improve symptoms, enhance quality of life and reduce hospitalisations related to heart failure.

The device is backed by findings from the TRILUMINATE Pivotal trial, a global randomised clinical study evaluating the safety and effectiveness of TriClip compared with standard medical therapy in patients with severe TR.

According to the study findings reviewed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, nearly 90 per cent of patients who received TriClip showed improvement in TR severity within 30 days, while two-year data demonstrated a 28 per cent reduction in heart failure hospitalisations along with significant quality-of-life improvements, the release added.

## IHCL reports record FY26 Revenue of Rs. 9,971 Cr, Announces Dividend

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, MAY 12:** The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) on Monday reported its sixteenth consecutive quarter of record performance, posting consolidated revenue of Rs. 9,971 crore for FY2025-26, registering a growth of 16 per cent year-on-year.

The company reported EBITDA of Rs. 3,477 crore with an EBITDA margin of 34.9 per cent, while profit after tax (PAT) stood at an all-time high of Rs. 2,084 crore for the financial year. For the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2026, IHCL posted consolidated revenue of Rs. 2,845 crore, up 14 per cent over the previous year, with EBITDA at Rs. 1,052 crore and PAT at Rs. 600 crore, the company said in a release.

Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & CEO, IHCL, said the com-

pany achieved double-digit revenue growth despite macroeconomic headwinds and the impact of the West Asia conflict.

He said IHCL's diversified strategy across brands, management contracts, and geographies helped deliver consistent growth and resilience over the last sixteen quarters.

According to the company, IHCL added three new brands during the fiscal, taking its major brand portfolio to fourteen. The company also recorded 250 hotel signings, expanding its overall portfolio to 630 hotels, including an industry-leading pipeline of 255 hotels. During FY26, IHCL opened or onboarded more than 130 hotels, expanding its footprint across luxury, experiential leisure, and mid-scale hospitality segments.

The company maintained a gross cash balance of Rs. 4,345 crore as of

March 31, 2026.

IHCL has proposed a dividend amounting to 25 per cent of consolidated PAT before exceptional items, including a special dividend to commemorate the company's 125th AGM.

Mr. Ankur Dalwani, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, IHCL, said IHCL Standalone reported revenue of Rs. 5,640 crore with an EBITDA margin of 45.1 per cent and PAT of Rs. 2,012 crore during FY26. He added that the company invested more than Rs. 1,000 crore in greenfield projects, renovations, digital initiatives, and acquisitions during the year.

The company's new businesses, including Ginger, Qmin, amā Stays & Trails and Tree of Life, reported enterprise revenue of Rs. 1,099 crore, registering 37 per cent growth during the year. UNI

## Noel Tata to quit Tata Group boards before 70th birthday

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**MUMBAI, MAY 12:** Noel Tata, Chairman of the Tata Trusts, is preparing to quit the Tata Group company boards since he is nearing 70, according to senior company officials.

Discussions about potential transitions are already underway with senior executives.

Noel Tata will turn 70 in November this year. The Tata Group has a governance practice where executives retire from operational roles at 65 and step down from non-executive board positions at 70. The group historically followed such age-linked succession norms including during the transition of late Ratan Tata.

Presently, Noel Naval Tata serves as Chairman of Tata Trusts and in that capacity chairs all the trusts which comprise the Tata Trusts.

He also serves as chairman of Tata Investment Corporation, which focuses on investments in both listed and unlisted equities. He also serves on the Board of various Tata Group Companies, including as the Chairman of Trent Limited, Tata International Limited, Voltas Limited & Tata Investment Corporation Limited and as the Vice Chairman of Tata Steel and Titan Company Limited.

Before his appointment, he was a Trustee on the Boards of the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and the Sir Ratan Tata Trust. Noel Tata has been associated with the Tata Group for more than 40 years.

Noel Tata, who is the half-brother of the late Ratan Tata, became the chairman of Tata Trust on October 11, 2024. He now oversees both the philanthropic and strategic interests of the Tata Group, balancing business leadership with social impact initiatives. His corporate journey began in 1999 when he took charge as Managing Director of Trent, the retail company founded by his mother Simone Tata, where he turned Westside into a profitable venture.

Later, Noel Tata joined the boards of Titan Industries and Voltas in 2003, before becoming Managing Director of Tata International in 2010, where he steered the conglomerate's international operations. UNI

## Heritage Foods crosses Rs.45,000 Mn Revenue Mark in FY26 despite Margin Pressure

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, MAY 12:** Heritage Foods Limited (HFL) on Monday reported resilient revenue growth for FY2025-26 despite severe milk supply shortages and elevated input costs, crossing the Rs. 45,000 million annual revenue milestone for the first time.

In a release, the company reported revenue growth of 9 per cent year-on-year to Rs. 45,260 million in FY26, while fourth-quarter revenue rose 10 per cent to Rs. 11,576 million despite weak flush season conditions, milk shortages and weather-related disruptions across key markets.

Value-added products (VAP) continued to drive growth momentum, with VAP revenue increasing 13 per cent year-on-year to Rs. 14,678 million in FY26 and 18 per cent growth in Q4FY26 to Rs. 3,957 million. VAP contribution improved to 35.3 per cent in FY26 compared to 32 per cent in the previous year.

Paneer volumes grew 27 per cent year-on-year during FY26, while curd volumes rose 7 per cent and ice cream volumes increased 15 per cent, reflecting strong consumer demand and improving product mix.

Ms. Brahmani Nara, Executive Director, Heritage Foods Limited, said the company remained



focused on strengthening procurement infrastructure, expanding distribution reach and scaling high-growth categories despite challenging industry conditions.

She said continued investments in premiumisation, value-

added products and new capacities positioned the company for sustainable long-term growth as market conditions gradually normalise.

However, elevated milk procurement costs impacted profitability during the year.

Average landed milk costs rose 8 per cent year-on-year to Rs. 46.7 per litre in Q4FY26, resulting in EBITDA margin contraction of 311 basis points to 4.5 per cent.

The company reported Q4FY26 EBITDA of Rs. 522 million, down 35 per cent year-on-year, while profit after tax declined 37 per cent to Rs. 239 million.

Despite supply-side con-

straints, Heritage Foods said its procurement network demonstrated resilience, although procurement volumes declined 7 per cent year-on-year to 16.38 LLPD during the quarter.

The company's wholly owned subsidiary, Heritage Nutrivet Limited, reported a 33 per cent increase in revenue to Rs. 2,454 million during FY26, while profit before tax rose to Rs. 206 million.

Heritage Foods also reported strong growth in emerging channels, with e-commerce and quick-commerce revenues rising 56 per cent year-on-year, while fresh distribution and other emerging channels grew 49 per cent. UNI

# Defending champions Delhi make emphatic start in Swami Vivekananda U20 Men's NFC

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NARAINPUR (CHHATTISGARH):** Defending champions Delhi began their Group D campaign of the Swami Vivekananda U20 Men's National Football Championship 2025-26 with an emphatic 5-1 victory against Sikkim, while Tripura, Punjab, and Maharashtra won their respective matches as well.

Delhi opened their campaign by defeating Sikkim 5-1 on Ground 1 at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama in Narainpur, Chhattisgarh, on Tuesday, May 12, 2026.

Parth Subhash Salunke gave Delhi an early lead in the first half, but Sujal Bhujel equalised for Sikkim after the resumption. Parity did not last too long, however, as Kanish Rawat scored two quick goals a little after the hour mark, to swing the match back in Delhi's favour.

Thongbam Lanchenba Singh and Kanak Raj Vohra added one



each, to make it a big win for the defending champions.

In the other match of Group D, Tripura defeated Himachal Pradesh 3-0 on Ground 1 at the RKM Ashrama.

Arma Jamatia scored in the last regulation minute of the first half, and another in the second half injury time, while Kishan Debbarma scored one in between, to make it a comfortable win for Tripura.

Delhi, with their big win, moved to the top of Group D, while Tripura are behind them in second, only by dint of goal difference. The mountainous states of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim are third and fourth, respectively.

Only the top team from each group will progress to the quarter-finals.

Over in Group H, Punjab defeated Goa 2-1 on Ground 2 at the RKM Ashrama, on Tuesday.

Goa's Jodric Abranches scored a sixth-minute own goal to put Punjab in the lead early on, but soon redeemed himself, levelling the scores in the 36th minute. However, Saqlane Sajid scruffed the winner just ahead of the hour mark, for Punjab. Maharashtra earned a slender 1-0 victory in the second match of Group H, after a goalless first half on Ground 2 at the RKM Ashrama.

Nirvaan Bhatt scored the only goal of the game, just after the resumption in the second half.

Punjab take the provisional pole position in Group H with 3 points; Maharashtra, who have the same number of points as well, are just a spot behind on goal difference. Goa and Assam are third and fourth, respectively.

## It favours fast bowlers: PBKS pace coach Hopes on Dharamshala track

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**DHARAMSHALA:** Punjab Kings are all set to play their first TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) match at their second home ground, HPCA Cricket Stadium, Dharamshala, against Delhi Capitals on Monday. Ahead of the crucial encounter, the Kings' fast bowling coach, James Hopes, addressed the media regarding the team's strategy, the shift to the new home ground, and maintaining a positive outlook despite recent setbacks.

Reflecting on the team's recent performance and the challenges faced, Hopes identified specific areas for improvement while noting that setbacks are natural over the course of a two-month tournament.

"We let ourselves down in the last game with our catching. If we take those catches, we could probably restrict them to a little bit more than 220 and come out on top in that game. It's a little bit of a hiccup, but I think any team that thinks they're going to go through this tournament and just sail for two months all the way through and not lose a game of cricket is kidding themselves. Our tournament for us starts now, I think," the coach said.

Discussing the tactical advantage of the venue, Hopes noted, "It does favour the fast bowlers historically just because there's a little bit of sideways movement and a little bit more bounce than some of the other venues that we play on. So the guys are excited about tomorrow night. We have been playing on some of the pitches which we think have been pretty flat, so I think they're excited to see the ball swing around a little bit and bounce a little bit."

Addressing questions regarding the potential bowling lineup for Monday's game, Hopes stated, "I think with Harpreet, whenever he gets a game, he always performs. He hasn't let us down at all in the last couple of years. With Azmatullah back now from

Afghanistan, we have an opportunity to maybe switch things up a little bit and still carry all our fast bowling and play two spinners, but we'll sit down and talk about that tonight."

The Fast Bowling Coach also lauded the leadership of Ricky Ponting and Shreyas Iyer for their role in helping the team maintain a disciplined yet composed atmosphere.

"They just talk about team first things, doing all the little things, like preparing the right way, getting our plans in place, the little extra efforts in the field, the extra efforts with the bat, being that little bit more selfless with the bat, being that little more selfless with the ball. All things like that all add up across the season to a team environment which those two have created and to be honest our group has a lot of fun," he said.

He further added, "I think those two are a big reason behind why they have a lot of fun because we understand

mistakes happen, we understand stuff goes wrong in a tournament, that's fine as long as we are trying our best, we are trying to execute, we are trying to do things the right way all the time, that's all we can do. We back our skill to come out on top in the end, but those two create a very relaxed environment."

## Pant blames poor fielding for loss against CSK

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**CHENNAI:** Lucknow Super Giants skipper Rishabh Pant said they had enough runs on the board but poor fielding proved costly during their five-wicket loss to Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League here on Sunday.

Josh Inglis played a sensational 85-run knock before CSK bowlers rallied to stop LSG at 203 for eight. CSK then rode on a swashbuckling knock from Urvil Patel (65 off 23 balls) to overhaul the target in 19.2 overs.

LSG thus suffered their eighth loss in 11 matches to end their playoff chances.

"It was a great game. Everything was coming up nicely. We knew we would be put under pressure in the powerplay. When you come to Chennai, that is the kind of cricket you expect," Pant said during the post-match



presentation.

"Felt there was enough on the board. Fielding standards have to be up there, too many dropped catches. Urvil played a fantastic and unbelievable knock, like Inglis did for us. The team showed character to come back."

LSG came out all guns blazing in the powerplay as Inglis launched a brutal assault on the CSK bowlers to propel the visitors to 77 for no loss after five overs before managing 203.

Pant admitted LSG fell short of the total they were aiming for.

"The way we started, we would have liked to have more. We knew 200-210 would be a good target. They got off to a flier but we knew it was getting difficult after the powerplay," he said.

On not giving the final over to Shahbaz Ahmed, Pant said the team backed experience.

"That came to mind, but it was a tough call to have. We needed to back someone. Aiden Markram has done it a lot of times. That is why we believe in every individual."

Defending 10 off six balls, Markram was smashed for two sixes by Shivam Dube.

Player of the match Urvil Patel said the coaches had asked him to keep things simple.

"The coaches told me to hold my shape and hit the ball well. Rutu (Ruturaj Gaikwad) just told me that the wicket is a little low and to be ready for it. He did not say a lot, and just asked me to play the way I did," he said.

# URVIL'S EXPLOITS POWER CSK TO FIVE-WICKET WIN OVER LSG

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**CHENNAI:** The swashbuckling Urvil Patel equalled the record for the fastest fifty in IPL history as Chennai Super Kings edged out Lucknow Super Kings by five wickets to keep their play-off hopes alive here on Sunday.

Batting first, Josh Inglis played a sensational 85-run knock before CSK bowlers rallied to stop LSG at 203 for eight. With the defeat, their eighth in 11 matches, LSG's play-off hopes went up in smoke.

A lot of credit for the CSK comeback must go to Jamie Overton (3/36), who took the big wickets of Inglis and Rishabh Pant in a space of three balls, before Shahbaz Ahmed chipped in with an useful 43 off 25 balls.

Thanks to Urvil's exploits and some sensible batting by Shivam Dube (15 not out off 7 balls) and Prashant Veer (17 not out off 12 balls), CSK chased down the target of 204 with four balls remaining.

Dube sealed the issue for CSK with two successive sixes.

Urvil, who blazed away to 65 in 23 balls with the help of eight sixes and two fours, reached his half-century in 13 balls to join current

record holder Yashasvi Jaiswal.

Sanju Samson provided the early momentum with a brisk 28, before Urvil unleashed a stunning assault on the LSG attack, targeting the likes of Digvesh Rathi and Avesh Khan while not sparing even seasoned campaigners such as Mohammed Shami.

Sent in at No.3, Urvil hammered three consecutive sixes off Avesh and went on to clobber 25 runs off Rathi, hitting three more maximums and a four. He also went after India pacer Shami, blasting the bowler over his head for another huge hit over mid-wicket before completing his fifty with a single to the off-side.

After reaching his half-century, Urvil looked skyward and took out a piece of paper from his pocket with the line "This is for you Papa" written on it, turning a record-equalling feat into a deeply personal tribute for his father Mukesh Patel, who played a key role in developing him into a professional cricketer.

Alongside skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad, who played the supporting role perfectly, Urvil ensured CSK were firmly in command by the end of the 10 overs.

After that, Dube and Veer got the job done for CSK.

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