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# We Will Hunt You Down Even in Your Deepest Hideouts: LG Warns Narco-Terror Network

Manoj Sinha says drug smugglers and terrorists are "two sides of the same coin"

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday issued a strong warning to drug traffickers and terror networks, declaring that security and law enforcement agencies would relentlessly pursue those involved in narcotics trade and terror financing across Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing a public gathering in Pulwama during an anti-drug campaign,

Sinha said the administration's mission was not limited to arrests but aimed at dismantling the entire narco-terror infrastructure operating in the Union Territory.

"We will hunt you down even in your deepest hideouts. Our mission is not just arrests but the complete destruction of the narco-terror empire and tearing out the very roots from which this poison spreads," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said the anti-drug movement had evolved into a large public campaign over the past several weeks, with people across districts openly joining efforts against narcotics abuse and trafficking.

"Over the last 39 days, neighbours became each other's support and the long silence that hung over Jammu and Kashmir began to break. Today, that silence has turned into a loud collective outcry against drugs," Sinha said.

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LG Honors Nari Shakti with Lal Ded National Award in a ceremony at Srinagar

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today attended the "Lal Ded National Award Ceremony" at Srinagar. The prestigious award event was organised by Sarhad, Pune. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said the Nari Shakti, honored by Lal Ded National Award, has achieved remarkable accomplishments in their respective fields. He said the blessings of saints like Lal Ded have nurtured and preserved the nation's vision, its arts, literature, music, folk traditions, and deep spiritual wisdom.

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## High Courts Should Set Up Special Courts For Cases Pending Over Five Years: Amit Shah

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAGDALPUR, MAY 19:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday urged High Courts across the country to establish special courts for the speedy disposal of cases pending for



more than five years, underlining the need for a stronger and more efficient justice delivery system.

Chairing the 26th meeting of the Central Zonal Council in Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh, Shah said timely DNA testing in cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and

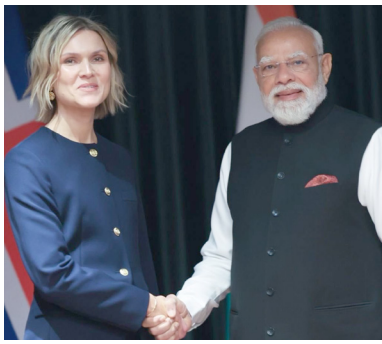
● Turn on Page 2

## India Deeply Values Friendship With Iceland: PM Modi

Holds High-Level Talks With Nordic Leaders on Clean Energy, Trade, Technology

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**OSLO, MAY 18:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held a series of high-level bilateral meetings with the leaders of Iceland, Finland and Denmark, focusing on strengthening cooperation in clean energy, trade, digitalisation, sustainability and emerging technologies ahead of the 3rd India-Nordic Summit in Oslo. During his meeting with Icelan-



dic Prime Minister Kristrun Frostadottir, Modi reaffirmed the importance India attaches to its ties with Iceland and described the bilateral friendship as highly valued.

"India deeply values the friendship with Iceland," Modi said after the meeting, adding that both countries discussed expanding cooperation in clean energy, fisheries, geothermal energy, sustainability and

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## Parliamentary Panels Intensify Engagement With J&K After Budget Session

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a notable increase in visits by Parliamentary Standing Committees following the conclusion of the Budget Session, with four panels already completing study tours in the Union Territory over the past 50 days and a fifth currently on its way.

The visits, involving committees dealing with education, finance, housing and urban affairs, home affairs and social

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## Operation Sindoor Demonstrated India's Smart Power: Army Chief

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR / NEW DELHI MAY 19:** Upendra Dwivedi on Tuesday described Operation Sindoor as a defining example of India's "smart power," saying the military campaign combined precision strikes, strategic communication, diplomatic signalling and measured restraint in a coordinated national response.

Addressing a seminar on "Security to Prosperity: Smart Power for Sustained National Growth" organised by the Centre for Land Warfare Studies in Srinagar,

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## CS Reviews Machail Yatra Arrangements



HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired a high-level meeting to review the arrangements being put in place by the concerned Divisional and District Administrations for the

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## CS calls for concrete action plan to control Cancer in J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today held detailed consultations with leading healthcare institutions and medical experts regarding the formulation of a comprehensive cancer control strategy for Jammu and Kashmir aimed at strengthening awareness, screening, diagnosis, treatment and preventive oncology across the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department; Director, SKIMS; Principal, Government Medical College, Srinagar/

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## MeT predicts light rain, thunderstorms till May 21

Srinagar records 30.7 C, Jammu 42.0 C

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** The Meteorological Department on Monday forecast light rain, thundershowers, gusty winds and hailstorms at scattered to many places across Jammu and Kashmir till May 21.

An official of the MeT department told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy till May 21, with spells of light rain, thunderstorms and gusty winds mainly during afternoon and

evening hours.

An advisory issued by MeT stated: "Possibility of thunder, lightning and gusty winds with speeds of 40-50 kmph exists at a few places in Kashmir and Jammu divisions during May 19-21."

The department said weather is likely to remain generally dry during the forenoon from May 22 to 25, although brief showers may occur at isolated to scattered places during afternoon or late afternoon hours.

From May 26 to 28, weather


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## Heatwave Pushes Tourists to Kashmir's Cool Retreats

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** As large parts of the country continue to reel under an intense heatwave, tourists are flocking to Kashmir's offbeat destinations such as Razdan

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# OUR CENSUS OUR DEVELOPMENT

(First Phase of Census 2027)

Common queries on Self-Enumeration (SE) and their Answers (Part-2)

### WHAT IS SELF-ENUMERATION?

Self-Enumeration is an online process in which you fill and submit your household details on the SE portal ([se.census.gov.in](http://se.census.gov.in)) yourself, without waiting for an enumerator




- ❖ **What are the benefits of Self-Enumeration?**
  - Fill details conveniently
  - Ensures privacy
  - Makes the Census process faster and efficient
- ❖ **How to log in to the Self-Enumeration portal?**
  - Select State/UT
  - Enter name of head of the family, mobile number and email (optional)
  - Verify through OTP
  - Start Self-Enumeration
- ❖ **How to mark the correct location of your house?**
  - Select district/PIN code
  - Enter area/landmark
  - Zoom on map and mark location near your house (Do not worry if exact address is not displayed)
  - Correct location marking is necessary
- ❖ **Can I edit my information later?**
  - Yes, you can edit before final submission during State/UT SE period
  - After final submission changes can be done during enumerator's visit
- ❖ **Can SE portal be accessed outside India?**

No, this facility is available only within India's geographical boundaries
- ❖ **What if an error is found after submission?**

Correction can be made when the enumerator visits your house
- ❖ **Can I save and complete the form later?**

Yes, you can save progress and complete the form within the stipulated time

**TOLL FREE - 1855**

Let us fulfill our responsibility, Let us participate in the Census  CensusIndia2027

CBC 19108/13/0101/2627

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

**We Will....**

The Lieutenant Governor said more than 11,000 awareness and outreach events had been organised in Pulwama district alone in recent days. He added that FIRs had been registered against 48 drug smugglers while 56 traffickers had been arrested in the district. "These figures show we are striking directly at the roots of terror," he said.

Sinha asserted that drug trafficking could no longer be viewed merely as a criminal activity, stating that narcotics networks were directly linked to terrorism and radicalisation in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Drug smugglers profit by destroying the future of our youth while terror outfits use that money to fuel terrorism and radicalisation. Every deal a drug peddler makes not only ruins a young life but also finances violence against innocent citizens," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said the administration remained committed to removing drug trafficking networks from Jammu and Kashmir and warned those involved that agencies were closely tracking their operations.

According to official figures, nearly 897 drug smugglers and peddlers have been arrested across Jammu and Kashmir since April 11. Authorities have also initiated action to cancel passports of 18 traffickers, while driving licences of 382 accused and registrations of 386 vehicles have been revoked.

Officials said 49 immovable properties linked to narcotics activities had been seized and 45 structures demolished during the ongoing crackdown.

The administration has also intensified inspections of medical establishments. Nearly 5,045 drug stores have been inspected across the Union Territory, resulting in suspension of licences of 225 stores, cancellation of 27 licences, and registration of FIRs against six establishments.

Sinha said awareness and rehabilitation efforts were being expanded simultaneously, with nearly 393,000 awareness programmes conducted across Jammu and Kashmir since April 11. More than 52,000 individuals have reportedly received treatment at addiction treatment facilities during the period.

"As this 100-day campaign advances, we must sustain its momentum. Every life saved weakens terror in the Valley," the Lieutenant Governor said.

**LG Honors Nari.....**

"By setting new standards in their fields, remarkable women achievers have helped shape the soul of society. Women empowerment must be a top priority for both society and government. We must also prioritize women in innovation and entrepreneurship so enterprises led by them become stronger," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said in today's world, Lal Ded's message can become a lifeline for humanity and her philosophy of compassion, truth, and morality is the foundation of a global society that seeks peace, inclusion, and fraternity.

"Lal Ded's life teaches society that no matter how great the challenge, a person's inner strength, faith, and courage can turn even the toughest trials into opportunities for growth and learning. Lal Ded became a beacon of hope for all seekers who dared to believe that humanity can truly become better and her ideals guided people toward a more harmonious world," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He observed that Nari Shakti exemplifies sacrifice, compassion, and equality, and it is solemn duty of society and nation alike to secure full rights for women.

"I believe gender equality is a call for men to stand shoulder to shoulder with women and to be partners and allies, and to jointly build a just society and developed India while fulfilling their responsibilities. I firmly believe that when women progress, families progress and families progress, the nation progresses. Women play a crucial role in nation-building and its evidence is visible across every sphere of life," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The prestigious award was conferred on contemporary Kashmiri poet Smt. Bimla Raina; Sahitya Akademi Award-winning poet Prof. Naseem Shafiq; scholar, author and Rajbhasha expert, Dr. Sakina Akhtar; Dr. Syed Darakhshan Andrabi Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board and the Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to eminent writer, academician, and translator Prof. Neerja Mattoo.

Smt. Vijaya K. Rahatkar, Chairperson, National Commission for Women; Shri Vijay Dhar, educationist; Shri Sanjay Nahar, Founder President, Sarhad; Smt Sushma Nahar, Founder Secretary, Sarhad; senior officials, members of Sarhad Foundation, and prominent citizens from different walks of life attended the award ceremony.

**High Courts.....**

rape cases could significantly improve conviction rates.

"The administration must demonstrate seriousness in dealing with serious crimes," Shah said while stressing that delays in criminal trials weaken the justice system.

The meeting was attended by Vishnu Deo Sai, Mohan Yadav, Yogi Adityanath and Push-

kar Singh Dhani, along with senior officials. Shah said the meeting was being held in Bastar after achieving what he described as the "historic milestone" of a Naxal-free India. He credited the success to coordinated efforts by security forces, intelligence agencies, state police and Central Armed Police Forces.

He said development initiatives were simultaneously carried out in areas freed from Left-wing extremism under a coordinated government approach, adding that efforts would continue until these regions matched the rest of the country in terms of development.

The Union Home Minister also called for joint efforts by states and the Centre to tackle malnutrition, reduce school dropout rates and improve the quality of education. He highlighted the expansion of banking facilities in rural areas as a major step in strengthening Direct Benefit Transfer schemes.

Shah further urged states to modernise their cybercrime helplines and strengthen action against food adulteration by publicising penalties imposed on offenders.

Referring to the implementation of the new criminal laws, he said the government should work towards ensuring that all criminal cases, including those reaching the Supreme Court, are disposed of within three years before 2029.

Highlighting the role of Zonal Councils, Shah said regular meetings under the leadership of Narendra Modi had strengthened cooperative federalism and helped resolve a large number of issues between states and the Centre.

**India Deeply.....**

carbon capture technologies. The Prime Minister also praised Iceland's expertise in sectors linked to the Blue Economy and expressed optimism that the India-European Free Trade Association Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement would further boost trade and investment ties.

According to Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, the talks also covered renewable energy, digital technologies, innovation, Arctic cooperation, creative economy and people-to-people exchanges. The two leaders additionally exchanged views on regional and global developments.

In separate discussions with Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo, Modi reviewed progress in bilateral relations and explored ways to enhance cooperation in artificial intelligence, 5G and 6G technologies, quantum technologies, renewable energy and circular economy initiatives.

The two leaders also discussed innovation, education, mobility and trade, while underlining the importance of the early implementation of the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement.

The India-Nordic Summit in Oslo has brought together leaders from India and the five Nordic nations — Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden — to deepen cooperation in strategic sectors including technology, sustainability, renewable energy, defence, space and Arctic affairs.

Officials said the summit aims to impart greater strategic momentum to India's engagement with the Nordic region, which is globally recognised for leadership in green energy, innovation and sustainable development.

Modi arrived in Norway from Sweden as part of his ongoing five-nation tour that includes visits to the UAE, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Italy. Italy will be the final stop of the Prime Minister's visit.

**Parliamentary.....**

justice, are being viewed as part of a broader effort to assess developmental progress and governance issues in the region through direct interaction and field-level review.

The first committee to visit after the Budget Session was the Department-related Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, headed by MP Divyajaya Singh. The panel undertook a two-day tour of Jammu and Kashmir to review educational reforms, youth participation and welfare initiatives in the Valley.

In the first week of May, the Department-related Standing Committee on Finance, chaired by MP Bhartruhari Mahtab, visited the Union Territory to examine matters related to financial literacy, digitalisation, Goods and Services Tax reforms, pension regulation, growth of micro, small and medium enterprises, insurance coverage and grievance redressal mechanisms.

Soon after, the Department-related Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs, led by Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy, assessed the progress of Smart City projects and other urban infrastructure initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Department-related Standing Committee on Home Affairs, headed by BJP MP Radha Mohan Das Aggarwal, also visited Jammu and Kashmir from May 10 to May 15 for discussions on a range of governance and administrative issues.

Meanwhile, the Department-related Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment is currently visiting the Union Territory as part of its study tour programme.

Officials and observers said the visits are

significant as they provide Members of Parliament with firsthand understanding of the developmental and economic challenges faced by Jammu and Kashmir. They added that the continued movement of parliamentary delegations also contributes positively to the region's tourism sector and public outreach efforts.

**Operation.....**

the Army Chief said the operation highlighted the integration of military capability with broader national and strategic objectives.

Recalling the operation conducted on the night of May 6 and 7 last year, General Dwiwedi said Indian armed forces executed a "precise 22-minute operation window" targeting terror infrastructure deep inside Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

"Operation Sindoor delivered military precision, information control, diplomatic signalling and economic resolve as one coherent national act," he said.

The Army Chief said the operation dismantled terror infrastructure and challenged what he termed a "long-standing strategic assumption." He added that India's decision to halt military action after 88 hours reflected calculated and deliberate restraint.

"The deliberate halt after 88 hours was smart power in its most complete expression, knowing exactly which lever to apply and at what intensity," he said.

Operation Sindoor was launched in response to the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 civilians were killed. Indian armed forces targeted nine terror-linked sites, including locations in Bahawalpur, Muridke and Sialkot in Pakistan, as well as camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, using precision-guided munitions in a coordinated tri-services operation.

Speaking on the changing global security environment, General Dwiwedi said the world was witnessing "disorder, distrust and dichotomy in alliances," adding that power politics was increasingly shaping economic and strategic relations.

"We were promised a world where prosperity would make power politics obsolete. Instead, we now see power politics being used to reorganise prosperity," he said.

The Army Chief noted that global defence expenditure had crossed USD 2.7 trillion, surpassing the estimated financial requirement for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

He said modern conflicts were no longer confined to battlefields and now placed growing demands on industrial production, research systems and governance structures.

"The boundary between security and prosperity no longer exists," he said, adding that national security must now be regarded as essential for economic growth and sustained development.

**CS Reviews.....**

smooth, safe and hassle-free conduct of the annual Machail Mata Yatra scheduled to commence in August this year in the mountainous region of Kishtwar.

The meeting, besides Additional Chief Secretary, PWD and Principal Secretary, Home, was attended by Director General, Fire & Emergency Services; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; IGP, Jammu; Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar; SSP, Kishtwar; Managing Director, JPDCL; Chief Engineer, Project Sampark and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took a detailed assessment of the arrangements being made for ensuring safe and smooth conduct of the pilgrimage this year, including sanitation measures entrusted to the Rural Development Department and arrangements related to water supply, power, medical facilities, transport management and emergency response by the concerned line departments.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the implementation of the directions issued in the aftermath of the last year's disaster incident along the yatra route. He took a detailed appraisal of measures such as introduction of online and RFID-based registration systems, disaster mitigation initiatives, installation of Automatic Rain Gauges (ARG) and Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) for real-time weather alerts and development of detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) aimed at ensuring safety and smooth movement of pilgrims throughout the Yatra period.

The Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Ramesh Kumar apprised the meeting that elaborate accommodation arrangements are being made at various locations including Kishtwar headquarters, Gulabgarh, Chishoti and Machail to cater to the expected rush of devotees. Government accommodations, private lodging facilities, homestays and tented accommodations are being augmented, while a dedicated tent city is also being established at Machail for the convenience of pilgrims.

Special emphasis was laid on crowd management and real-time monitoring of pilgrims through implementation of 100 percent online registration and RFID-enabled tracking mechanisms. The arrangements for daily monitoring of pilgrim movement, deployment of adequate manpower at sensitive points and strengthening coordination among

departments for effective management of the Yatra were also detailed out by the Divisional Commissioner during this meeting.

To enhance pilgrim safety, the administration is also undertaking landslide mitigation measures and strengthening monitoring systems at vulnerable stretches along the route. The departments concerned were directed to maintain strict vigil and ensure immediate response to any weather-related exigencies during the pilgrimage period.

The Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma divulged the details about the comprehensive traffic and transport management plans prepared to ensure smooth vehicular movement and timely restoration of road connectivity, wherever required. The apprised the meeting about the establishment of designated parking areas, regulation of traffic movement and ensuring uninterrupted access for emergency response vehicles.

The Chief Secretary further reviewed medical preparedness and emergency response arrangements for the Yatra. The meeting was informed that medical camps, ambulance services, emergency response teams and first-aid facilities would be established at key locations along the route. Adequate healthcare personnel and essential medicines are also being arranged to meet any eventuality during the pilgrimage.

The meeting also reviewed arrangements related to drinking water supply, uninterrupted electricity, communication facilities, sanitation and solid waste management made for this year's yatra.

Directions were issued to all departments to work in close coordination to ensure efficient delivery of essential services and maintain cleanliness and environmental protection along the pilgrimage route.

Reiterating the administration's commitment towards ensuring a spiritually fulfilling and incident-free pilgrimage, the Chief Secretary called for coordinated efforts among all stakeholder departments and agencies for successful conduct of the Machail Mata Yatra this year.

**CS calls for.....**

Jammu/SKIMS Medical College; Managing Director, National Health Mission; representatives from Indian Council of Medical Research and Tata Memorial Centre besides faculty members and experts from various medical colleges and healthcare institutions of the UT.

During the deliberations, the Chief Secretary outlined the broad framework of the strategy to ensure an effective and sustainable impact on the ground. He emphasized the need for extensive Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities to generate awareness among the masses about cancer prevention and early diagnosis.

He further stressed the importance of establishing a robust Cancer Registry for collection and analysis of disease-related data, besides undertaking population-based screening in accordance with the guidelines of the Indian Council of Medical Research.

The Chief Secretary observed that early detection and timely management of cancer cases remain critical for reducing the burden of the disease and improving survival outcomes. He underscored the need for ensuring proper treatment of patients strictly in line with established medical protocols while simultaneously promoting preventive oncology measures to safeguard the population from this life-threatening disease.

Reviewing the progress made so far, the Chief Secretary directed the expert committees constituted earlier to come up with concrete action plans within the next one month after conducting a detailed analysis of the prevalence of cancer and the existing treatment facilities available across Jammu and Kashmir.

He also asked the committees to assess the requirement for capacity building and strengthening of manpower in the healthcare sector for effective implementation of the proposed strategy.

He further instructed the Health and Medical Education Department to establish a dedicated core team of professionals drawn from different medical college faculties to ensure that the formulation and execution of the cancer control plan is taken forward in a coordinated and time-bound manner.

He also called for expediting the framing of comprehensive screening guidelines in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research so that early detection of the disease becomes a practical reality across the UT.

During the meeting, experts from various health institutions shared their inputs regarding the prevalence and incidence of cancer in Jammu and Kashmir and highlighted the challenges faced by patients in obtaining timely diagno-

sis and treatment, particularly in far-flung districts. The participants also offered several suggestions aimed at strengthening cancer care infrastructure, improving accessibility of treatment facilities and bringing quality oncology services closer to patients' homes across the Union Territory.

**MeT predicts....**

conditions are expected to remain generally dry, while light rain and thundershowers are likely at isolated places between May 29 and 31.

The MeT department also warned of hot and dry weather conditions at many places during the next two days, with heatwave conditions expected at isolated places in the Jammu division.

Meanwhile, temperatures remained significantly above normal across several parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.

According to data compiled by Kashmir Weather Watch, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 30.7 degrees Celsius, 5.3 degrees above normal, while Qazigund settled at 30.2 degrees Celsius, 5.8 degrees above normal.

Kokernag recorded 29.2 degrees Celsius, 5.4 degrees above normal, Kupwara 28.3 degrees Celsius and Gulmarg 21.6 degrees Celsius, also 5.3 degrees above normal. Pahalgam recorded a maximum temperature of 22.4 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu division, Jammu city recorded 42 degrees Celsius, 3.9 degrees above normal, while Katra registered 39 degrees Celsius, 5.4 degrees above normal.

Banihal recorded 31 degrees Celsius, Batote 30.6 degrees Celsius and Bhaderwah 30.4 degrees Celsius, the data showed.

In the Ladakh region, Leh recorded a maximum temperature of 21.6 degrees Celsius, while Nubra Valley settled at 18.1 degrees Celsius—(KNO)

**Heatwave.....**

Top in Gurez, Tulail Valley, Bangus Valley and Sonamarg, seeking relief from soaring temperatures in the plains.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) with temperatures crossing 45 degrees Celsius in several states tourists are thronging the Valley in large numbers.

At Razdan Top, the high-altitude mountain pass connecting Bandipora with Gurez Valley, tourists were seen enjoying fresh snow, an uncommon sight during the month of May.

"It feels unbelievable to see snow in May. We came from Delhi where temperatures are extremely high, and here we are playing in snow and wearing jackets," said Rohan Sharma, a tourist from New Delhi visiting Gurez with his family.

Another tourist, Mehak Gupta from Punjab, said the weather in Kashmir was a "huge relief" from the scorching heat in the plains.

"We had seen videos of Razdan Top on social media, but witnessing snow here in May is completely different. The beauty of this place is unmatched," she said.

Tourist movement has also increased in Sonamarg and Bangus Valley, where visitors are spending time near snow-covered peaks, streams and vast green pastures. At Sonamarg, tourists were seen taking pony rides and enjoying the cool breeze along the Sindh stream.

"Back home in Rajasthan, it is impossible to step outside during daytime because of the heat. Kashmir's weather is pleasant and refreshing," said tourist Ankit Verma.

In North Kashmir's Bangus Valley, known for its dense forests and sprawling meadows, tourists described the landscape as peaceful and untouched.

"The natural beauty of Bangus is extraordinary. It is less crowded and feels very close to nature," said Sana Khan, a tourist from Mumbai.

Local tourism stakeholders said off-beat destinations in Kashmir were witnessing increased footfall this season as more tourists explored lesser-known locations beyond Srinagar and Gulmarg.

"Tourists are now looking for unexplored places. Gurez, Tulail and Bangus are attracting visitors because of their natural beauty, pleasant weather and peaceful atmosphere," said local tourist guide Hilal Ahmad in Gurez.

Another guide in Sonamarg, Mushtaq Ahmed, said many tourists were extending their stays due to the cool weather conditions. "People arriving from Delhi, Rajasthan and Punjab are enjoying the climate here. Many tourists are surprised to witness snow at Razdan Top during May," he said.

Officials in the tourism sector said the recent weather conditions and social media promotion of offbeat destinations had contributed to the rise in tourist arrivals across the Valley—(KNO)



# DC Srinagar reviews sector wise implementation of PM SYM, JK Samadhan, PM KMY, Traders & Self-Employment Pension Yojana

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroon Tuesday chaired a comprehensive meeting here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex to assess the progress achieved under various flagship welfare and pension schemes including Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana, JK Samadhan, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana and National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-Employed Persons across the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner undertook a detailed sector-wise review of targets and achievements registered under the schemes aimed at providing social security, pension coverage and grievance redressal support to workers, farmers, traders and self-employed persons in the district.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner was given a department wise brief through a detailed presentation highlighting the progress of PM-SYM, JK Samadhan, PMKMY and Traders

& Self-Employment Pension Yojana in the district.

The DC reviewed the status of beneficiary registration, enrollment progress, awareness generation activities and overall implementation of the schemes by the concerned departments and agencies. He emphasized the need for intensified outreach efforts to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered under the schemes within the stipulated timelines.

Highlighting the significance of the schemes, the DC stated that the schemes are aimed at providing social security, pension coverage and grievance redressal support to workers, farmers, traders and self-employed persons in the district.

He further instructed line departments to work closely with field staff and other agencies to conduct on-the-spot registrations of the left-out population across the district, ensuring maximum outreach and coverage under the schemes.

With regard to implementation of the National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-



Employed Persons, the DC directed the General Manager DIC to begin implementation of the scheme in coordination with other line departments to achieve considerable progress by June 10, 2026.

The meeting was attended by IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas, Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid, District Programme Officer, ICDS, Chief Planning Officer, General Manager DIC, Assistant Commissioner Development, Deputy Director, Tourism, Chief Education Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, District Sericulture Officer, Assistant Commissioner, State Taxes, Deputy Director, Employment, District Sheep Husbandry Officer, Floriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, AD Handicraft/Handloom, AD Food & Supplies, AD Fisheries, Assistant Labour Commissioner, ARTO, Assistant Commissioner Food Safety, District health Officer, District Officer, KVIB/KVIC, District Programme Manager, NRLM, District Manager CSC and other concerned.

## NSD TIE Workshop Culminates at Manchowa, Budgam with great fervor

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, MAY 19:** The 15 day-long TIE workshop organized by National School of Drama, TIE Centre, Srinagar in collaboration with AEIMS International Pre-Sec. School, Manchowa, Budgam culminated today with heart-warming and inspiring performances. Designed for 11-16 years of age group, the workshop aimed to cultivate life skills, nurture creativity, and unlock the latent potential of young minds through theatre.

The Chairman of the host school, Mr. Danish Yousuf graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Addressing the young participants and their parents, he lauded NSD TIE's initiative to nurture creativity at the grassroots. He further said that these 15 days have given our children confidence, expression, and teamwork that no textbook can teach. I



urge parents to encourage such creative pursuits alongside academics," he said. He also appreciated the parents for supporting their children throughout the intensive workshop.

Mr. Sandeep Chaudhary Workshop Director & Coordinator, NSD T.I.E Centre Srinagar extended heartfelt gratitude to the school management and parents. While speaking on the occasion he said, "in these 15 days the children transformed from shy students to confident performers. This is the power of Theatre-in-Education. I thank the Chairman sahab for his vision, the parents for their trust, and most importantly, the children for their honesty and hard work."

He acknowledged the efforts of participating students, resource persons and school management for making the workshop a success.

The event concluded with certificate distribution to all the participating students. Parents expressed happiness at the visible change in their children's communication skills and stage presence.

The workshop was facilitated by: Mr. Sandeep Chaudhary - Workshop Director & Coordinator, NSD T.I.E Centre Srinagar Mr. Hasan Javid - Assistant Facilitator.

## NCW, KU hold awareness programme on gender sensitisation and PoSH

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** The National Commission for Women (NCW) in collaboration with the Department of Students Welfare (DSW), University of Kashmir (KU) organised a day-long programme on "Gender Sensitisation and PoSH Awareness" at the varsity's Main Campus.

The programme aimed to create awareness about gender sensitivity, workplace dignity, and the provisions of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act, while encouraging a safe and inclusive environment for women in educational and professional spaces.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Acting Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Mohiuddin Sangmi, said that educational institutions have a vital responsibility in promoting gender sensitivity, mutual respect and safe work environments.

Highlighting the varsity's long-standing association with the National Commission for Women, he said that "the University of Kashmir has been consistently organising awareness and outreach programmes over the years on issues related to gender equality, women's rights and social responsibility."

Chairperson, NCW, Smt. Vijaya Rahatkar, in her keynote address, highlighted the importance of understanding laws and regulations related to the safety and protection of women in domestic and workplace settings. She also spoke about the contributions of many remarkable women from Kashmir who have played significant roles in shaping society through their courage, intellect and leadership. Earlier, in his welcome address, Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, said that awareness about legal safeguards and institutional mechanisms is essential for creating a secure and inclusive academic atmosphere.

The programme featured a technical session on "Working of the National Commission for Women" by Shri Shivam Garg, Media Advisor, NCW, who elaborated on the role and functioning of the Commission in addressing women-related issues across the country.

Another technical session on "Workshop on PoSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment)" was conducted by Ms. Tunika Sharma, Counsellor, NCW, who discussed the importance of Internal Committees (ICs) in institutions and workplaces and emphasized the need for timely reporting and redressal mechanisms. The sessions also included interactive discussions with the participants.

The programme was attended by faculty members, scholars and students from across the University campus.

The proceedings of the event were conducted by Dr. Shahid Ali Khan, Cultural Officer, DSW KU, while the vote of thanks was presented by Shri Ramavatar Singh, Deputy Director, NCW.

## G.V.E.I Creates History; Secures Spot at Viksit Bharat Buildathon National Presentation Event

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** In a proud moment for Jammu & Kashmir's educational fraternity, Green Valley Educational Institute, Ellahi Bagh (G.V.E.I), has created history by becoming the only CBSE school from Jammu & Kashmir to secure a place among the winning teams at the prestigious Viksit Bharat Buildathon 2025. Guinness Presentation Event, regarded as India's largest innovation driven student competition.

The national level event is being organized by the Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education, Government of India, in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog. The event is scheduled to be held in New Delhi on May 25, 2026, and will be graced by the Hon'ble Union Minister for Education, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan.

The talented team, aptly named "Dream Builders", comprises: Arhaan Ahmad Class 10th Mohammad Muntaha Class 9th Mannat Jan Class 10th Under the guidance of ATL In-charge Ms. Nauf



Nisaa, the students designed and developed an innovative working model titled "Guardian Bridge" under the theme Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The project was inspired by the growing concern over suicide and accident-related fatalities across the country.

A result of nearly three years of dedicated effort, Guardian Bridge reflects not only scientific innovation

and technical creativity but also a strong sense of social responsibility among the young innovators.

The achievement has brought immense pride to the institution and the region, as these young students from the Valley prepare to represent Jammu & Kashmir on the national stage with distinction and honour.

# SAMPARK ECONOMICAL DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY ORGANIZED FREE MEDICAL CAMP

■ AASHIQ HUSSAIN

**JAMMU, MAY 17:** Sampark Economical Development Society organized a free medical camp in collaboration with Shivam Diagnostic Lab at Pacca Danga Jammu. The initiative aimed to provide accessible healthcare services to the local community, including free medical consultations, diagnostic tests, and free distribution of medicines.

Dr. Y.P. Gupta (MD) attended the camp and examined patients free of cost, offering professional medical advice and treatment. Shivam Diagnostic Lab conducted free diagnostic tests for patients during the camp.

The event also received support from several representatives from the pharmaceutical and



healthcare sectors. Among those who contributed were Mr. Sunny Magotra from Baxton Pharma, Mr. Mohit Mahindra from Asta Care, and Sdr. Samar Pal Singh from Talent India Pharmaceuti-

cals, who helped in distributing free medicines to people in need. The camp witnessed active participation from the community and proved to be a meaningful effort toward promoting

accessible and affordable healthcare for all. Speaking on the occasion, Chander Kant Treasurer of the Sampark Economical Development Society Said Society is committed to work for

all the sections by providing best healthcare facilities to the people. "We will continue to organize such camps in future also so that maximum people can take advantage of it.

# CS reviews implementation roadmap of mega Youth Empowerment Programme

Platform to provide tailored schemes, Counselling, Skills and Career Pathways to youth

## HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** In a major initiative aimed at harnessing the potential of the youth and creating a unified ecosystem for their engagement, empowerment and development an ambitious Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) is set to be rolled out soon by the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department (PD&MD) across the districts of J&K.

The implementation of the programme was today reviewed by the Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo in a meeting attended by Principal Secretary, Home; Principal Secretary, Culture; Commissioner Secretary, Planning; Commissioner Secretary, GAD; Commissioner Secretary, School and Higher Education Departments; Commissioner Secretary, YS&S; Secretary, RDD; Secretary, SDD; Secretary, Floriculture; MD, HADP; Director, EDI and Special Secretary, Planning (Nodal Officer YEP) along with other concerned officers.

Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir and Deputy Commissioners attended the meeting through video conferencing.

During the presentation, Chief Secretary took a first-hand appraisal of the YEP portal presently under development and reviewed in detail the range of services proposed to be offered to the registered youth through the platform. He appreciated the department for first time creating a robust and interactive platform for the youth of the UT.

He also reviewed the dedicated interface developed for



departments and Deputy Commissioners, including the workflow mechanism for creation of action plans, approval processes, uploading of events and documentation of activities through photographs and videos on the portal.

The initiative, as elucidated by Commissioner Secretary, PD&MD, R. Alice Vaz is first-of-its-kind integrated digital platform designed to connect the youth of this region with different career opportunities, services, counselling, skill development and participatory governance for their empowerment irrespective of their social, economic or geographical background. She further added that the programme envisions creating a comprehensive framework for empowering youth in the age group of 15 to 35 years across all the 20 districts of Jammu & Kashmir by integrating the schemes and services of more than 18 government departments

onto a single platform to ensure convergence, transparency, efficiency and targeted outreach during the tenure of this mega orientation programme.

In the presentation by Nodal Officer, Dr Owais Ahmad it was highlighted that once registered on the portal, the youth would gain access to a tailored list of dozens of government schemes, programmes and opportunities based on the outcome of their psychometric assessment tests. The system has been designed to map the aptitude, interests and aspirations of the youth and accordingly recommend suitable interventions, career pathways and developmental programmes.

It was further highlighted that the programme would channelise the energies of youth towards constructive nation-building and community-development activities by encouraging their active participation in social service campaigns, aware-

ness drives and community participation initiatives including the Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan. The initiative aims to create socially responsible youth leadership committed towards uplifting society and improving the quality of life in urban as well as rural areas across Jammu & Kashmir.

Additionally, the platform would provide AI-enabled chatbot support through the YEP Assistant, an intelligent guidance and counselling mechanism designed to assist youth in addressing specific issues and challenges faced by them. The AI-based assistant would provide guidance, counselling, mentoring and handholding support system in multiple languages to youth while helping them access appropriate schemes, services, career opportunities and wellbeing interventions.

The meeting was further informed that Application Programming Interface (API) inte-

gration with multiple schemes and services has already been incorporated into the YEP portal, enabling eligible youth to apply online for various schemes and programmes directly through the platform without the need for separate registrations on different departmental portals.

The programme also includes the development of a dedicated mobile application for both Android and iOS platforms, enabling youth and officials alike to access services, events, counselling, certificates and dashboards on the go. The mobile application is being developed with offline functionality and feature parity with the main portal to facilitate seamless field operations and youth participation even in remote areas.

The immediate roadmap for implementation includes completion of security audits, OTP integration, onboarding of departments and districts, creation of a Programme Management Unit (PMU), capacity building of stakeholders and phased roll-out of pending modules. Future phases of the programme would focus on DigiLocker integration, onboarding of additional departmental databases, advanced analytics, predictive modelling and AI-driven enhancements.

The meeting emphasized that the Youth Empowerment Programme would emerge as a landmark initiative in shaping a unified, technology-driven and inclusive youth development framework for Jammu & Kashmir by creating "One Platform, One Generation, One State" for the youth of the Union Territory.

## HKM GDC Bandipora organises series of Awareness Programmes under Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, MAY 19:** HKM Government Degree College (GDC) Bandipora on Tuesday organized a series of awareness programmes under the banner of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan to educate students and the local community about the harmful effects of drug abuse and tobacco consumption.

The programmes were conducted under the guidance of Principal Prof. Suresh Kumar Dogra. The Department of Botany, in collaboration with the Red Ribbon Youth Club, organized an awareness lecture on the harmful effects of drug abuse. Head of the Department of Botany, Dr. Mehrajuddin Talie, delivered an insightful lecture highlighting the growing menace of drug addiction and its social, psychological and health-related impacts. He urged the students to spread anti-drug awareness in their localities and among their peers.



The programme concluded with a pledge to work towards a healthy and drug-free society.

Meanwhile, the NCORD Cell of the college organized another awareness programme focusing on the ill effects of drug abuse on youth.

NCORD Convener Prof. Irfan Ahmad Wagay delivered a detailed lecture on the adverse physical, mental, social and economic impacts of drug addiction on society. He emphasized the importance of awareness, counselling and collective responsibility in eradicating the menace of drugs and encouraged students to stay away from all forms of addiction.

The programme witnessed active participation from students and faculty members.

In continuation of the awareness initiatives, the College COTPA Committee also organized an anti-tobacco awareness drive in the nearby market vicinity of the college.

Students and volunteers, accompanied by committee members interacted with local shopkeepers and residents to spread awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and related products.

The participants appealed to shopkeepers not to sell tobacco products, particularly to the youth, and encouraged the public to further spread awareness in the locality.

The programmes reflected the college's commitment towards promoting a healthy, aware and drug-free society through educational and community outreach initiatives.

## Shopian holds awareness, sports activities under 100 day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, MAY 19:** As part of the ongoing 100 Day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, a series of awareness, yoga and sports activities were conducted across different schools and zones of district Shopian today to spread the message of a drug-free and healthy society.

The activities were aimed at sensitizing students and the general public about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encouraging youth to adopt a positive, disciplined and healthy lifestyle.

Students, teachers, staff members and community participants took active part in the programmes and expressed their commitment towards the cause of Nasha Mukta Abhiyan.

Awareness programmes were held in several educational institutions, where students and staff participated in pledge-taking and awareness activities were informed about the dangers of substance abuse and the importance of collective responsibility in preventing drug addiction.

As part of the Abhiyan, yoga sessions were organized across schools and other venues, with participation from students and staff.

The AYUSH Department also conducted yoga related activities, highlighting the importance of physical fitness, mental well-being and a balanced lifestyle in keeping youth away from drugs.

Sports activities were also held at various locations to engage students in constructive and healthy pursuits. Events such as Kabaddi, basketball and cricket were organized under the banner of Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan.

A cricket match was also held at Zainapora, where Kabaddi and other sports activities witnessed enthusiastic participation from students.

In addition, awareness rallies, pledge ceremonies and symbolic activities such as balloon release with anti drug messages were conducted to spread the message of "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" among the wider community.

The day long activities reflected the collective efforts of schools, departments and local stakeholders in promoting awareness against drug abuse.

The campaign emphasized that prevention, awareness, sports, yoga and community participation are key tools in protecting the younger generation from the menace of drugs.

## Awareness programme on NALSA Veer Parivar Sahayita Yojana 2025 held at Shopian

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, MAY 19:** District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Shopian in collaboration with the Indian Army's 44 Rashtriya Rifles (RR), organized a comprehensive awareness programme today focusing on the NALSA Veer Parivar Sahayita Yojana 2025.

The event witnessed large-scale participation from ex-servicemen, serving Army personnel, and their families.

The programme was graced by several prominent judicial and military dignitaries, including, Mehmood Ahmad Chowdhary, Principal District & Sessions Judge (PD&SJ)/Chairman,

DLSA Shopian; Mudasar Farooq, Secretary, DLSA Shopian, Col. Jaspreet Singh, 21 Sector, 44 RR.

During the event, Rafie Ahmad Ganie, Chief LADC Shopian provided a detailed explanation of the NALSA Veer Parivar Sahayita Yojana 2025.

He highlighted the core pillars of the scheme, which include, legal aid and advocacy support, financial assistance mechanisms, Welfare support tailored for the families of martyred soldiers, disabled soldiers and ex-servicemen in distress.

Additionally, Mehraj-ud-Din Wani, Chief LADC Pulwama and Secretary DLSA, Mudasar Farooq, addressed the gathering, emphasizing

the importance of community reach and legal literacy.

A major highlight of the programme was an interactive question-and-answer session.

The PD&SJ alongside Chief LADC, patiently resolved queries from the audience, further enlightening the attendees on their fundamental legal rights and entitlements.

The programme concluded smoothly with a vote of thanks proposed by Col.

Jaspreet Singh who reaffirmed the Indian Army's unwavering commitment to supporting the Veer Parivar in seamlessly accessing their rightful legal benefits.

## Mission Vatsalya, Police conduct inspection drive under Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan in Bandipora

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, MAY 18:** In a major step towards safeguarding children from tobacco exposure and substance abuse, Mission Vatsalya (Child Protection Services) Bandipora in collaboration with Bandipora Police conducted a special inspection drive across shops and marketplaces in the district to check the illegal sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products to minors in and around educational institutions.

The drive was conducted under the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan aimed at creating awareness against drug abuse and ensuring a safe environment for children and youth. The inspection drive was also joined by members of the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), officials from the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) and Child Helpline (CHL), who actively participated in the inspection and awareness campaign.

During the drive, several shops were inspected for violations under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Several violators found selling tobacco products near schools were fined on the spot and strictly warned against repeating the offence. The inspection aimed to ensure strict implementation of laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors and near educational institutions. Officials reiterated that such practices pose a serious threat to the health and wellbeing of children. Speaking during the awareness campaign, Chairperson Child Welfare Committee Bandipora, Dr Asima, and Protection Officer Bandipora, Gowhar Mahmood sensitized the general public about the provisions of the JJ Act, 2015 and urged citizens to immediately report any violations related to child protection, sale of tobacco to minors, child labour, abuse or neglect.

They appealed to the public to actively support child protection mechanisms and report such incidents on emergency helpline numbers 1098 and 112 for immediate intervention and assistance.

Officials stated that such inspection drives and awareness programmes would continue across the district to ensure a safe, healthy and drug-free environment for children and youth.

## Sericulture Department Bandipora concludes Three-Day Farmers Skill Development Programme at Hajin

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, MAY 19:** A three-day Farmers Skill Development Programme conducted under Capacity Building Activities (Silk Samagra-2/HADP), organized by the Sericulture Development Department ISDP Sonawari of District Bandipora, concluded successfully today at Mulberry Nursery Vijpara Hajin.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from silkworm rearers and progressive farmers from different areas of Sonawari.

Speaking on the occasion, Development Officer Sericulture ISDP Sonawari, Dr. Inayat Saleem Fazili, highlighted the immense potential of sericulture as a low-investment, employment-generating and sustainable rural enterprise capable of transforming the socio-economic condition of farming communities. He emphasized that the favourable climatic conditions of the district, coupled with the active participation of women in sericulture activities, provide a strong foundation for the rapid growth and strengthening of the silk industry in the district.

During the programme, farmers were

imparted practical and technical training on scientific silkworm rearing practices, chawki rearing management, disease prevention measures, mulberry plantation management and modern cocoon production techniques aimed at enhancing cocoon yield and improving farmers' income. The programme mainly focused on creating awareness among farmers regarding sericulture as a profitable and sustainable alternative to traditional farming practices.

Technical sessions during the programme were conducted by various expert resource persons, including Zonal Incharge ISDP Sonawari, Peer Nazir Ahmad and other field functionaries of the department.

On the successful culmination of the programme, certificates, sericulture-related tool kits, informative booklets and other materials were distributed among 50 participating farmers for their encouragement and capacity enhancement.

The participants appreciated the department for organizing such a valuable and farmer-oriented programme aimed at strengthening the sericulture sector at the grassroots level.

## Chairperson National Commission for Women holds Mahila Jan Sunwai in Srinagar; Stresses prompt redressal of women's grievances

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAY 19:** Chairperson National Commission for Women, Vijaya K. Rahatkar today presided over a Mahila Jan Sunwai sessions at Banquet Hall Conference Complex Srinagar as a part of its flagship outreach programme "Rashtriya Mahila Aayog Apke Dwar" aimed at hearing women's grievances and ensuring their prompt redressal.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar Akshay Labro, SSP Srinagar, Dr. G.V. Sundee Chakravarthy, Additional District Development Commissioner Srinagar, Rifat Aftab Qureshi, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed, DySP Headquarters, Syed Sleet Shah and other



senior Officers were present on the occasion

During the proceedings, the Commission heard 14 registered and other walk-in cases concerning women's grievances.

Vijaya K. Rahatkar also held an interaction with senior Officers of District Administration Srinagar and District Police present on the occasion.

The Chairperson emphasized the crucial role of One Stop Centres (OSCs) in addressing crimes against women and ensuring timely support to victims. She further stressed the need for a more sensitive, empathetic, and responsive approach by the police while handling cases related to crimes against women.

## DC Bandipora finalizes Eid-ul-Azha Arrangements

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, MAY 19:** Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, along with Senior Superintendent of Police Bandipora, Ajaz Ahmad Zargar, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to finalize arrangements for the smooth celebration of Eid-ul-Azha across the district.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held regarding arrangements for Eid prayer, sanitation, drinking water supply, electricity, traffic regulation and availability of Poultry.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted water and electricity supply during the festival days, particularly in areas where large congregational Eid prayers are scheduled to be held.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed the concerned departments to ensure proper regulation of sacrificial animal markets during Eid-ul-Azha and stressed upon strict enforcement against unhygienic disposal of animal waste to prevent pollution and maintain cleanliness.

She instructed the District Sheep Husbandry Officer and concerned enforcement teams to ensure fixation and display of rates of sacrificial animals for the convenience of the public and to keep a close check on overpricing and unfair market practices. The DC further emphasized adherence to sanitation norms at slaughter sites and directed Municipal Committees to ensure timely collection and scientific disposal of waste generated during the festival.

The DC stressed upon Municipal Committees to intensify sanitation drives around mosques, Eidgahs and marketplaces and also directed the departments concerned to conduct awareness campaigns regarding sanitation and proper waste disposal during Eid celebrations. The Traders Association Bandipora appreciated the Municipal Committees for their sanitation efforts in the district.

While reviewing traffic management measures, the Deputy Commissioner directed Traffic Police to ensure smooth vehicular movement and strictly regulate roadside parking in busy market areas and around Eidgahs to avoid congestion.

The District Sheep Husbandry Officer Bandipora was directed to make proper announcements regarding designated sale centres for sacrificial animals to facilitate the general public. The meeting also discussed arrangements related to poultry supply and market regulation during the festive period.

The Deputy Commissioner further directed the Executive Officer Municipal Committee to submit proposals for construction of bathrooms at Eidgahs to improve public convenience during major congregations. Fire and Emergency Services and Health Department were directed to remain fully prepared and ensure availability of emergency response mechanisms during the Eid festivities. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized coordinated efforts among all departments to ensure that people celebrate Eid-ul-Azha in a peaceful, hygienic and hassle-free atmosphere.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Assistant Commissioner Panchayats Bandipora, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Bandipora, District Sheep Husbandry Officer Bandipora, Assistant Director FCS&CA Bandipora, Assistant Regional Transport Officer Bandipora, Assistant Director F&E&S Bandipora, District Information Officer Bandipora, Chief Medical Officer Bandipora, Assistant Commissioner/Designated Officer Food Safety & Standards Bandipora, Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council Bandipora, Assistant Controller Legal Metrology Bandipora, Administrative Officer Waqf Board Bandipora and representatives of Traders Federations Bandipora and Sumbal/Hajin.

Sub Divisional Magistrates of Gurez and Sumbal, Block Medical Officers, Block Development Officers, Executive Officers of Municipal Committees Hajin and Sumbal, Food Safety Officers, Naib Tehsildars, Station House Officers, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti, KPCL and R&B departments, and Tehsildars attended the meeting through virtual mode.

## DC Ganderbal reviews implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules 2026

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, MAY 19:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today chaired a meeting to review the implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules-2026 in urban and rural areas of the district.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed the existing system of solid waste management, including waste collection, segregation and disposal mechanisms across the district, and stressed the need for effective implementation of sanitation measures.

He also reviewed the mechanism for handling bulk waste generators and emphasized strict



adherence to prescribed waste management norms.

The DC directed the concerned officers to ensure source segregation of waste at all levels and called for intensified awareness and enforcement measures to strengthen compliance.

Emphasizing strict enforcement of the Solid Waste Management Rules, the DC directed officers to take action against violators and ensure imposition of penalties wherever required. He particularly stressed that bulk waste generators violating the norms must be penalized.

To strengthen oversight and implementation, the DC directed the constitution of a dedicated monitoring cell to supervise and monitor implementation of the Solid Waste Management Rules-2026 across all blocks of the district.

The DC also instructed all Block Development Officers to issue proper garbage collection rosters to ensure timely and systematic waste disposal within their respective jurisdictions.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, District Officer Pollution Control Committee, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Committee, Ganderbal and all Block Development Officers of the district.

## Kishtwar admin launches 7-Day Mega 'Jan Bhagidaari Sabse Door-Sabse Pehle' IEC Campaign at Panchayat Tipri- Bunjwah

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KISHTWAR, MAY 19:** Under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Sh. Pankaj Kumar Sharma and under the supervision of Additional District Development Commissioner (Nodal Officer), Kishtwar, Vinod Kumar Behnal, the 07-day Mega "Jan Bhagidaari Sabse Door-Sabse Pehle" IEC Campaign was formally launched in the district, starting from Panchayat Tipri, Block Bunjwah.

The 07-day campaign will continue till 25th May 2026 at various venues, along with activities as per the schedule notified by the District Administration Kishtwar.

The initiative kicked off with a grand Awareness & Benefit Saturation Camp along with several welfare-oriented activities for the tribal community, setting the tone for a comprehensive outreach programme aimed at ensuring inclusive growth and empowerment of tribal communities residing in remote areas.

During the camp, on-the-spot services and registrations under Financial Inclusion Schemes were facilitated including PMJJBY applications with 10 on-the-spot registrations, PMSBY applications with 08 on-the-spot registrations, and a total of 10 Aadhaar seeding consent forms collected.

Awareness regarding Government Welfare Schemes and Financial Inclusion Schemes was also imparted during the programme.

The initiative reflects the Government's unwavering commitment towards inclusive development and upliftment of tribal populations through doorstep delivery of services and real-time grievance redressal.

The awareness camp, led by BDO Bunjwah, Sh. Aijaz Ahmad, witnessed enthusiastic participation from tribal residents, locals, and community stakeholders, creating a vibrant atmosphere of engagement and awareness.

A comprehensive overview of the campaign was shared with the attendees, highlighting the objective of achieving 100 percent saturation coverage of Government Welfare and Financial Inclusion



Schemes, including PMJJBY, PMSBY, PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, and other flagship schemes across remote tribal areas.

Several key government departments, including Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, FCS&CA, Education, J&K Bank, Lead Bank Office, Fisheries, PDD, ICDS, Health, Agriculture, Youth Services & Sports, Revenue, Polytechnic, and ITI, established informative stalls to showcase their flagship schemes and services.

A total of 12 grievances from members of the tribal community were received during the camp, out of which 10 were resolved on the spot.

Beneficiaries were also provided with immediate assistance, awareness regarding their entitlements, and facilitation for availing government services.

An awareness session on the ongoing 100 Days Nasha Muk

JK Abhiyan was also conducted on the occasion by the BDO Bunjwah.

A Gram Sabha was convened during the programme, fostering meaningful dialogue on community priorities. Participants actively discussed local issues, passed resolutions, and reinforced the importance of grassroots governance in the development process.

The event served as an invaluable platform for direct interaction between tribal communities and government officials, helping address grievances, promote transparency and strengthen mutual trust.

Local residents and tribal elders expressed deep appreciation for the administration's outreach efforts, observing that such initiatives are crucial in regions where access to essential services has traditionally remained limited.

## Modalities discussed to strengthen legal aid services in District Jail Udhampur

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**UDHAMPUR, MAY 19:** A meeting was convened today by the Secretary District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Jammu regarding the implications of the Supreme Court judgment in Shankar Mahto vs State of Bihar (2026). The meeting was conducted in virtual mode and was attended by the Learned Secretary, High Court Legal Services Committee, Superintendent, District Jail Udhampur and the Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC), Udhampur. The aim of the meeting was to ensure the effective implementation of the said judgment, which reaffirms that prisoners continue to enjoy their fundamental rights and must be provided timely legal aid and fair legal procedures under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The participants

deliberated on the need to strengthen coordination among the High Court Legal Services Committee (Jammu/Srinagar), District Jail, Udhampur and the LADC, Udhampur, with a view to eliminating delays in filing legal aid applications, appeals, revisions, and other related proceedings on behalf of incarcerated persons. It was unanimously decided to conduct a prompt review of the legal aid status of all inmates in District Jail, Udhampur, and to prepare a joint action plan with clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the digital transmission and monitoring of case records. It was further resolved to hold review meetings in the virtual mode at regular intervals to monitor compliance, address bottlenecks, and ensure that the directions of the Supreme Court in Shankar Mahto vs State of Bihar are fully implemented in practice.

## Series of Legal awareness camps held across Reasi

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**REASI, MAY 19:** Under the visionary leadership of Khalil Choudhary, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Reasi (also Pr. District and Sessions Judge Reasi) and the able guidance of Pooja Gupta, Secretary, an awareness programme on the Road Safety Act was organized at Government Middle School Karua by PLVs of TLSC Katra. The Para Legal Volunteers sensitized the students, staff members and local participants regarding the importance of road safety rules and responsible behaviour while using roads. The participants were made aware about traffic regulations, use of helmets and seat belts, prevention of over-speeding, dangers of drunk driving and safety measures for

pedestrians and school-going children. Another awareness programme in the form of a Nukkad Natak on the POCSO Act was organized at Government Middle School (GMS) Garn by the PLVs of TLSC Katra. The main objective of the programme was to spread awareness among students, teachers and the general public regarding the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the importance of safeguarding children from abuse and exploitation. Through the medium of Nukkad Natak, the PLVs effectively conveyed messages related to child safety, reporting mechanisms, legal protection available to children and the role of society in preventing offences against minors.

Another Awareness Program

on Lok Adalat was organized by PLVs under the directions of Secretary, DLSA at Reasi. The programme was conducted with the objective of spreading awareness among the general public regarding the significance and advantages of Lok Adalat as an effective mechanism for amicable settlement of disputes. During the programme, the participants were informed that Lok Adalat provides speedy, simple and cost-effective justice through mutual settlement, thereby reducing lengthy court procedures and promoting harmony among parties. The resource persons highlighted that disputes related to matrimonial matters, motor accident claims, bank recovery cases, labour disputes, electricity and water bills and other compoundable matters can

be resolved effectively through Lok Adalat. The participants were also sensitized about free legal aid services provided by the Legal Services Authorities for deserving sections of society.

Another Awareness Programme on "Nasha Mukh Bharat" was organized by the Para Legal Volunteers of DLSA Reasi at Government Middle School, Nala Banji. During the awareness session, the participants were sensitized about the social, physical and psychological consequences of substance abuse and were encouraged to actively contribute towards building a drug-free society.

The speakers highlighted the importance of education, moral values and community participation in combating the menace of drug addiction.

HT EDITORIAL

Plug loopholes for successful implementation of golden card scheme

The Ayushman Bharat scheme launched across the country by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government has proved to be a boon for the poor people. The scheme better known as Golden Card scheme provides an option for a patient to get surgery free of cost at the government hospitals as well as private hospitals empaneled with the health department.

In the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir the scheme has also led to a relief for the people who are not well off economically. However, over the years there are certain issues that have cropped up and these need to be addressed at the earliest so that there are more benefits for the people. The private hospitals have been complaining that they are not receiving the payments from the government on time and due to which there is a delay in the surgeries of the patients.

In most of the cases the patients blame the hospitals for the inordinate delay in their surgeries and very few among them go to the root cause of the problem. Ideally the government should make the payments to the private hospitals well on time so that the surgeries and other procedures are carried out well on time. This would also mean that the system is an ideal one where the patients are able to get the surgeries done free of cost and that too at the top notch private hospitals.

At the same time the management of the private hospitals should not take the golden card beneficiaries for a ride. It has been observed that some of the private hospitals usually resort to delaying tactics while admitting patients having a golden card. These patients are asked to wait for months together to get a particular surgery in case they want to avail the benefits of the golden card. The same surgery can be arranged within a few days if the patient agrees to give up the benefits of the golden card and is ready to make the payment for the same.

For the reasons best known to the people at helm in the health department virtually no action whatsoever has been taken against such hospitals. It is imperative that the management and the owners of such hospitals are taken to task. Once action is taken against a particular hospital then others will fall in line and they would follow the rules and regulations in letter and spirit.

# The Women of Kashmir and Their Role in the Economy: A Historical Perspective and Contemporary Realities



SHAHNAWAZ NAZIR

The women of Kashmir have long been silent architects of the region's cultural and economic identity. From the snow-covered valleys to the bustling artisan homes tucked within rural villages, Kashmiri women have preserved traditions, sustained households, and contributed significantly to the local economy. Their labor—often hidden behind the intricate beauty of embroidered shawls, hand-woven carpets, and delicate papier-mâché designs—has been central to the survival of Kashmir's famed handicraft industry. Yet, despite their indispensable role, their contributions have often remained undervalued and overshadowed by social, political, and economic hardships.

Historically, Kashmiri women have played a dual role as caregivers and economic participants. In traditional Kashmiri society, women were deeply involved in agriculture, household industries, and artisanal crafts. Their skills in weaving, spinning, embroidery, and textile production became essential to sustaining local livelihoods. The handicraft traditions of Kashmir, renowned globally for their beauty and craftsmanship, owe much of their survival to generations of women artisans who passed down techniques and cultural knowledge from mother to daughter.

The shawl industry, one of Kashmir's most celebrated economic sectors, has long depended on women's

invisible labor. Women have contributed significantly to spinning, embroidery, and finishing processes, particularly in the creation of Pashmina shawls and crewelwork. Similarly, women have played key roles in carpet weaving, sozni embroidery, paper mâché decoration, and namda making. Their homes often doubled as workplaces, allowing them to balance domestic responsibilities with income-generating activities. This home-based model, while culturally accepted, also reinforced the invisibility of their labor, making their economic contributions difficult to quantify and often undercompensated.

During the Dogra rule and later under changing political administrations, Kashmiri women's economic participation remained largely informal and unrecognized. While men often dominated trade and public marketplaces, women remained behind the scenes, producing goods that sustained family incomes. Their work, however, was frequently mediated by middlemen, who controlled access to markets and captured much of the profit. This pattern of economic exploitation has persisted into the modern era.

In contemporary Kashmir, women continue to play a critical role in the economy, particularly in the handicraft and informal sectors. According to various sociological studies, including recent research on women artisans in districts like Pulwama, Budgam, and Srinagar, thousands of women depend on handicrafts for their livelihoods. These women are engaged in embroidery, shawl-making, crewelwork, carpet weaving, and other craft-based occupations that contribute substantially to Kashmir's domestic and export economy.

However, the challenges they face are immense. Globalization and the rise of machine-made products have

severely affected traditional handicrafts, reducing demand for labor-intensive handmade goods. The free flow of cheaper, mass-produced imitations has marginalized local artisans, especially women who already earn meager wages. Many women work long hours for low pay, often receiving only a fraction of the final market value of the products they create.

Political conflict has further compounded these hardships. Decades of unrest in Kashmir have disrupted trade, tourism, and access to markets. Frequent shutdowns, curfews, and instability have interrupted production cycles and diminished economic opportunities. The abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 and the prolonged communication blockade that followed created additional barriers, isolating artisans from customers and business networks. For many women who relied on local traders or digital platforms to sell their work, these disruptions led to significant income losses.

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these vulnerabilities. Lockdowns halted handicraft production, closed marketplaces, and severed supply chains. Women artisans, already operating at the margins, found themselves facing extreme financial insecurity. Studies have shown that many women experienced increased poverty and deprivation during this period, with limited access to government support or social protection schemes.

Despite these challenges, Kashmiri women continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience. Across the region, women-led self-help groups, cooperatives, and entrepreneurial ventures are emerging as powerful tools for economic empowerment. Organizations promoting direct market access, digital literacy, and fair trade practices are helping women

reclaim control over their labor and income. Younger generations of Kashmiri women are also entering education, entrepreneurship, and professional sectors in increasing numbers, diversifying their contributions to the economy beyond traditional crafts.

Government initiatives and non-governmental programs aimed at skill development, financial inclusion, and artisan registration have the potential to improve the situation. However, much more needs to be done to address structural inequalities. Ensuring fair wages, eliminating exploitative middlemen, improving access to markets, and recognizing women's labor formally are essential steps toward empowering Kashmiri women economically.

The story of Kashmiri women is not only one of hardship but also of endurance, creativity, and quiet strength. They are the keepers of heritage, the sustainers of households, and the unseen pillars of the region's economy. Their hands have woven not only exquisite crafts but also the social and economic fabric of Kashmir itself.

To honor the women of Kashmir is to recognize their labor, amplify their voices, and invest in their futures. A just and prosperous Kashmir cannot be imagined without the full inclusion and empowerment of its women. Their economic participation is not merely a contribution—it is a foundation upon which much of Kashmir's identity and resilience rests.

As Kashmir moves through uncertain times, the resilience of its women remains one of its greatest strengths. Their empowerment is not only an economic necessity but a moral imperative, essential for building a more equitable and hopeful future for the valley.

The author from Zangipora Chararsharif

## Digital Census Of India-2027



MOOL RAJ

India's Census 2027 has commenced, heralding the nation's first fully digital census—a transformative step in demographic data collection. This exercise, announced officially, is divided into two phases: house listing from 1 June and population enumeration thereafter.

At the heart of this digital transformation is the self-enumeration portal at se.census.in. For the first time, families can log in using a single mobile number and have the Head of the Household fill in essential details about their home and residents. Once submitted, the system generates a unique 11-digit Self-Enumeration ID, sent via email and SMS. This ID is crucial—enumerators visiting homes from 1 June will use it to verify and cross-check information, ensuring no duplicates or omissions.

Authorities emphasise saving this ID safely, as it bridges the gap between citizen input and official validation. This feature not only empowers people to contribute from the comfort of their homes but also reduces the workload on field staff, minimising errors in a country as vast and diverse as India.

Phase 1: House Listing

This phase involves cataloguing all structures—houses, huts, buildings—along with amenities such as electricity, water, and sanitation. Enumerators, equipped with GPS-enabled tablets, will visit households, scan the 11-digit Self-Enumeration ID (generated post-registration using one family's mobile number), and validate data in real time. This phase establishes a housing database, identifying infrastructure gaps, such as in Jammu and Kashmir's remote areas.



Phase 2: Population Enumeration

This phase delves into individual profiles: age, gender, occupation, education, marital status, religion, language, disability, and migration. It encompasses nomads, institutionalised persons, and transients. In Jammu and Kashmir, teams will cover high-altitude Ladakh outposts and flood-vulnerable areas of the Chenab Valley, using multilingual apps in Kashmiri and Bodhi.

Yet, success hinges on citizen cooperation. Officials are making a fervent appeal: log on to se.census.in between 17 and 31 May, register your family, and secure that 11-digit ID. This is not just paperwork—it is your voice in nation-building.

Septics worry about digital exclusion; not everyone has smartphones or internet access. To counter this, enumerators will assist offline households during visits, uploading data on their behalf. Awareness campaigns via TV, radio, and social media aim to reach all corners.

Why The Census Matters

The census's importance cannot be overstated. It underpins constituency delimitation, resource allocation, and schemes such as PMAY and Ayushman Bharat. Accurate data ensures targeted interventions: in Jammu and Kashmir, it will highlight youth unemployment in rural Doda district (over 70 per cent under 35) and housing shortages in urban Srinagar slums. Nationally, it tracks

urbanisation—projected at 40 per cent by 2027—and vulnerabilities exposed by COVID-19, informing health and digital inclusion policies.

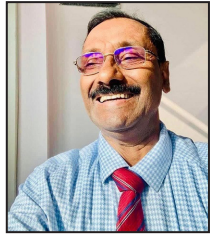
Digitalisation addresses past inefficiencies. The 2021 delay due to the pandemic underscores the need for resilience; tablets and cloud syncing will expedite results from years to months. Aadhaar linkages and biometrics enhance precision, with robust privacy protocols. Over a million enumerators, including those tackling Jammu and Kashmir's conflict-prone and remote areas such as Rajouri's forests, have been trained. Multilingual interfaces support 22 languages plus regional dialects.

Census 2027 is not merely a count; it is a digital leap towards a data-driven India. By embracing self-enumeration and modern tools, citizens and officials together forge a brighter future. Participate now—your details shape tomorrow. Since 1872, the decennial census has evolved into a governance cornerstone. From 1.21 billion in 2011 to an estimated 1.45 billion, it guides equitable growth—from flood-resilient infrastructure in Jammu's floodplains to tourism-led development in tourist destinations.

Census 2027 fortifies India's data-driven future. Active involvement ensures policies reflect ground realities.

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# Narendra Modi's Visit to Sweden: A New Horizon Opening



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

The relationship between India and Sweden has evolved into a remarkably special partnership built on trust, innovation, democracy, sustainability, and mutual respect. Though geographically distant and culturally different, the two nations have discovered strong common ground in areas ranging from technology and trade to environmental protection and global peace. India values Sweden not merely as a European partner but as a nation known for progressive ideas, scientific advancement, social welfare, and environmental leadership. Sweden, in turn, sees India as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, a vibrant democracy, and an emerging global power with immense human potential. One of the strongest pillars of India-Sweden ties is innovation. Sweden is internationally admired for its research ecosystem, startup culture, and technological excellence. Global companies such as Ericsson, IKEA, Volvo and H&M have established deep economic and commercial connections with India. These collaborations contribute not only to investment and employment but also to the modernization of India's industrial and digital infrastructure.

The special nature of the relationship became especially visible during the visit of Narendra Modi to Sweden. The visit highlighted how both countries envision a future driven by innovation, sustainability, clean energy, digital transformation, and smart urban development. The India-Nordic Summit further elevated the importance of Sweden within India's broader European engagement.

Environmental cooperation forms another important foundation of this friendship. Sweden is among the world leaders in sustainable development, renewable energy, waste recycling, and green urban planning. India, confronting the challenges of climate change and rapid urbanization, has found Sweden to be a valuable partner in building eco-friendly solutions for the future. Both nations support global climate action and emphasize responsible growth. Education and research cooperation have also strengthened bilateral ties. Indian students and researchers increasingly engage with Swedish universities and scientific institutions. Collaborative projects in biotechnology, artificial intelligence, healthcare,

renewable energy, and digital communication are helping create a bridge of knowledge between the two countries.

The democratic values shared by India and Sweden make the relationship even more meaningful. Both nations believe in pluralism, freedom of expression, international cooperation, and peaceful dialogue. Despite differences in size and history, they share a commitment to human dignity and inclusive development. The Indian diaspora in Sweden further enriches the relationship. Indians living in Swedish cities contribute significantly to academia, business, healthcare, engineering, and information technology. They act as cultural ambassadors connecting the traditions of India with the modern Scandinavian way of life. Trade relations between the two countries continue to grow steadily. Swedish companies view India as a dynamic market with enormous opportunities, while India benefits from Swedish expertise in advanced manufacturing, green technology, and innovation-led development. Cooperation under initiatives like "Make in India" and sustainable industrial partnerships reflects the practical depth of the bilateral relationship.

Cultural exchanges also deepen people-to-people understanding. Yoga, Indian cuisine, cinema, music, and literature have become increasingly popular in Sweden, while Indians admire Sweden's social harmony, quality of life, design culture, and environmental consciousness. Such cultural appreciation strengthens emotional bonds beyond diplomacy. India-Sweden relations are special because they are based not on temporary strategic interests alone, but on long-term shared aspirations for innovation, sustainability, peace, and human progress. The partnership represents a modern model of international friendship where technology, culture, environment, and democratic ideals come together harmoniously. In an increasingly uncertain world, the friendship between India and Sweden stands as an example of constructive global cooperation. It demonstrates how nations from different continents can collaborate meaningfully to create a more sustainable, peaceful, and technologically advanced future for humanity.

The Indian diaspora in Sweden is a rapidly growing community, estimated to number between 60,000 and 80,000+ individuals (including roughly 42,000 to 66,000 Indian nationals). The community is highly skilled, deeply integrated into the economy, and concentrated primarily in urban hubs like Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö. The vast majority of the diaspora consists of IT professionals, engineers, and researchers. Major Swedish multinational companies (like Ericsson, Volvo,



and Scania) employ a significant portion of these high-tech workers. Sweden attracts thousands of Indian students annually, with an estimated 2,500 enrolled in Swedish universities, heavily pursuing advanced degrees in engineering and technology. While immigration boomed in the 2000s, earlier waves of the diaspora in the late 20th century consisted of political asylees, people relocating from Uganda, and children adopted by Swedish families. The Indian diaspora in Sweden warmly welcomed Modi during his visit. Addressing the Indian community abroad has become a distinctive feature of Modi's foreign tours, and the Stockholm interaction showcased the emotional and cultural bond connecting overseas Indians with their homeland. The diaspora event celebrated Indian culture, democratic values, and India's rising global stature. The visit also carried geopolitical significance. India's engagement with Nordic nations strengthened its relationship with Europe at a time when global power structures were shifting rapidly.

The most common pathway for Indians in Sweden is through employer-sponsored work permits. After working for 44 months within a seven-year period, individuals can qualify for per-

manent residency (PR). There are deep ties between the two countries, with roughly 22,000 Swedish nationals holding Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards.

There are several vibrant Indian Cultural Associations spread across the country, providing community support and organizing festivals for Diwali, Holi, and others.

The open-air festival Namaste Stockholm is a massive annual event supported by Swedish ministries, drawing tens of thousands of visitors to celebrate Indian dance, music, and food. Hinduism is steadily growing across Sweden due to the influx of Indian engineers, and Ayurveda and Yoga practices are widespread among the broader Swedish population.

The visit of Narendra Modi to Sweden marked a significant chapter in India's growing engagement with the Nordic countries and reflected New Delhi's expanding global diplomatic outreach. Sweden, known for innovation, technology, sustainability, and progressive governance, emerged as an important partner for India in Europe. Modi's Sweden visit was not merely ceremonial; it symbolized a strategic effort to deepen cooperation in trade, green technology, defense, digital innovation, and global diplomacy. During

the historic visit to Stockholm, the Indian Prime Minister held extensive discussions with the Swedish leadership, including then Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. The bilateral meetings focused on innovation partnerships, clean energy, smart cities, skill development, defense manufacturing, and startup ecosystems. Both countries recognized that India's vast market and Sweden's technological expertise could complement each other remarkably well.

One of the major highlights of the visit was the India-Nordic Summit, where leaders from Nordic countries gathered to interact with the Indian Prime Minister. This summit represented a new diplomatic dimension in India's foreign policy. The Nordic nations—including Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Iceland—are globally respected for sustainable development, environmental consciousness, education systems, and technological advancement. India sought to build closer ties with these nations for mutual economic and strategic benefit. The visit emphasized innovation as the central pillar of India-Sweden relations. India expressed keen interest in attracting Swedish investment in sectors like telecommunications, clean technology, renewable energy, manufacturing, and digital infrastructure. Swedish firms also viewed India as one of the world's fastest-growing markets and a promising destination for expansion.

Environmental cooperation formed another important dimension of the visit. Sweden has long been recognized as a global leader in sustainable development and environmental protection. India, facing enormous challenges related to urbanization, pollution, and energy demand, explored Swedish expertise in waste management, water conservation, green transport, and renewable energy technologies. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement and sustainable economic growth. Defense cooperation also received attention during the visit. Sweden's defense industry possesses advanced technological capabilities, and discussions included possibilities of collaboration under India's "Make in India" initiative. The growing strategic partnership reflected India's broader effort to diversify defense ties beyond traditional partners.

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## PEACE OF MIND



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Before ten years, we could clearly differentiate between a city and a village. In the past, electricity was so weak that bulbs only gave dim light on the walls. It was very difficult to get clear visibility on the floor surface. Electric poles were very rare; most households used temporary and risky wiring for electricity and felt immense pleasure even when they got a dim light occasionally.

The roads were just sources of dust, and even a heavy bus would move on these roads with uneven jerks. Drivers kept the third and fourth gears at rest due to the dilapidated condition of the roads. The roads were risky and caused frequent accidents, especially when a driver made a wrong turn.

In the upper reaches, ten or more households would share a single water point. Womenfolk had to do labour work that was not exercise for them. During winters, when taps

got frozen, our womenfolk rushed to nearby springs to bring drinking water and used it very carefully. That activity was so hectic that most households ended up in unhygienic conditions and severe health issues.

Alhamdulillah! Today every household in remote areas has sufficient water facilities. I salute those who sponsored schemes like the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and provided clean tap water to every home. This act definitely blessed the higher-ups. It is a great comfort to the underprivileged class, and people appreciate the scheme. But due to some selfish contractors and negligence of officials, this scheme faces issues in some areas where the public complains that the work was not done properly. Some contractors even engage household members for pipe digging without paying them labour charges.

Schemes like the Prime Minister's Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) and other projects for better connectivity, protection bunds, and drainage systems have provided great relief to the population living in villages. Today, almost every village is connected to each other, roads are macadamized, and people feel great comfort and appreciate the government for these steps.

Today, around 90 percent of villages are electrified, and only a few areas still lack electricity. But one unfortunate thing is the hike

in electricity charges. It is very difficult for the underprivileged class to pay electricity bills promptly; they should be given relaxation by the central government.

What came to my mind encouraged me to write this article for a renowned newspaper of the Kashmir Valley.

When I was in 7th class, I started bodybuilding. It was my passion to stay healthy and fit so that I would not feel exhausted and lethargic in school. My school witnessed how much I contributed to a number of activities like scouting, cricket, bodybuilding, etc.

In Srinagar at that time, we had very few gym centres, and they were not equipped with advanced machines. Most players were passionate and did their best, always staying away from drugs and keeping their health a priority. Now, after every two kilometres in Srinagar, we have a gym centre. Unfortunately, today we are facing a severe drug menace. Even the government is very concerned and is applying stringent acts against drug peddlers. Drug peddlers deserve capital punishment, and every corner should be checked so that this curse is eliminated. Youth need proper counselling, education, and sports activities.

Today's youth demand a free zone, which means we should counsel them properly. Tell them, "Give your best, you are still in." Never

discourage them when they fail to achieve their goals. Always encourage them and provide opportunities so that they get enough time to know themselves and overcome all odds in life.

I am residing in Bhatti Mohalla Raiyar-Ich, Khansahib, District Budgam, a beautiful and mesmerizing village in the Kashmir Valley. My village is known for noon chai and maki roti. Due to the famous tourist destination Doodhpathri, my village has gained identity as an emerging tourist village in Khansahib.

Just ten years ago, this village was backward in all respects road connectivity, electricity network, tap water facilities, and many more. Today, we have most facilities, but unfortunately, the road connectivity from my home to the main Doodhpathri Road has still not been taken up by the concerned authorities. Some miscreants are blocking the main entrance and keeping us deprived of this basic facility. Still, I am blessed and thankful for many things. I appeal to the government authorities to kindly intervene and take up our road from High School Raiyar-Ich to Bhatti Mohalla. We are losing our dignity without a road. How is it possible that due to some selfish brokers, they can block our road? We have MSc students and civil service aspirants, and the area is purely inhabited by the Gujjar community.

Alhamdulillah, I am passionate about bodybuilding. I have set up a mini gym in a single room at my home.

One of my friends, Mohammad Yousuf, suggested that there is a gym at Yarikhah, just 2 kilometres from my home. A couple of days ago, I went there, got the key from the owner's family, opened the lock, and was surprised that we have such a great gym with imported machines near the shrine of Syed Yaqoob Balkhi. Alhamdulillah.

I talked to some people and the gym owner about their experience. They told me that people are not aware of such beneficial activities. I requested them to please spread the awareness among the general youth so that they visit the gym, get attracted, and explore the iron game world.

Suggestion: Our village is emerging in terms of development, education, business, and many more fields. So we have to keep in mind the mistakes we made while framing the master plan of cities like Srinagar, where we face flood threats and pollution issues. We must keep ample space for plantation, drainage, roads, and irrigation canals. We must stop illegal encroachment so that development becomes permanent, not temporary.

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# Health Benefits of MANGO



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

When it comes to health, we should always say that we will never compromise with it because wise people always give priority to their health and achieve their life goals. Health has no alternative. It is the greatest blessing in the world and should never be taken lightly. We do not need rocket science to stay healthy. We only need simple, fresh, and hygienic food for a healthy lifestyle.

Anyone who wants to stay away from serious infections and diseases needs an adequate amount of fresh and healthy food on a regular basis. It is our responsibility to introduce seasonal fruits and vegetables into our families and share their health benefits. Health experts believe that fresh fruits and vegetables are very good for our health. Natural and pure

food items are always beneficial.

One thing is interesting: everyone has different food choices. The same is true when choosing recipes and meals. This is fine, but health should always be our priority. We should never ignore health-related issues.

In this article, let us learn some amazing facts about the mango, one of the most favourite and beneficial fruits that the Almighty has bestowed upon us. Mango is a seasonal fruit with great health benefits. It is native to India and Southeast Asia. Maharashtra, Odisha, and Punjab are among the states where mangoes have been cultivated for centuries.

Mango is beneficial for digestive health, heart health, and eye health. It contains antioxidants that may lower the risk of cancer. Mangoes have unique characteristics such as taste and size. This delicious fruit offers many health benefits.

### Benefits of Mango

Mango boosts the immune system as it contains vitamin E, which helps protect us from various infections. People who do not get enough vitamin E are at a higher risk of infections.

Mango contains important min-

erals like folate and copper, along with vitamins E and B.

Mango supports heart health because it contains potassium and magnesium. These help maintain good blood flow and reduce the risk of high blood pressure. It also helps lower bad cholesterol.

Mango helps in digestion. It is very good for digestive health because it contains digestive enzymes called amylases.

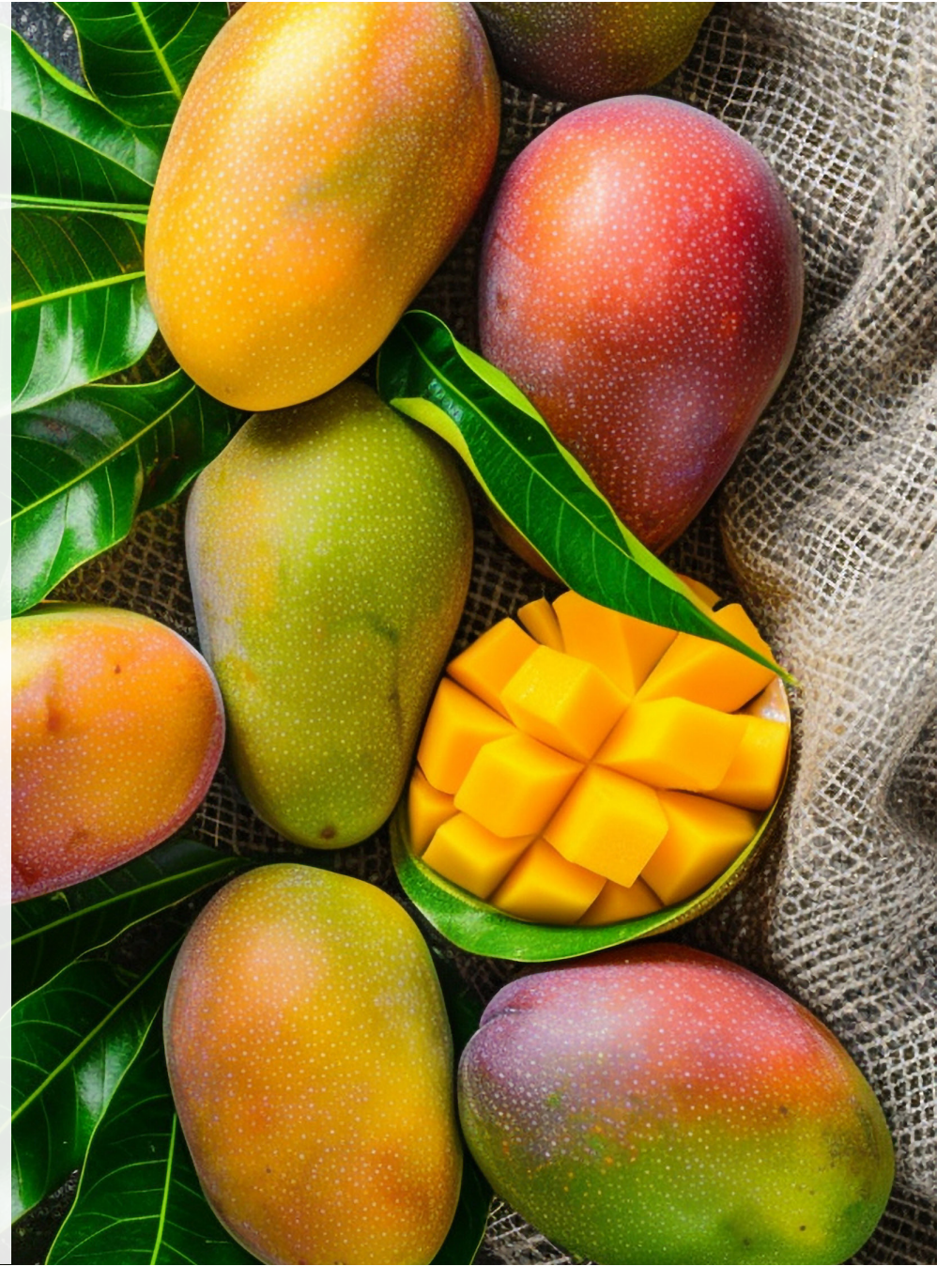
Mango supports eye health as it contains nutrients that help keep our eyes healthy. It also contains antioxidants that protect us from cancer.

### Suggestions

We should eat a balanced diet to keep our bodies fit and healthy. A balanced diet includes proper amounts of vitamins, minerals, and fats. It plays a crucial role in our overall development.

We should stay away from junk food and oily, reused food items commonly sold on the streets. We must avoid unhealthy food that spoils our lifestyle and makes us ill.

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# SUMMER MAKE-UP TRICKS TO BEAT THE HEAT



■ SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Summertime is right around the corner, but can your makeup withstand the heat? Summer makeup can be quite a challenge due to the high humidity and scorching heat.

Summer makeup means spending hours applying makeup only to sweat it all off in the heat. It's the perfect weather for meltdown mishaps; running foundation, chapped lips, smudged eyeliner and streaky mascara. Rising temperatures can cause a makeup meltdown, leaving you with oily skin, fading foundation and creased eyeshadow.

A full face of makeup can quickly start running, look cakey and unnatural, and be incredibly hot to be outside in. However, there are a few simple measures you can take to give your full makeup look a little more staying power on the hottest of days.

The common question is What's the best way to make your look sweat and heat resistant and start enjoying sunshine. Summertime makeup has a completely different set of need and minor adjustment in beauty routines can prevent melted make up and sun burn etc. The golden rule for summer make-up is "soft, delicate and very sparing." Water-based and powder make-up items are better during summer. Use powder eyeshadows and powder blush-

on. Waterproof mascaras and eye liners will prevent eye make up from running during the hot and humid season. Waterproof or water resistant lip colours and lip liners are also available. Or, go for matte lipstick and add just a dab of gloss in the centre for a delicious pout.

Cleansing the skin before make-up is most important. Wash off with plenty of cool water. After cleansing, use chilled rose water to tone and cool the skin. This helps to close the pores. In hot and humid weather, wrap an ice cube in a clean cloth and wipe the face with it, just for a few seconds at a time. This helps to close the pores.

For oily skin, apply astringent lotion with cotton wool, to close pores and reduce oiliness. Or apply a face serum. It is lighter than a moisturizer and provides an ideal cover. Applying primer also helps. Dab it on oily areas, like the T-zone. It is said that Milk of Magnesia works as a primer during the humid season. It helps to reduce oiliness. Take some Milk of Magnesia on moist cotton wool or a sponge and dab it on the face. Allow it to dry.

After a few minutes, apply water based foundation, blending with a damp sponge for a smooth finish. Use foundation with beige tones, rather than pink. I feel beige suits Indian skin colour better. Add a drop or two of water, before applying, to provide a lighter coverage. Then apply powder to "set" the foundation. When you apply powder, press the powder all over the face and neck, with a slightly damp sponge. This helps it to set and last longer. Or, use only compact powder, which lasts longer and provides a smooth finish. Primers and powders help to remove the oily look. Try tinted powders, like warm

yellow tones of powder. Bronzing powders may also suit. If you want a really healthy glow without the shine, go for a bronzing powder. Avoid applying too much. It should be lightly applied, using a big powder puff. A powder puff is better than a brush in summer.

Blot your make-up with tissue. When you apply make-up, remember not to smear too much or rub it. Whether it is foundation or blusher, it is best to dot it with a light touch, using a finger tip, or an applicator. It can also be applied lightly and evenly with a damp sponge.

A hint of blusher should be used on the cheeks. A powder blusher is best in summer. Use it after you have applied powder and at the end of your make-up. Apply on the cheekbones and blend it outwards and slightly upwards. Applying foundation on the lips before applying lipstick to help lipstick last longer. Go for matte lipstick and add just a dab of gloss in the centre for a delicious pout. Use a spray mist to help set the make-up. If you use kajal, after applying on the lower lid, just below eyelashes, apply a line of grey or brown eye shadow over it. This helps it last longer.

At night, you need more colour. Applying lipstick with a lip brush helps it to last longer. The lip colour should match the attire. However, bronze, coral, copper, burgundy and even red would look good for the night. Coral lipsticks are in fashion. A coral or dark pink lipstick may look very attractive, even with light coloured clothes. Apply a hint of lip gloss after applying lipstick. This gives a fresh and cool look.

The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

# Asthma Unmasked - Facts, Care, and Hope



■ DR. VINOD CHANDRASHEKHAR DIXIT

World Asthma Day is observed annually on 5th May to raise awareness about asthma, its prevention, and management. It highlights the importance of early diagnosis, proper treatment, and access to healthcare to reduce asthma-related complications.

Asthma is a long-term condition that affects the airways. It can cause coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, and breathlessness. With timely diagnosis, correct inhaler use, trigger control, and regular follow-up, most people with asthma can live active and fulfilling lives. Asthma is one of the most common chronic non-communicable diseases, affecting over 260 million people worldwide. It is responsible for more than 450,000 deaths each year, most of which are preventable.

Asthma attacks cause great distress for patients, their families, and caregivers. They may result in hospital admission and, in some cases, death. The theme for World Asthma Day 2026 is "Access to anti-inflammatory inhalers for everyone with asthma, still an urgent need."

This theme highlights a simple but important message: asthma is often driven by inflammation in the airways. Reliever medicines may ease symptoms quickly, but anti-inflammatory inhalers help control the underlying inflammation and reduce the risk of attacks. GINA emphasizes that people with asthma should have access to inhaled corticosteroid-containing treatment, as advised by their doctor. This is especially important because many asthma-related deaths are preventable with the right care, timely treatment, and better access to essential medicines.

Asthma affects people of all ages, including children and adults. Its burden is high across the world and in India. It can cause missed school and work days, poor sleep, and reduced quality of life. Many asthma-related deaths occur due to under-diagnosis, under-treatment, or poor access to essential inhalers. India carries a high asthma burden, with studies estimating over 34 million people affected. Air pollution, dust, pollen, smoke, respiratory infections, and changing weather can worsen symptoms. The good news is that asthma can be managed well. Early detection and the right medical plan can make everyday life much easier.



Asthma symptoms can come and go. They may be mild at first and may worsen at night, early morning, during exercise, or after exposure to triggers. Common symptoms include wheezing or a whistling sound while breathing; persistent cough, especially at night or early morning; shortness of breath; chest tightness or pressure; coughing after exercise; breathlessness during routine activities; needing a reliever inhaler more often than usual; and repeated chest infections or slow recovery after a cold. Asthma attacks involve obstruction of the air passages in the lungs which reduces the ability of the person to inhale life sustaining oxygen into the body. The airway obstruction is caused by spasm and tightening of the airway muscles, and inflammation which causes both swelling of the walls of the air passages and mucus or phlegm blocking the airways.

Doctors and allied health care professionals are called upon to ensure that all people with asthma, including most preschool children with asthma, are prescribed evidence-based, essential, inhaled corticosteroid-containing medication. These should be prescribed in addition to, or in combination with, reliever medication, to prevent the continuing avoidable morbidity and mortality from asthma. World Asthma Day is more than a date on the calendar. It is a global reminder that millions still struggle to breathe freely, and that awareness, access, and action can change that. Asthma is not just a personal health issue — it is a public health priority shaped by air quality, healthcare access, education, and stigma. The real progress lies in early diagnosis, proper treatment, cleaner environments, and breaking the myth that asthma limits a full, active life. With inhalers, education, and community support, most people with asthma can manage their condition and thrive.

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## Ministry of Culture and LPC Organise Anti-Drug Folk Theatre Workshop in GGMS Arigam Budgam

■ GULFAM BARJI

**BUDGAM, MAY 19:** A colourful one-day cultural programme was organised at Govt, Girls Middle School Arigam, Budgam under the joint collaboration of the Ministry of Culture, Govt, of India New Delhi and Luka Pather Centre Ichgam Budgam. Artists associated with the centre presented an educational folk theatre performance against drug abuse under the direction of Gh Nabi Bhat. The performance received huge appreciation from the audience for its meaningful message and



vibrant presentation. The play beautifully showcased the rich tradition of Kashmiri folk theatre while delivering a strong social message against drug addiction. The artists' lively performances left a deep cultural and educational impact on the audience especially the students. During the programme experts also interacted with students and provided detailed information about the history, importance and role of traditional folk theatre in society. Speakers highlighted that traditional arts play a significant role in preserving cultural identity and guiding the younger generation towards positive values. The school administration appreciated the efforts of Luka Pather Centre in promoting and preserving traditional art forms and described the programme as highly informative, meaningful and successful. The administration also expressed hope for continued collaboration in organising similar cultural and educational programmes in the future.

The programme was organised under the Guru Shishya Parampara "Repertory Grant" Scheme 2025-26 approved by the Ministry of Culture, Govt, of India, New Delhi. A large number of students, school staff and local residents attended the event.

### Public Notice

I need to change my Name in my bank account as per my Adhaar and Pan Card. As my bank account name is Tawfeeq Mehraj which needs to be changed as per Adhaar and Pan identity Tawfeeq Ahmad. I'm attaching my proof identities for the same. For any query or clarification please contact +91 7051590812.

### Government Of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KALANTRA / KREERI

Subject: Application of TABASUM.NABI D/O GH NABI BHAT R/O SHEIKHPORA Tehsil KREERI for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of self for the issuance of RBA in his own favor

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of RBA in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of SHEIKHPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the BHAT community having annual income 603936// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..GH NABI BHAT Father 59 years Govt employee
- 2...NASEEMA BAGUM Mother 54 years H/W
- 3...SABREENA NABI sister 24 years student
- 4...TABASUM.NABI self 21 years student
- 5.. HAIFA NABI sister 14 years student
- 6.... ABIROO NABI sister 10 years student

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

NAIB TEHSILDAR KALANTRA

### Public Notice

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the name of the consumer recorded in the electricity records of JKPLC Wagoora under Consumer ID No. 021204000298 has been entered wrongly as Gulshan Mir S/o Mohd Abdullah Mir R/o Soripora Kreeri.

The correct name of the consumer is Ghulam Mohammad Mir S/o Mohammad Abdullah Mir R/o Soripora Kreeri.

Now, therefore, objections, if any, regarding the correction/change of name should be conveyed to the office of JKPLC Wagoora within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained and the concerned department shall proceed with the correction accordingly.

Applicant:

Ghulam Mohammad Mir  
S/o Mohammad Abdullah Mir  
R/o Soripora Kreeri  
Consumer ID: 021204000298

### Public Notice

I have last Number plate of my vehicle (Bike) bearing No JK05 G4588 at somewhere Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact with ARTO SOPORE within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....AADIL AHMAD KHAN  
S/O ...SHABIR AHMAD KHAN  
R/O ...HAIL JAGIR KREERI  
Dist...BARAMULLA

### Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on my father's name Lt BASHIR AHMAD GANAI Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 021204000007 wants to be registered on my name ADIL BASHIR S/O BASHIR AHMAD GANAI 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....ADIL BASHIR  
S/O...Lt BASHIR AHMAD GANAI  
R/O ...KREERI  
BLOCK.... WAGOORA

### Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on my husband's name HASSAN MIR Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040002609 wants to be registered on my name HAFIZA BEGUM W/O HASSAN MIR 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....HAFIZA BEGUM  
W/O...HASSAN MIR  
R/O...KALANTRA BALA  
BLOCK.... WAGOORA

### Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on my Father's name MALLA MOHDA (GHULAM MOHI UD DIN MALLA ) Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040002549 wants to be registered on my name MANZOOR AHMAD MALLA S/O late MALLA MOHDA 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....MANZOOR AHMAD MALLA  
S/O ...LATE MALLA MOHDA ( Ghulam Mohi ud Din Malla) R/O...KALANTRA BALA  
BLOCK.... WAGOORA

## Government of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Khoja Bagh, Baramulla

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Fresh e-NIT No. MIDB/07 OF 2026-27 | Dated: 18-05-2026

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K UT, Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Baramulla, invites tenders on item rate basis by e-tendering mode for the following items of work from the reputed Manufacturers/contractors/fabricators/firms/Joint Ventures having relevant experience. The bidding process shall be completed online in two covers viz Cover '1st' -Tender fee and Earnest Money details. Deposit, fulfillment of prequalification criteria, technical specifications and acceptance to terms and conditions of the tender & Cover '2nd' - Financial Bid in the prescribed BOQ.

S.No	Particulars of the work	Name of Division	Advt. Cost (in Lacs)	T.D Cost (In Rs.)	E/M (In Rs.)	Validity of Rates
1	Providing and fitting of pumping unit of 02 cusec capacity and other electro mechanical components of LIS Dangiwa (4702) IRRSS2021100087--_various Mechanical and Electrical Work to be carried out at Lift Irrigation Scheme Dangiwa--revised.	MID Baramulla	11.09	500/-	22000/-	90 Dya

Position of funds: Awaiting

Head of Account: Regular Capex Budget MH-4702.

AAA: Order No: 51/MCO of 2021-22 Dated:11-10-2021

Key/critical Dates:

01	Date of issue of Tender Notice	18/05/2026
02	Date of downloading of bidding documents	18/05/2026 from 04.00 PM
03	Date, Time & Venue of Pre-bid meeting	25/05/2026 at 11.00 AM in the office of Executive Engineer, MID Baramulla.
04	Bid submission start date	18/05/2026 from 04.00 PM
05	Bid Submission end date	08/06/2026 up to 04.00 PM
06	Date & time of opening Technical Bids (online)	09/06/2026 at 01.00 PM in the office of Executive Engineer, MID Baramulla.
07	Date & time of opening Financial Bids (online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation

1. Bid documents can be assessed at and downloaded from the websites www.ifckashmir.com / http://jktenders.gov.in
2. The Bids shall be deposited on the website http://jktenders.gov.in
3. The complete bidding process will be online http://jktenders.gov.in.
4. The bids received shall be opened in the office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Baramulla on the date given above; the bids shall be evaluated online/offline thereafter.
5. Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 5 & 6 of the table above payable at Baramulla.
  - a. Bid Security to be pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Baramulla Bid Security will have to be in form of CDR/FDR/IBG of any scheduled Bank and shall have to be valid for one year or more after last date of receipt of Bid.
  - b. The cost of downloaded tender documents should be in form of DD/Treasury challan //GR MH 0702 in favor of Executive Engineer MID Baramulla payable at Baramulla.
6. The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of DD, Earnest money in shape of CDR / FDR must be delivered to the office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Baramulla as and when demanded.
7. The bidder could be an individual, Limited Company/corporation, Proprietary firm, Partnership firm, Consortium or Joint Venture Companies. Bids from joint ventures are allowed with maximum two partners.
8. The bid for the work shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids. If any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/tender before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the said earnest money shall stand forfeited.
9. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website http://jktenders.gov.in.
10. Queries by email if any should be made at amitabhan.721013@jk.gov.in

No: MIDB/782-88 | Date: 18/05/2026

Sd/- Executive Engineer Mech. Irri. Division Baramulla

DIPK: 1418/26 | Dated: 19-05-2026

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MERIT BASED ADMISSION

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Registration & Preference Filling	09 May - 27 May 2026
1st Merit List	30 May 2026
Admission (1st Round)	01 June - 06 June 2026
2nd Merit List	09 June 2026
Admission (2nd Round)	10 June - 15 June 2026
Spot Round	18 June - 25 June 2026

#### COMMENCEMENT OF CLASSES

- Winter Zone Colleges: 15 June 2026
- Summer Zone Colleges: 15 July 2026

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ADMISSION COORDINATOR: Dr. Khurshed Wani (9682169453)

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# Satish Sharma visits The Art of Living International Center

Highlights Healing, Youth Empowerment, and Jammu & Kashmir's Transformation

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BENGALURU, MAY 19:** Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, and Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma today visited The Art of Living International Center in Bengaluru as part of the ongoing celebrations marking 45 years of The Art of Living.

During his visit, Satish Sharma met Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and joined a special Satsang at the newly inaugurated Dhyan Mandir, a meditation hall dedicated to the millions of seekers visiting The Art of Living International Center from around the world. The hall was inaugurated earlier this month by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The visit formed part of the month-long celebrations bringing together leaders, policymakers, artists, industrialists, sports persons, and spiritual figures from across India and abroad to commemorate four and a half decades



of The Art of Living's humanitarian work toward creating a violence-free and stress-free society. Addressing the gathering, Satish Sharma spoke about the importance of compassion, emotional resilience, and collective efforts in rebuilding communities and strengthening society.

Expressing gratitude for Gurudev's engagement with the people of Jammu & Kashmir through challenging times, he said,

"Gurudev, during our darkest times, you stood by us. You held our hand."

He particularly acknowledged the impact of stress-relief and trauma-healing interventions carried out across the region, especially among children and communities affected by prolonged conflict. "The relief and healing that our children received from stress and trauma through your guidance is, in my view, among the greatest contributions made

anywhere in India," he said.

Satish Sharma also spoke on a difficult phase in his own life and shared his journey of resilience and renewal.

Speaking about the future of Jammu & Kashmir, Satish Sharma highlighted the region's changing landscape and growing opportunities, expressing confidence in its developmental trajectory and tourism potential.

"We are witnessing a period

of transformation in Jammu & Kashmir. There is growing optimism, renewed confidence, and increasing opportunities for our youth and communities," he said.

During his interaction, Satish Sharma also referred to discussions around the region's tourism growth and reaffirmed confidence in Jammu & Kashmir's emergence as a leading destination in the years ahead. Apart from participating in the Satsang, Satish Sharma toured various initiatives across the International Center, including the Sri Sri Gaushala, Gurukul, and Ved Agama Paathshala, which work toward preserving traditional knowledge systems while integrating contemporary education and values.

The visit also highlighted the longstanding work carried out by The Art of Living and its initiatives in Jammu & Kashmir over the past two decades in the areas of trauma relief, youth leadership, peace building, prison rehabilitation, skill development, and community empowerment.

## Mission Shakti Jammu intensifies Anti-Drug Campaign with awareness session at NCC Academy Nagrota

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MAY 19:** To strengthen the fight against substance abuse, Mission Shakti District Hub for Empowerment of Women - Department of Social Welfare organised an impactful Drug Awareness Session at NCC Academy- Nagrota-the aim was to encourage the cadets to become ambassadors of a healthy, disciplined and drug-free society.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from NCC cadets, faculty members and officials, creating an atmosphere of active engagement and social responsibility.

The session was delivered by Advocate Kiran Thakur, who sensitised young minds about the alarming consequences of drug addiction, the importance of mental resilience and the crucial role youth can play in protecting society from the growing menace of narcotics.

Addressing the gathering, District Mission Coordinator Mission Shakti Shagun Manchanda emphasised that today's youth possess the power to transform society through awareness, discipline and positive leadership. She encouraged cadets to remain vigilant against peer pressure and harmful influences while promoting a culture of fitness, confidence and responsible decision-making.

The programme was conducted under the supervision of Colonel Kuldeep Kachru, Commanding Officer, 4 J&K BN NCC Jammu, who appreciated Mission Shakti Jammu for its continuous support and commitment towards youth awareness and social welfare initiatives.

The interactive session highlighted the psychological, social and legal repercussions associated with drug abuse and stressed the importance of early intervention, community participation and sustained awareness campaigns. Cadets actively participated in the discussion and pledged to spread the message of a drug-free India within their communities, reaffirming their commitment towards building a healthier and stronger nation.

## Jammu-Punjab-Haryana Pustak Parikrama 2026 flagged off from Samba to promote reading culture

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SAMBA, MAY 19:** National Book Trust India under the Ministry of Education, Government of India today flagged off the Jammu-Punjab-Haryana Pustak Parikrama 2026-a Mobile Book Exhibition under the Books on Wheels scheme here from the Office of the Deputy Commissioner Samba.

The Mobile Book Exhibition was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan along with Chief Education Officer Yash Paul Sharma.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the rich collection of books displayed in the Mobile Exhibition Bus. She interacted with officials and visitors present and lauded the initiative of NBT India for making quality books accessible to readers at their doorstep.

The DC herself purchased books to encourage reading habits and promote a vibrant reading culture in the district.

The exhibition offers a wide range of books available at affordable prices across diverse subjects including Indian history, geography, biographies and autobiographies, health and wellness, yoga, mental health, science, environment, culture, art, literature, personality development, inspirational writings and books for children and young readers.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appealed to students, teachers, parents and book lovers to visit the Mobile Exhibition Bus and explore books according to their interests. She remarked that books play a vital role in preserving knowledge, heritage, culture and the collective wisdom of society while connecting readers from ancient India to the modern world.

NBT India has also launched the Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya initiative through which citizens can access more than 7,000 titles across diverse subjects through a free mobile application.

The Mobile Book Exhibition Bus shall travel across different districts of the Jammu region till June 26, 2026, covering Samba, Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Reasi, Ramban, Kishtwar, Doda, Udhampur and Kathua before proceeding towards Punjab.

The Pustak Parikrama shall visit schools, colleges, libraries, universities and prominent public locations, bringing quality books directly to readers and inspiring young minds towards lifelong learning, creativity and knowledge-sharing.

## CEO conducts surprise inspection of Schools in Zone Thathri

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**DODA, MAY 19:** Chief Education Officer Bhushan Kumar Pathak conducted a surprise inspection of the educational institutions in Zone Thathri today to assess the academic environment and overall functioning of schools. The CEO inspected academic activities and provision of infrastructure including accommodation, civic amenities, staff position at Government High

School Thaleela; Government High School Poneja and PM Shri GHSS Chiralla. During his visit to High School Thaleela, he directed the Planning Section to coordinate with the executing agencies for the early handover of the newly constructed school building after the overall condition of the institution was found unsatisfactory. The CEO issued on-the-spot directions to the teaching staff to improve the teaching-learning process and ensure a conducive

academic environment.

Member Legislative Assembly Daleep Singh Parihar joined the CEO during the latter's visit to PM Shri GHSS Chiralla. They interacted with staff and students, listened to their concerns and assured necessary support for addressing genuine issues. The visit concluded at GHSS Bhella, where the CEO inspected the Girls' Hostel and interacted with the girl students to inquire about the facilities available in the Hostel.

## Census 2027: Self-Enumeration process picks up pace across Kathua

MLAs Rajeev Jasrotia, Dr Bharat Bhushan complete self-enumeration, appeal for mass participation

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA, MAY 19:** The Self Enumeration under Census 2027 has gained momentum across Kathua District as the public participation in the process is picking up pace.

Member Legislative Assembly Jasrotia Rajeev Jasrotia and MLA Kathua Dr. Bharat Bhushan today completed their self-enumeration, reaffirming their support towards the nationwide exercise aimed at ensuring accurate and inclusive population data collection.

The self-enumeration process of MLA Kathua was carried out in the presence of ADDC Surinder Mohan Sharma at his residence.

The district administration team provided detailed assistance regarding the step-by-step digital procedure.

Similarly, Tehsildar Kathua Vikram Kumar along with his team assisted MLA Jasrotia Rajeev Jasrotia in the smooth completion of the self-enumeration process.

Speaking on the occasion, the legislators appealed to the people

to actively participate in the self-enumeration process, terming it an important exercise for effective planning and developmental policymaking in the country. They urged citizens to utilise the digital platform and complete the process from the comfort of their homes within the stipulated timeline.

The elected representatives appreciated the efforts of the District Administration Kathua in spreading awareness and facilitating the public regarding the self-enumeration process under Census 2027.

Meanwhile, the Charge Officers across the district are organising a series of awareness sessions, public outreach programmes and special camps to educate the masses about the importance, procedure and benefits of self-enumeration. The officers are sensitising people at Panchayat, ward and village levels and encouraging maximum public participation to ensure comprehensive and accurate coverage under Census 2027.

Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma said that the Self Enu-

meration process under Census 2027 is receiving encouraging public response across the district. He appealed to the citizens to actively participate in the exercise and complete self enumeration within the notified timeline. He further stated that the district administration has put in place dedicated teams, awareness camps and facilitation mechanisms to assist the public and ensure maximum participation in the nationwide exercise, which forms the foundation for effective planning and inclusive development.

## Director FCS&CA inspects flour, oil Mills

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MAY 19:** A team of the FCS&CA Department, headed by the Director Rajesh Kumar Shavan on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive inspection of flour mills at Gangyal- engaged in grinding wheat into Atta under the Public Distribution System (PDS).

The inspection was aimed at reviewing the grinding process, quality standards, hygiene and sanitation conditions, packaging, stock position and timely dispatch of Atta to the departmental stores for further distribution among the consumers. The Mills inspected included Upkar Flour

Mill, Mahajan Flour Mill, Jammu Flour Mill, National Flour Mill and Bhagwati Flour Mill.

During the inspection, the Director emphasized the importance of maintaining prescribed quality parameters and ensuring transparency and efficiency in the supply chain so that quality food grains and Atta are made available to beneficiaries without any interruption. He also directed the concerned officials and mill operators for proper stacking of wheat and Atta, to take preventive measures for pest control, to strictly adhere to the guidelines and standards laid down by the Department.

## Samba admin gears up for Baba Chamliyal Mela, Baba Sidh Gorla Ji Mela -2026

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SAMBA, MAY 19:** Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today reviewed the preparations for the smooth and successful conduct of the Annual Baba Chamliyal Mela and Baba Sidh Gorla Ji Mela in the District.

The meeting discussed in detail the arrangements related to security, sanitation, drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, medical facilities, traffic management, transport facilities, fire and emergency services, tourism promotion and overall convenience of the

devotees expected to visit the shrines during the mela days.

The Deputy Commissioner exhorted concerned departments to ensure timely completion of assigned works and maintain close coordination for seamless management of the religious events.

Directions were issued to the Police Department for foolproof security arrangements and traffic regulation, while the PWD Department was asked to ensure improvement and maintenance of roads leading to the shrine.

## Jammu-Punjab-Haryana Pustak Parikrama 2026 flagged off from Samba to promote reading culture

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SAMBA, MAY 19:** National Book Trust India under the Ministry of Education, Government of India today flagged off the Jammu-Punjab-Haryana Pustak Parikrama 2026-a Mobile Book Exhibition under the Books on Wheels scheme here from the Office of the Deputy Commissioner Samba.

The Mobile Book Exhibition was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan along with Chief Education Officer Yash Paul Sharma.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the rich collection of books displayed in the Mobile Exhibition Bus. She interacted with officials and visitors present and lauded the

initiative of NBT India for making quality books accessible to readers at their doorstep. The DC herself purchased books to encourage reading habits and promote a vibrant reading culture in the district.

The exhibition offers a wide range of books available at affordable prices across diverse subjects including Indian history, geography, biographies and autobiographies, health and wellness, yoga, mental health, science, environment, culture, art, literature, personality development, inspirational writings and books for children and young readers.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appealed to students, teachers, parents and book lovers to visit the Mobile Exhibition

Bus and explore books according to their interests. She remarked that books play a vital role in preserving knowledge, heritage, culture and the collective wisdom of society while connecting readers from ancient India to the modern world.

NBT India has also launched the Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya initiative through which citizens can access more than 7,000 titles across diverse subjects through a free mobile application. The Mobile Book Exhibition Bus shall travel across different districts of the Jammu region till June 26, 2026, covering Samba, Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Reasi, Ramban, Kishtwar, Doda, Udhampur and Kathua before proceeding towards Punjab.

## DC Kathua reviews progress under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, smart metering

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA, MAY 19:** Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today reviewed the progress achieved under the Prime Minister Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and the Smart Metering Programme at a meeting attended by concerned officers and representatives of the implementing agencies. The meeting was informed that so far a total of 3228 applications seeking solar installation under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana have been received in the district, of which 2993 applicants have selected vendors for installation of rooftop solar panels. It was further given out that rooftop solar panels have been installed in 1915 cases in addition to

1828 already commissioned installation. The meeting was further apprised that subsidy has been redeemed in 1792 cases and reimbursement has been completed in 1714 cases, reflecting steady progress in implementation of the flagship scheme aimed at promoting clean and affordable energy solutions among households. The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for intensifying awareness and public outreach activities to encourage the maximum number of households to avail the benefits of the scheme. He directed the concerned departments and field functionaries to organise awareness camps at Panchayat, ward and village levels to educate the masses about the ben-

efits, application procedure and subsidy provisions under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

While reviewing the pace of Smart Meters, the meeting was informed that Kathua district has shown better performance in Jammu Division in implementation of the programme in the last fiscal.

The Deputy Commissioner impressed upon concerned officers to further accelerate the coverage of households under smart metering, stating that the scope for expansion remains immense. He emphasised that smart metering would help improve transparency, energy efficiency and consumer convenience while ensuring better management of electricity consumption.

# Hike in fuel prices to have no direct impact on India's fiscal situation: SBI Report

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MAY 19:** The SBI research report has said the recent hike in the petrol and diesel prices are going to have no direct impact on the fiscal situation.

SBI Ecowrap said the historical data shows that hike in petrol and diesel price has been followed by a decline in consumption immediately after the hike, only to recover thereafter with no decline visible in the annual consumption levels.

"Further, immediate impact on CPI inflation is likely around 15-20 bps in May-June 2026. So we revise our FY27 forecast to 4.7%. There is no direct impact of this hike on the fiscal situation," it said.

The current increase in oil price



by Rs 3 provides a relief of Rs 52,700 crore in under-recoveries, which is 15 per cent of the expected total loss of the OMCs in financial year 2027.

"If we assume that the Government reduced the excise duty on petrol and diesel to zero from its current level of 11.9% and 7.8% respectively, it will lead to reduc-

tion in government revenue/gain of OMCs to the tune of Rs 1.9 lakh crore. This might increase fiscal deficit by 0.5% of GDP, if the government doesn't reduce the expenditure," the report added.

The report said, "Our estimates suggest that states would lose Rs 0.8 lakh crore if Centre's excise duty is reduced to nil, keeping all else same. However, higher oil prices will benefit states by around Rs 30,000 crore, so the net impact of excise duty cut on states revenue would be Rs 50,000 crore."

On Sunday, the Trump administration has allowed a sanctions waiver on Russian seaborne crude to expire. This will add to the woes of India, as the country managed to survive one of the worst global oil shocks in recent years through a narrow opening. UNI

## Need for generating awareness and integration of schemes in handloom and handicraft sector: Report

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MAY 19:** There is an apparent need for generating awareness and integration of various schemes in the handloom and handicraft (HH) sector, initiated by different ministries such as MSME, textiles, and culture, said a joint report of the Institute for Human Development (IHD) and Crafts Council of India (CCI) released here on Monday.

The report, "Economics of Indian Craft", noted that the handloom and handicraft sector, which is a main source of livelihood for many families, faces multiple issues like low income of workers, limited access to markets, and various obstacles the establishments face in day-to-day operations.

Basically, official data for this sector was limited, and previously, an attempt was made in the Sixth Economic Census. At that time, each manufacturing unit was asked whether it was engaged in handloom or handicraft activities.

The primary survey was conducted in five states covering Assam, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal, both in rural and urban areas.

The handloom industry is characterised by manual weaving techniques, often using traditional looms operated by skilled artisans. This survey covers only the manufacturing component of Handloom and Handicraft (HH) activity.

"Only the persons/units engaged in manufacturing the handloom or handicraft products were covered in the survey, excluding thereby the units which were exclusively engaged in the trading, that is, the purchase and sale of handloom/handicraft products."

The survey found that in employment terms, out of 61 lakh persons, about 29.4 lakh were engaged in the handloom sector and 31.7 lakh were involved in the handicraft sector.

"In terms of the total number of HH units, the rural areas had a little higher share (18.7 lakh units) than the urban areas (15.2 lakh units).

"If we look at the state-wise rankings, then Uttar Pradesh ranked first (12.5 lakh units), followed by the States of Rajasthan (8.5 lakh), West Bengal (7.4 lakh), Tamil Nadu (3.3 lakh), and Assam (2.2 lakh units)."

The survey noted that female ownership in handloom establishments is followed by Rajasthan (94.5pc), Uttar Pradesh (78.2pc), Assam (68.8pc), and West Bengal (47.9pc).

"In the handicraft establishments too, the female ownership was quite significant in Uttar Pradesh (65.1pc), West Bengal (49.5pc), and Assam (44pc)."

Many organisations operating from within the household premises, and a significant proportion of handloom establishments, remain unregistered under any formal scheme or programme.

A high proportion of owners of HH units under the proprietary and partner-

ships have a low education level.

"Among 61 lakh workers engaged in the HH sector, the proportion of hired workers was relatively low in each State. The proportion was the lowest (5.2pc) in Uttar Pradesh and highest (37.4pc) in the State of Assam. The proportion of hired workers is generally higher in urban areas compared to rural areas."

The survey found that the majority of establishments reported that their workers were trained through traditional and inherited knowledge.

Lack of market access and financial constraints were reported by the majority of HH establishments in each state except Uttar Pradesh.

In terms of Gross Value Added (GVA), HH establishments of the five states contributed about Rs 51,445 crore.

It is with the reference year being the last accounting year (prior to the date of survey) for establishments maintaining accounts, and the last 365 days for those not maintaining accounts.

The percentage share of the HH sector in respect of GVA in relation to the overall Gross State Value Added (GSVA) by the manufacturing sector for the year 2023-24 works out to be 9.6pc for Assam, 9.9pc for Rajasthan, 0.9pc for Tamil Nadu, 3.6pc for the State of Uttar Pradesh, and 6.8pc for West Bengal.

"If we talk about GVA per worker, then the average for the five states was about Rs 84,000. In this dimension, West Bengal showed the highest number with Rs 1.25 lakh, and Uttar Pradesh has the lowest, Rs 44,000 per worker."

Many artisans continue to use only traditional techniques, which limits the market value. For addressing this issue, continuous up-skilling through training programmes is necessary.

"There is also an urgent need to create and implement schemes in order to improve access to raw materials, finance, and social security, given the fact that the handloom and handicraft."

"The sector is a crucial source of livelihood for millions, particularly women, as well as other vulnerable and marginalised communities."

Over the past decade, this sector has sustained many crises such as COVID-19, demonetisation, GST issues, and market fluctuations.

"However, the proportion of establishments with a decline in the scale of production in relation to the position ten years before, as well as in comparison with the pre-COVID period, has been substantially high."

The survey suggested linking youth with artisan activities through entrepreneurship schools and through higher education systems can also ensure the sector's sustainability.

Enhancing social security is also vital to retain and attract talent in this sector, which needs partnerships with other sectors to develop schemes for health, pensions, and overall well-being. UNI

## TVS Venu to take stake in Jana Small Finance Bank

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**CHENNAI, MAY 19:** TVS Venu, a leading player in India's financial services sector though nBFC TVS Credit Services, has agreed to acquire a minority stake in Jana Small Finance Bank Limited (JSFB) through a combination of primary issuance of warrants and a secondary purchase for an equity ownership of up to 9.9% on a fully diluted basis, which includes 4.9% to be owned by TVS Motor Company, subject to all applicable approvals.

TVS Venu has also signed definitive agreements to acquire 100% stake in PGIM India Asset Management. The investment in JSFB (Jana) will allow for mutual collaboration in various areas for the long-term success of the Bank, subject to applicable laws.

Jana has an established presence in mass retail and MSME banking, a strong growing secured lending base and a national distribution footprint.

With over 12 million customers served, 822 outlets across 23 states and 2 union Territories, and advances and deposits of over Rs. 35,000 crore each as of March 31, 2026, the Bank offers a strong platform for long-term participation in India's credit, savings, and investment growth.

TVS Motor Company Chairman Sudarshan Venu said, "We firmly believe that a key driver to India's growth is the strengthening and expansion of India's financial services. We have been serving more than 44 million financial services customers across more than 100,000 touch points pan India, and are excited about the huge opportunity that the sector presents."

This investment in Jana is aligned with TVS Venu's long-term approach to support high-quality institutions that serve India's growing financial needs and its expanding digital financial ecosystem. JSFB has built a credible banking franchise with a strong presence across customer segments central to India's credit, savings, and investment growth.

We are thankful to TPG Capital for backing and building Jana together with Ajay and his team. We are also excited to welcome new investors, particularly the highly respected industrialist Mr S P Lohia, founder of Indorama Corporation and Ms Shruti Lohia, through her investment vehicle Zi Capital PCC.

We are very thankful to Mr Haigreve Khaitan and Khaitan & Co for their continued advice and legal counsel. Subject to the necessary approvals, we look forward to supporting Jana in its journey towards a leading Bank in India."

The transaction will be completed after receipt of necessary approvals and fulfilment of customary closing conditions, a company statement said here on Monday. UNI

## ITC empowers 31,800 Spice Farmers through tech-driven programme across 2.2 Lakh Acres

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MAY 19:** ITC Limited has built a comprehensive agri-ecosystem that is empowering Indian farmers to cultivate high-value spices through access to advanced advisory services, technological inputs, traceability systems and global market linkages, the company said.

Backed by its state-of-the-art spices processing facility in Guntur and its integrated technology-enabled spices programme, ITC said it has cumulatively benefited more than 31,800 spices farmers across 2.2 lakh acres.

The initiative has helped farmers improve productivity, adopt sustainable farming practices and enhance incomes through export opportunities.

The company said it emerged as India's leading exporter of organic spices in 2025, expanding the global market for Indian spices while strengthening sustainable agricultural value chains and rural livelihoods. ITC's spices processing facility in Guntur, spread across six acres, is among Asia's largest processed spices facilities with a handling capacity of over 20,000 metric tonnes annually. The facility can process more than 15 varieties of spices and is equipped with specialised processing, logistics and packaging infrastructure for organic produce.

The company said the facility enables end-to-end traceability through barcode-based sourcing systems, ensuring visibility across the processing chain and improving compliance with food safety standards in international markets.

ITC said it has built a robust backward integration programme focused on

farmer empowerment through three key models: Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Integrated Crop Management (ICM) and organic farming. These initiatives aim to provide farmers with better agronomic practices, inputs and market access.

According to an earlier analysis by IDH - The Sustainable Trade Initiative, farmers associated with ITC's spices programme over a 10-year period witnessed a 42 per cent increase in incomes compared to baseline farmers, driven by higher yields, reduced costs, better quality and improved market access.

The company said its focus on premium and value-added spices, including organic and traceable products, has enhanced its sourcing competitiveness in global markets amid rising demand for health-focused and ethically sourced products. ITC said it has expanded the presence of Indian spices in regulated export markets including the United States, the European union and the United Kingdom. Technology continues to play a key role in the programme.

The company said its spices consignments have consistently met food safety norms in markets such as the EU, Japan and the US, helping reduce recall risks and improve export access for Indian spices. ITC also leverages its 'phygital' platform, ITCMAARS, to deliver AI-powered personalised advisory services to farmers through Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). The platform offers tools such as AI-enabled crop calendars, weather alerts, pest detection systems, fertiliser calculators and "Krishi Mitra", a GenAI-powered multilingual voice assistant and chatbot. UNI

## Altiva SIF launches Altiva Equity Ex-Top 100 long-short fund to push expansion of equity-led strategies

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MAY 19:** Altiva SIF by Edelweiss Mutual Fund on Monday announced the launch of its second offering under Altiva Specialised Investment Fund (SIF) platform, marking a strategic expansion into equity-led specialised strategies, said an official statement here.

"Altiva Equity Ex-Top 100 Long-Short Fund," the new fund is specially designed to deliver long-term capital appreciation by investing in equity and eq-

uity-related instruments with a differentiated focus on opportunities beyond the top 100 companies.

This new fund offer (NFO) will open on May 18 and close on June 1 with units priced at Rs 10 during the offer period.

It adopts a unique approach by focusing on companies outside the top 100 by market capitalisation, allowing investors to access a broader and potentially under-researched segment of the market.

This type of strategy combines

bottom-up stock selection with the flexibility to take both long and limited short-term positions, including through derivatives, to navigate market cycles effectively. Speaking on the launch, Radhika Gupta, MD & CEO, Edelweiss Mutual Fund, said, "Following the successful launch of Altiva Hybrid Long Short Fund - now the largest SIF in the industry, driven by a strong investment track record and the confidence and trust of our investors - we are excited to introduce our next strategy."

"Altiva Equity ex Top 100 is predominantly a long-only strategy designed to capture long-term alpha through a high-conviction small and midcap portfolio. Backed by our strong track record in managing mid and small-cap funds and deep bottom-up stock research, this offering will focus on building a focused portfolio of high-conviction ideas," Gupta added.

Trideep Bhattacharya, President & CIO - Equities, Edelweiss Mutual Fund, further added that, "The Ex-Top 100 strategy, focused

on small and midcaps, opens opportunity to a broader universe of companies across sectors that are largely absent in the large-cap space."

Bhattacharya noted that it represents a fertile ground for high-growth businesses that are yet to be fully discovered by the market and has the potential to generate meaningful alpha.

"With the recent correction in SMID valuations, the strategy offers an attractive entry opportunity for investors," he added. UNI

# Celonis places India alongside North America in global growth strategy

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**BENGALURU, MAY 19:** In a significant endorsement of India's growing dominance in the global artificial intelligence economy, global process intelligence giant Celonis has elevated India to a standalone strategic market on par with North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific, describing the country as the emerging "global powerhouse" for Enterprise AI. The Germany- and US-headquartered company said India now occupies a central position in its global growth strategy as multinational corporations increasingly drive AI-led enterprise transformation from their Indian opera-

tions, GCCs and technology ecosystems. "India is a very unique market. In fact, we have elevated it to a market position similar to North America, EMEA, APAC and India," Celonis Chief Growth Officer Malhar Kamdar told UNI in an interaction here.

Calling India "the epicentre of process intelligence", Kamdar said the country's unique convergence of over 2,000 Global Capability Centres (GCCs), a massive technology workforce, leading IT services firms and rapidly expanding AI adoption made it unlike any other market globally.

"Many global enterprise AI transformations are now being powered from India either with GCCs, with partners, or a com-

bination of both," he said.

The remarks come amid intensifying global competition among technology companies to capture the rapidly expanding Enterprise AI market, with India increasingly emerging as both a talent hub and a strategic execution centre for global AI deployments.

Celonis, valued at nearly USD 13 billion, recently unveiled its next-generation "Celonis Context Model" platform, which the company says addresses one of the biggest weaknesses in enterprise AI systems - the absence of operational business context. "AI is missing something. It has blind spots because it doesn't understand how the business really works," Kamdar

said. He said enterprises worldwide were investing billions into AI but struggling to generate meaningful returns because AI systems lacked visibility into real-world business operations, workflows and decision-making structures.

The new platform aims to provide AI agents with operational intelligence by integrating process data, business rules and decision intelligence into a unified architecture capable of supporting enterprise-scale AI deployment. The company also acknowledged growing concerns over AI hallucinations, unreliable outputs and accountability risks in enterprise deployments. "We've all seen the hallucinations," Kamdar

said, adding that AI systems often fail because they operate without complete business context or access to full enterprise data. However, he maintained that companies deploying AI systems would ultimately remain responsible for operational decisions generated using such technologies.

"Ultimately the company is responsible for deploying technology," he said, while stressing that advanced AI systems would continue to require human supervision.

On fears that AI and automation could lead to large-scale job losses, Kamdar argued that technology historically transformed skill requirements rather than eliminating human

roles entirely. "AI is a force multiplier for humans," he said, adding that enterprises were increasingly using AI to clear long-pending operational inefficiencies and improve productivity. Celonis entered India in 2021 and currently employs over 300 professionals in the country, with headcount doubling over the past year.

Kamdar said the company would continue investing in talent, infrastructure and technology capabilities in India, though he declined to disclose investment figures. The executive also underlined the strategic role being played by India-based consulting firms, service providers and technology partners in the company's global growth

model. Asked about profitability and a potential IPO, Kamdar declined to reveal financial details but described the company as "financially strong" and focused on accelerating growth and innovation. Celonis has recently announced the acquisition of Ikgai Labs to strengthen its predictive AI and decision intelligence capabilities as part of its broader enterprise AI push. Despite growing speculation over a future public listing, Kamdar said the company had not fixed any IPO timeline and remained focused on expanding its leadership position in the rapidly evolving Enterprise AI sector. UNI

IPL 2026 SCENARIOS:

Eight Matches To Go, Three Playoffs Spots Left To Fight For



UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEWDELHI:** With only eight matches to go in the league phase of IPL 2026, three playoff spots are still up for grabs - only Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) are in the final four after beating Punjab Kings (PBKS) on Sunday. Here's a look at the teams in contention, and what they need to do (and need other teams to do) to qualify.

- **Royal Challengers Bengaluru**
  - **Played: 13, Points: 18, NRR: 1.065**
  - **Remaining match: SRH (A)**
- RCB have not only sealed their place in the playoffs, but more-or-less ensured that they will finish in the top two. After Rajasthan Royals (RR) lost last night to Delhi Capitals (DC), only Gujarat Titans (GT) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) can match RCB's points. However, it's near impossible for both teams to go past RCB on net run-rate, given that GT have only one match, and SRH two, to catch up. Not to forget that RCB also have another game to play.

- **Punjab Kings**
  - **Played: 13, Points: 13, NRR: 0.227**
  - **Remaining match: LSG (A)**
- PBKS' campaign has been on a freefall for the last three weeks, and their qualification chances have taken a further beating with the defeat to RCB. With just one game to go, against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) - who have won two of their last three contests - PBKS can finish with a maximum of 15 points. That will leave them at the mercy of other results as five teams can finish on 16 or more.
- **Gujarat Titans**
  - **Played: 13, Points: 16, NRR: 0.400**
  - **Remaining match: CSK (H)**
- GT can confirm a place in the playoffs with a win over CSK in their last game. A top-two finish will then depend on whether SRH win both their remaining matches or not; if they do, it will come down to NRR.
- **Sunrisers Hyderabad**

- **Played: 12, Points: 14, NRR: 0.331**
  - **Remaining match: CSK (A), RCB (H)**
- A win for SRH against CSK on Monday will seal qualification for them, as it will ensure CSK can finish on no more than 14 points. As mentioned above, it will also confirm a top-four finish for GT, leaving only one spot up for grabs.
- If SRH beat CSK and lose to RCB, then they can hope to finish in the top two only if GT lose to CSK. Both SRH and GT will then be on 16, with RR having the chance to join them if they win their last two. NRR will decide the team which ends up second among these three.
- **Rajasthan Royals**
  - **Played: 12, Points: 12, NRR: 0.027**
  - **Remaining match: LSG (H), MI (A)**
- With defeats in their last three games - and six defeats in their last eight - RR have been struggling. Even if they win their last two - against teams who have

- already been eliminated - they could still be one of four teams fighting for three spots on 16 points. However, if CSK lose to SRH on Monday, then 16 will assure qualification.
- **Chennai Super Kings**
  - **Played: 12, Points: 12, NRR: 0.027**
  - **Remaining match: SRH (H), GT (A)**
- As mentioned above, even if CSK win their last two matches and finish on 16 points, they could still be in a four-way fight for three spots. However, if CSK lose to SRH, then 16 points will be enough for qualification, which means SRH and GT will both be through to the playoffs.
- **Kolkata Knight Riders**
  - **Played: 12, Points: 11, NRR: -0.038**
  - **Remaining match: MI (H), DC (H)**
- PBKS' defeat against RCB has offered some more hope to KKR, though qualification is still not entirely in their hands,

- as five teams can finish on 16 or more points (including RCB, who have 18). For KKR to qualify without NRR, they will have to hope that no more than one out of SRH, RR and CSK go beyond 15 points - SRH need only one win to move to 16, while RR and CSK need two each. If that happens, and PBKS lose to LSG, then KKR can qualify with two wins and 15 points. In fact, if SRH lose both matches, CSK lose to GT, and RR get no more than two points from their two remaining matches, then both KKR and PBKS can qualify with 15 points.
- **Delhi Capitals**
  - **Played: 13, Points: 12, NRR: -0.871**
  - **Remaining match: KKR (A)**
- DC's NRR is so poor that their only real chance is to get to 14, and then hope that other results work in their favour, so that they make it as the fourth team without NRR coming into play. For that to happen, PBKS, CSK and RR will have to lose their remaining matches. Then RCB, GT, SRH and DC will be the four teams that qualify. (UNI)

Bhuvneshwar stretches Purple Cap lead; Kohli, Rahul move up on Orange Cap table

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**LUCKNOW:** Some of the best performing batters of IPL 2026 did the heavy lifting for their teams on Sunday, when Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) beat Punjab Kings (PBKS) and Delhi Capitals (DC) got the better of Rajasthan Royals (RR). While the top man on the Purple Cap table stretched his lead.

- **Orange Cap leaderboard**

When RCB beat PBKS, Virat Kohli scored 58 in 37 balls and Cooper Connolly scored 37 in 22 balls. Neither of them was the best batter on show, but made big contributions nevertheless.

As a result, Kohli moved to 542 runs for the season and close to the top two of B Sai Sudharsan (554 runs) and Shubman Gill (552 runs), the Gujarat Titans (GT) openers. And Connolly got to 473 runs and the eighth spot.

Later in the double-header day as DC beat RR, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi hit 46 in 21 balls, and KL Rahul scored 56 in 42 balls. With those runs, Rahul relegated Heinrich Klaasen of Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) to fifth spot and slotted in behind Kohli at No. 4 with 533 runs. Sooryavanshi, meanwhile, is at No. 6 with 486 runs.

- **Purple Cap leaderboard**

Bhuvneshwar Kumar has been unstoppable this



season, and continued to be among the wickets against PBKS, sending back the openers Priyansh Arya and Prabhsimran Singh in his first and third overs respectively during his spell of 2 for 38. He was a trifle expensive on the day, going at 9.50 when his season economy rate has been 7.70.

His brace of wickets took his tally for the season up to 24, three clear of second-placed Kagiso Rabada of GT and five clear of Anshul Kamboj of Chennai Super Kings (CSK). In the evening, Jofra Archer returned 2 for 35, bouncing back after a sequence of three games where he only picked up two wickets and went for plenty. Archer got to fourth place on the table with 17 wickets, one ahead of a quartet of bowlers with 16 wickets.

Affarwat-XI Sports Club Crush Friends-XI Wulraman by 7 Wickets in Wagila Premiere League

HT SPORT DESK

**WAGOORA, MAY 19:** Affarwat-XI Sports Club Baramulla defeated Friends-XI Wulraman by 7 wickets in a one-sided contest of the Wagila Premiere League today at Wagoora.

After winning the toss, Friends-XI Wulraman opted to bat first but were bundled out for 116 runs in 17.2 overs. Mahir Rasool delivered a splendid bowling spell and claimed 3 wickets, while Rayees Lone, Tahir Ahmad, and Ishfaq Wani picked up 2 wickets each. Lone Moeid also contributed with



1 wicket for Affarwat-XI Sports Club Baramulla.

In reply, Affarwat-XI Sports Club Baramulla chased down the target in just 11 overs for the loss of 3 wickets. Openers Shahid Bashir and Sajid Rather played magnificent innings, scoring 58 runs off 32 balls and 41 runs off 18 balls respectively, putting their team in complete control of the chase.

Shahid Bashir was adjudged as the Player of the Match for his brilliant innings. In a heartwarming gesture, he dedicated his award to young Lone Moeid.

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