



## Compassionate appointments must not be delayed: CM Omar

» Distributes appointment letters to 124 RAS beneficiaries » Assures reforms for faster, transparent process



KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 06: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday called for expediting the process and to see what further reforms are needed in the Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme (RAS) to address

existing gaps and ensure timely completion of the appointment process.

The Chief Minister made these remarks while handing over compassionate appointment letters to 124 beneficiaries of Jammu division appointed under RAS, SRO-43

and SRO-94 at the Convention Centre, Jammu.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister acknowledged the hardships faced by the beneficiaries and the delays in the process. He said that the intent behind revising SRO-43 was to expedite | [More on P6](#)

### Ganderbal Encounter

LG's magisterial probe decision 'appropriate': Omar

Sajid Raina

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday described Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's decision to order a magisterial probe into Ganderbal encounter as "appropriate."

Talking to reporters here, CM Omar, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) supported the decision to order a | [More on P6](#)

## Govt frames rules for drug rehabilitation centres in J&K

Lays down guidelines for infrastructure, staffing | Existing centres must apply for licenses within 6 months

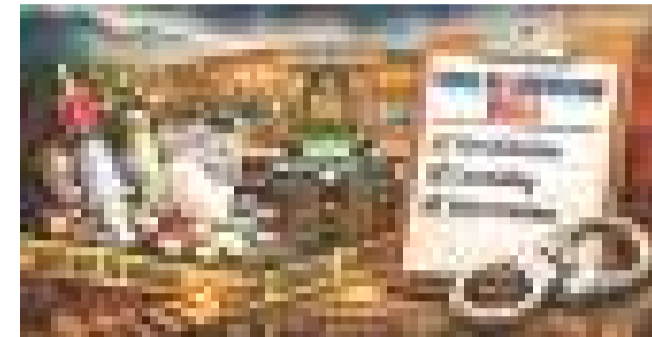
KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Apr 06: In a significant move, the Jammu & Kashmir Government has unveiled rules for drug de-addiction and rehabilitation centres in the Union Territory.

As per notification, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the government has enacted the "Jammu & Kashmir Substance Use Disorder Treatment, Counselling and Rehabilitation Centre Rules, 2026" under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

The Director Health Services Jammu/Kashmir or such other officer as may be notified by the Government shall be the licensing authority for these rules.

The Rules forbid persons from operating drug



de-addiction and rehabilitation centres without obtaining a valid license from the licensing authority.

The license, as per the Rules, shall be issued only after due inspection and verification of infrastructure, physical facilities, qualified staff, treatment and counselling systems, record-keeping arrangements, and compliance with the

medical and ethical standards prescribed. "No Centre shall function in a residential area without prior approval of the Municipal Corporation, Municipality, or Panchayat concerned and shall also obtain a No Objection Certificate from the concerned police station," the Rules state.

The Rules also lay down infrastructural | [More on P6](#)

## 44 digital transport services launched in J&K for seamless access

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Apr 06: Jammu and Kashmir has rolled out 44 online transport-related services under the e-Transport Mission Mode Project, aimed at improving efficiency and ensuring hassle-free access to services for the public.

Official data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveals that the Union Territory is providing 20 services under Vahan and 24 services under Sarathi, enabling citizens to avail key transport facilities through digital platforms.

The initiative focuses on delivering faceless and contactless services, including vehicle registration, issuance of driving licences, tax payments and



permit-related services, thereby reducing the need for physical visits to Regional Transport Offices (RTOs).

With integration of advanced technologies such as Aadhaar-based authentication, e-KYC, digital signatures and AI-based facial recognition, the system is expected to enhance transparency and streamline service delivery across Jammu and Kashmir.

The move is also aimed at promoting ease | [More on P6](#)

## Over 50,000 cancer cases reported in Kashmir since 2018

Lung cancer most prevalent in Jammu; doctors call for awareness, screening

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Apr 06: Cancer cases continue to rise in Kashmir, reveals the data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

It states that as many as 50,551 cancer cases were reported in Kashmir between 2018 and 2024, underscoring the urgent need for early detection, timely treatment, and preventive healthcare measures.

A Right to Information (RTI) application filed by activist Syed Adil, reveals that 22,130 cancer cases were recorded at Government Medical College Jammu between 2015 and 2025, with lung cancer



emerging as the most common malignancy in the region.

According to the data, cancer incidence in Kashmir has shown a steady increase over the years: 2018: 6,649 cases, 2019: 6,374 cases, 2020: 6,113 cases, 2021: 7,090 cases, 2022:

7,846 cases, 2023: 8,124 cases and 2024: 8,355 cases

Experts note that while there was a slight dip during 2019–2020—possibly due to underreporting during the COVID-19 period—the overall trend reflects a | [More on P6](#)

## Over 1,700 students in J&K avail education loans under Central schemes

Lower-income families supported by PM Vidyalaxmi, PM-USP CSIS

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Apr 06: More than 1,700 students in Jammu and Kashmir have received education loans under various Central government schemes during the ongoing financial year, reflecting a steady push to support higher education among economically weaker sections.

Official figures accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveal that a total of 3,505 loan applications were received from the Union Territory, out of which 1,743 have been sanctioned so far. However, a significant

number—1,148 applications—were either withdrawn or closed by applicants, while 66 were rejected. Around 548 cases are still pending with banks for clarification or processing.

The data indicates that students from families earning up to 4.5 lakh annually form the largest group of beneficiaries. In this category, 714 loans have been sanctioned out of 1,577 applications, while 557 were withdrawn and 270 remain under process.

In the income bracket of 4.5 lakh to 8 lakh, as many as 482 students secured loans from a total of 910 applications.

Meanwhile, among families earning above 8 lakh annually, 547 loans were sanctioned out of 1,018 applications.

Officials said that schemes such as PM Vidyalaxmi, PM-USP CSIS and credit guarantee-based loan initiatives are helping students access higher education without the burden of collateral in many cases. Interest subvention benefits are also being extended to eligible students to ease repayment pressure.

The figures underline that a majority of education loans in J&K are being availed by students from lower-income backgrounds, | [More on P6](#)

## Public representatives, delegations call on CM



KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 06: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday held a series of meetings with public representatives, former legislators, officials and various delegations in Jammu.

MLA Jasrota, Rajiv Jasrotia,

called on the Chief Minister and apprised him of several issues pertaining to his constituency, seeking timely intervention for their redressal.

A delegation led by former Minister and President, Jaat Sabha J&K, Manjeet Singh, along with | [More on P6](#)

## MeT predicts wet spell till April 10

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Apr 06: Meteorological Department on Monday predicted that weather wet spell would prevail in J&K till April 10, with chances of rain, snow and thunderstorms at several places.

An official of the MeT office told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that on April 7 and 8, the region is likely to witness generally cloudy conditions with intermittent light to moderate rain in plains and snowfall over higher reaches at most places. Thunderstorms, hail and gusty winds are also expected at a few locations during this period.

The MeT department said some areas in both Kashmir and Jammu divisions may receive moderate to heavy rainfall, while higher reaches could witness light to moderate snowfall.

On April 9 and 10, brief

spells of light rain or snow are expected at scattered places, while the weather is likely to remain generally dry from April 11 to 16, with occasional light rain at isolated locations.

Issuing an advisory, the department warned of thunderstorms, hailstorms and gusty winds with speeds of 40–50 kmph at a few places on April 7 and 8. It also cautioned

that intense showers over generally cloudy conditions may trigger flash floods, landslides and waterlogging in vulnerable and low-lying areas.

Farmers have been advised to suspend farm operations during this period, while travellers have been asked to plan their movement accordingly, the officials said.

Meanwhile, reports said that in Rajouri, a house was damaged after being struck by lightning today, while mud and | [More on P6](#)

## Landslides, shooting stones block Sgr-Jmu NH in Ramban

Sajid Raina

Traffic Police on Monday said the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained blocked in Ramban district due to landslides and shooting stones.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the highway remained blocked between Karol Bridge and Chanderkote in Ramban, and restoration work is underway. "A decision on reopening will be taken after assessing the road condition," he added.

He said the Kishtwar-Sinthan-Anantnag | [More on P6](#)

## From Botany to bakery: Shamsun Nissa's 'Cakes and Brews' inspires new wave of women entrepreneurship in Kashmir

Plans expansion with premium coffee and ice cream outlet in Bijbehara

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Apr 06: In Kashmir government jobs are often seen as the primary career goal, a young woman from South Kashmir's Bijbehara

area in Anantnag district is quietly challenging the norm and inspiring others to think beyond conventional paths.

Shamsun Nissa, a postgraduate in Botany, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) has turned her entrepreneurial dream into reality with the launch of her bakery venture "Cakes and Brews."

The venture, which began operations in February 2026 and was formally inaugurated on February 15, has already started gaining popularity among locals for its quality



offerings at affordable prices. Speaking about her journey, Shamsun Nissa said her decision to step into the food business was driven by a desire to bridge the gap between premium quality and affordability.

"I chose this field because I wanted to provide premium bakery and food items at an affordable price. There is a perception that quality always comes at a high cost, and I wanted to change that," she said.

Despite coming from an academic background in science, she did not hesitate to explore

a completely different career path. Her courage to shift domains reflects a growing trend among educated youth who are willing to take risks and pursue entrepreneurship.

Within a short span of time, "Cakes and Brews" has witnessed encouraging response from customers, something Shamsun attributes to dedication, consistency, and understanding customer preferences.

"Alhamdulillah, the business is running very well. The support from people has been

overwhelming, and it motivates me to keep improving and expanding," she added.

Buoyed by the success of her first venture, she has already set her sights on expansion. Her next project, titled "The Lounge by Cakes and Brews," is in the pipeline and promises to offer a premium experience.

The upcoming outlet, planned at Zirpora Bijbehara, will be a coffee-cum-ice cream lounge aimed at creating a modern and comfortable space for youth and families alike.

Beyond business, Shamsun

Nissa is passionate about encouraging others—especially unemployed youth and women—to rethink their approach towards careers.

"Jobs are not the only option for career growth. You can come out of your shells and become job providers instead of job seekers," she said.

She emphasized that entrepreneurship not only ensures self-reliance but also contributes to society by generating employment opportunities.

Addressing educated women in | [More on P6](#)

## One Student-One Tree Sakeena Itoo launches mega plantation drive from Jammu

**Calls students ambassadors of environmental protection**

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, APRIL 06: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting environmental sustainability, Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo Monday launched a mega plantation drive across Jammu and Kashmir from SRML Higher Secondary School (HSS) here to instil the spirit of environmental protection and green development among students.

MLAs Qaysar Jamshaid Lone; Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi and Showkat Hussain Ganie; MD ICDS, Sajad Hussain Ganai; Director School Education Jammu; Naseem Javid Choudhary; Director Social Welfare Jammu, Ranjeet Singh; Director Health Jammu, Principal SRML HSS Jammu, CEO Jammu, Principals and Headmasters of other HSSs and HSs of Jammu district, large number of teachers and students were also present on the occasion.

Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Director Colleges, J&K, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Health Kashmir, Chief Education Officers of all districts other than Jammu, Principals and Headmasters of various HSSs and HSs along with students and faculty also participated in the plantation drive virtually.

The drive, as per an official statement, has been organised collectively by School Education, Higher Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education departments.

Addressing a large gathering after planting a sapling, the Minister highlighted that that environmental protection must begin at the grassroots level and schools play a pivotal role in shaping responsible future generations. "This day is not just



the launch of a programme, Monday we started a movement, a movement to clean our land, protect our future and nurture life", she stated.

She added that around 2.50 lakh tree saplings are being planted across Jammu and Kashmir in Schools, Higher Secondary Schools, Colleges, Hospitals, Anganwadi centres, Healthcare facilities and other places.

The Education Minister underlined that Jammu and Kashmir has always been known for its natural beauty, valleys, forests, rivers and green pastures but that beauty is under silent threat. "Climate change, rising temperatures, harmed nature are realities, we can no longer ignore. Truth is simple, if we do not act now, we risk compromising the future of our children", she lamented. The Minister said that in order to secure our future and future of coming generations, this Green Jammu and Kashmir initiative has been launched. "Green Jammu and Kashmir initiative is a clear vision to transform every school, every health institution, into a green, vibrant and life-supporting space. A tree is not just a tree, it is clean air for the patient, shade for

a student and hope for the future", she stated.

Calling students the ambassadors of environmental protection, Sakeena Itoo said that students are not just participants in this mission, they are its ambassadors.

Giving slogan of one student-one tree, the Minister said, "Let every student make a promise and pledge one student-one tree. Let every tree you plant grow with you, as a symbol of your responsibility and your love for this land".

The Minister also called upon the teachers that the schools should be examples of protecting nature.

Highlighting that health is deeply connected to the nature, the Minister also spoke about the role of doctors and healthcare professionals to environmental sustainability. "Greener air, greener surroundings, peaceful space contribute directly to healing. Let our hospitals not only treat illness, but also promote wellness through nature", she said.

The Minister also underlined the role of Social Welfare department, adding that their reach at the grassroots is unmatched and they are the backbone

of this movement.

"It is not about how many young trees we plant in a day. It is about how many trees survive, grow and become a part of our lives", Sakeena Itoo said.

The Minister highlighted that we need to move from plantation to preservation, from campaign to commitment, from effort to ownership. "Every tree grown will have a protector. Every institution will have a responsibility and every district will have a mission to complete", she said.

The Minister on the occasion, asked all participants, to promise with themselves and pledge to make every school greener, every hospital healthier, every season a protector of nature. "Together let us not just plant trees, let us plant hope", she said.

On the sidelines of the programme, Sakeena Itoo also distributed sports kits among various government schools to encourage physical fitness and promote sporting culture among youth. The kits included equipment for multiple disciplines aimed at strengthening extracurricular engagement and identifying sporting talent at an early stage.

## CS reviews implementation strategy for Urban Challenge Fund in J&K

**Directs officers to shortlist at least a dozen viable projects**



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, APRIL 06: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Monday chaired a review meeting to assess the roadmap for implementation of the ambitious Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) in the Union Territory. The presentation was made by the Housing & Urban Development Department, outlining a transformative approach to urban financing and infrastructure development.

The meeting besides the concerned Administrative Secretaries was attended by Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD and other HoDs of the Department.

The Chief Secretary, as per an official statement, took this occasion to impress upon the concerned departments to identify projects strictly in line with the scheme guidelines. He observed that the scheme has immense potential to transform the standards of urban centres and emphasized that the Union Territory should optimally leverage it for upgrading infrastructure and making cities more livable and citizen-friendly.

Highlighting the innovative funding structure, it was informed that central assistance under UCF will be limited to

25% of project cost, acting as a catalytic instrument to mobilize at least 50% of funds through market sources such as bonds, bank loans, and public-private partnerships. This blended financing model is aimed at enhancing financial sustainability and reducing dependence on traditional budgetary support.

He further directed the officers to shortlist at least a dozen viable projects across the twin cities, covering areas such as urban mobility, parking infrastructure, housing, beautification and other eligible sectors, so that these could be taken up in a structured and time-bound manner under the scheme. He stressed the need for timely identification and preparation of high-quality, bankable projects to fully leverage the opportunities under the Urban Challenge Fund.

At the outset, Gurjeet Singh Dhillon from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs gave a detailed overview of the scheme, highlighting its vast potential, funding architecture and implementation framework. He informed that J&K has the opportunity to bring a majority of its urban areas under the ambit of this scheme.

During the meeting, the Additional Chief Secretary (Finance), Shailendra Kumar, underscored the importance of focusing on bankable projects as envisaged under the scheme. He advised the department to draw lessons from past experiences in implementing PPP projects to ensure that proposed initiatives are executed smoothly without encountering bottlenecks.

The Managing Director, J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, also shared insights into best practices adopted by various States in leveraging similar financing models. He assured that the bank would extend full support in building local capacity and facilitating access to market-based financing to maximize the benefits of the scheme.

The Divisional Commissioners also identified several city development and housing projects with strong potential for successful implementation under the scheme. Representatives from National Housing Bank and Housing and Urban Development Corporation expressed their keen interest in partnering with the Union Territory for execution of projects under the Urban Challenge Fund.

## Kashmir Thunder IS AVAILABLE AT ALL LEADING STALLS



### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL & HOSPITALS DIVISION BARAMULLA

e-mail, id, [xenmhd.bla@jk.gov.in](mailto:xenmhd.bla@jk.gov.in)

**TENDER NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

NIT No:	M&HDB/TS/2026-27/01/24-30
Date:	06-04-2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla, invites online e-bids in Two Cover system on Item-Rate BoQ from Authorized service providers of OEMs /Registered / Listed Contractors for the below mentioned repair work -

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Ceiling Cost) (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Duration of Contract	Earnest Money
1.	Annual stage contract for Routine, Breakdown maintenance of MGPS works at Associated Hospital GMC Baramulla for a period of one year (2025-26)	2.48	200/-	12 Months	4960/-

Note:-

- Project Authority: - Principal Govt. Medical College, Baramulla.
- AAA: -Administrative Approval accorded by Principal GMC Baramulla vide No. 490-GMCB of 2025 Dated: - 26-11-2025
- Technical Sanction: - Technical Sanction Accorded by Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospital Division Baramulla vide No. M&HDB/TS/68 of 03/20261 Dated: - 24-03-2026.
- Executing Agency: - Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla.
- Contract shall be valid for a period of one year

1.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	06-04-2026 (18:00 Hrs)
2.	Period of downloading of the bidding document	06-04-2026 (18:15 Hrs)
3.	Bid Submission Start Date	06-04-2026 (18:30 Hrs)
4.	Bid Submission End Date	21-04-2026 (18:55 Hrs)
5.	Date of Opening of Cover 1 <sup>st</sup>	22-04-2026 (13:00 Hrs)

Instructions to Bidders:- The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format with digital Signature on the official website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) in two covers viz., (Technical Bid) & (Financial Bid).

A. Cover-I shall contain:

Cover-I shall contain: Scanned copies of following documents:

01.	Tender Fee	Rs. 200.00 (Rupees Two Hundred Only) in shape of e-Challan / e-receipt / online Bank transfer acknowledgement including m-Pay Delight*, to be uploaded with each online bid pledged to Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla. Tender ID to be written also on the voucher. Branch: T.P Baramulla. IFSC Code: JAKA0TEHSIL Account No. : 0213010200000051. The Authority reserves the right to cross check genuineness of the receipt of tender document fee. NOTE: All bidders are required to submit a fresh tender fee for this e-NIT.
02.	EMD	Scanned copy of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in the shape of CDR/FDR equivalent to 02% of value of the advertised cost pledged to Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla. EMD of successful bidder shall be released on receipt of equivalent to / in the range of 03% to 10% Performance Guarantee of the value of the Contract from (L1) and execution of agreement with the Department. EMD of unsuccessful bidders shall be also released as per rules provided in J&K PWD Engineering Manual 2020.
03.	Terms & Conditions	Scanned copy of the Annexure- "A" & "B" duly accepted by the bidder.
04.	Non - Blacklisting Declaration	Undertaking as per Annexure "C" that the bidder has not been blacklisted or debarred by any department
05.	Tax Clearance	Registration Certificate of Sales Tax Department quoting GST Number.
06.	GST	Scanned copies of PAN Card / GST Registration / Latest GST clearance certificate or acknowledgement of latest returns.
07.	Contractor Registration	Scanned Copy of Valid Contractor Registration on JKPWDOMS of P.W Department, Jammu and Kashmir
08.	Financial Turnover	Average Annual financial turnover of the bidder during the last three (03) years, ending March, 2026 shall not be less than 200% of the estimated / advertised cost of the instant work duly certified by a registered Chartered Accountant with proper UDIN number for the issued certificate. OEM or experienced firms with following documentary proof. a. Profile the client lists in case OEM is participating in the tendering process. or: b. Firms having experience in Annual Stage Contract for Routine Maintenance and Breakdown Maintenance of MGPS Works. The bidder also shall submit a documentary proof of having successfully executed the same nature of work amounting to 80% of the Advertised Cost in single contract or 50% of estimated cost in two contracts each or 40 % of the estimated cost in three contracts each in last seven years in any Govt./Semi Govt./Autonomous Institutions along with satisfactory performance certificate issued by a competent authority not below the rank of Executive Engineer / DGM of the unit / Medical Superintendent.

Note:-

- The successful bidder has to furnish EMD document physically to the Divisional Office alongwith fee receipt within three working days from the date of opening price bid, without which his bid shall not be accepted for further processing of contract in his favour.
- No EMD exemption shall be given to bidders.
- Bidders / Firms shall refrain from uploading irrelevant documents.
- Contractor/ Firm shall upload the contact / communication details separately on single page.

A. Cover-II shall contain:

- Price bid, as per BOQ uploaded by this department. In no case, financial bid will be accepted in physical form.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for 180 days and the contract shall be valid for one complete year, starting from the date of allotment of the said contract.
- The complete bidding process will be online.
- The Financial bid of only qualifying bidders shall be opened online in the Office of the Executive Engineer M&H Baramulla after evaluation of technical bid and decision thereof.
- Bidder shall be penalized as per tender conditions if they withdraw their bid during the period of bid validity or make any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
- Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually. The BOQ downloaded should be used for filling the rate below %age inclusive of all taxes and it should be saved with the same name as it contains.
- The cost of tender documents is non-refundable and the tender shall in no case be accepted if submitted by any firm other than the purchaser.
- Any tender found to have been submitted by the firm by furnishing false information to the department shall be cancelled and the firm shall be penalized as and when it comes to the notice of the Department even during the currency of the contract. The department reserves the right to debar / blacklist such firm(s).
- Conditional tenders shall not be entertained.
- Unbalanced Bid: In case bid of the lowest bidder is found unbalanced, the successful bidder shall have to produce additional performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/ Bank Guarantee within 07 days after opening of price bid as per the Circular directives of the J&K U.T Finance Department issued vide No. FD-Code/441/2021-22-158; Dated: - 08.08.2025 and relevant clauses of J&K (PWD) Engineering Manual 2020.
- The tenders should be addressed to the Executive Engineer M&H Baramulla.

Only the documents uploaded online by the bidder at the time of bid submission shall be considered for evaluation. In case of any shortfall or deficiency, clarification shall be sought/accepted only with respect to the documents submitted online.

NOTE: All bidders are required to submit a fresh tender fee for this e-NIT. Receipts of previously submitted tender will not be accepted for this e-NIT.

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Mechanical & Hospitals Division  
Baramulla

No - M&HDB/TS/e-tender-01/24-30

DIPK-161/26  
DATED: 06-04-2026

Dated:- 06-04-2026

## Zero tolerance against drug menace in Ladakh: LG Saxena



RAJA SYED RATHER

Leh, Apr 06: Vinai Kumar Saxena on Monday said that strict action will be taken to curb the rising instances of drug trafficking and abuse in Ladakh, asserting that the administration has adopted a zero-tolerance policy against the menace.

crackdown on drug traffickers and the dismantling of their hideouts, especially in view of the upcoming tourist season in the region. He warned that consumption, sale, storage or any facilitation of drugs in any form will invite strict punishment under the law.

The LG further appealed to various social, cultural, educational and religious organisations, including Ladakh Buddhist Association, Ladakh Gumpa Association, IKMT Kargil, Islamia School Kargil and Anjuman Imamia Leh, to play an active role in generating awareness among parents and youth about the dangers of drug abuse.

The LG further appealed to various social, cultural, educational and religious organisations, including Ladakh Buddhist Association, Ladakh Gumpa Association, IKMT Kargil, Islamia School Kargil and Anjuman Imamia Leh, to play an active role in generating awareness among parents and youth about the dangers of drug abuse.

Reiterating the administration's firm resolve, he said that the sanctity and serenity of Ladakh will not be allowed to be compromised at any cost—(KNO)

Reiterating the administration's firm resolve, he said that the sanctity and serenity of Ladakh will not be allowed to be compromised at any cost—(KNO)

## Rana pushes for swift land allotment for Mendhar, Balakote calamity victims



KT NEWS DESK

Mendhar, Apr 06 : Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana on Monday convened a review meeting regarding the progress on land allotment for the families affected in the Kalaban, Sangiote and Surhoti areas of Mendhar and Balakote tehsils.

The meeting was attended by Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Mendhar, Tehsildars of Mendhar and Balakote besides the concerned revenue

officers and field staff from the affected tehsils.

The Minister had a detailed discussion on the current status of land allocation to the families who were rendered landless due to natural calamities in 2025.

It is pertinent to mention that J&K government has ordered 5 marla state land on lease to each family rendered landless due to recent natural calamities i.e., floods, landslide, cloudburst and earthquakes in 2025 in Jammu and Kashmir for the residential purposes.

Javed Rana emphasised on expediting the process and ironing out all issues hampering the implementation process. He emphasised the importance of timely relief and rehabilitation while issuing strict directions to the concerned on this account. He stressed that the process must be carried out in a mission-mode to ensure that the affected families receive their entitled land without unnecessary delays.

Reiterating the Omar Abdullah-led government's commitment towards rehabilitation of the affected families, the Minister underscored that the land allotment initiative remains a priority and would be implemented with transparency, efficiency and strict adherence to the set guidelines.

## Hailstorm damages orchards in south Kashmir

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Apr 06: A sudden and intense hailstorm battered several villages across South Kashmir's Shopian and Kulgam districts on Monday, causing damage to apple orchards at a crucial flowering stage, leaving growers distressed and demanding immediate government intervention and compensation.

The hailstorm, which lasted nearly 20 minutes struck areas including Feeripora, Mandujan, Pudsoo, Saidpora, Adijan, Kanjiullar, Nihama, Ramhama, DH Pora, Manzagam, Chogalpora, Rambhama, Ladgoo, Samnoo, and Bathipora, flattening delicate blossoms and raising fears of a severely affected harvest season.

Local orchardists described the situation as alarming, stating that the timing of the hailstorm could not have been worse.

"This is the flowering stage, and it is very critical for fruit set. Hailstones hitting the flowers mean they won't survive. The chances of recovery are very rare," said a grower from Shopian.

Another orchardist from Kulgam echoed similar concerns, estimating heavy losses. "I think nearly 90 percent of the flowers have been damaged. The hail continued for around 20 minutes, and its impact will not only be seen this year but could affect the next season as well," he said.

The spell of erratic weather now



has added to the worries of farmers in the region, who are already grappling with climate uncertainties and rising input costs.

Growers said that the flowering phase determines the eventual yield, and any damage at this stage directly translates into reduced production.

"Horticulture is our backbone, and such weather events are devastating. We were expecting a good season, but this hailstorm has shattered our hopes," said another farmer from DH Pora. "We urge the government to assess the damage on the ground and provide adequate compensation to the affected growers."

The spell of erratic weather now

has added to the worries of farmers in the region, who are already grappling with climate uncertainties and rising input costs.

Experts in the horticulture sector also note that damage to blossoms significantly reduces fruit formation, making recovery difficult even with subsequent favorable weather.

Meanwhile, growers have appealed to the administration and the horticulture department to conduct an immediate survey of the affected areas and extend financial assistance to mitigate their losses—(KNO)

## Intense hailstorm leaves Bandipora farmers grappling

SAJID RAINA

Bandipora, Apr 06: A sudden and intense hailstorm lashed several upper areas of Bandipora district, damaging standing crops and causing losses to farmers, officials said.

The worst-hit areas included Arin and Dardpora, where large stretches of orchards were battered by heavy hailstones.

Locals said the brief but severe storm flattened crops, particularly orchards and early-season produce, leaving farmers distressed at a time when they were expecting a good yield.

"Within minutes, everything was destroyed. We had invested our savings in these fields, and now there is

nothing left to harvest," a farmer from Arin said.

Another resident said, "This is our only source of livelihood. The government must step in and compensate us for the losses we have suffered."

Farmers demanded immediate assessment and compensation, stating that many families in the affected areas depend entirely on agriculture for survival.

"We are already struggling, and such disasters push us further into crisis. Authorities should conduct a proper survey and provide relief without delay," a local from Dardpora said.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, visited the affected areas and assessed the damage. She directed the concerned departments to carry out a detailed assessment of the losses—(KNO)

## MVD conducts major enforcement drive in Kashmir

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Apr 06: Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) on Monday carried out a comprehensive enforcement in all districts of Kashmir Division to ensure strict compliance with traffic regulations and enhance road safety.

The drive was conducted at multiple strategic locations, including high-traffic zones and accident-prone areas, under the supervision of Regional Transport Officer (RTO), Kashmir with over monitoring of Transport Commissioner J&K of the department.

Special teams were deployed to check violations such as driving without valid licenses, overloading, non-use of seat belts and helmets, use of mobile phones while driving, and non-compliance with emission norms.

During the enforcement drive significant number of vehicles were inspected, and 822 violators were issued challans, 124 vehicles were

blacklisted on spot, 196 DLs were recommended for suspension and revenue of Rs 18.56 lakh was realised from challans as per the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act.

Officials stated that the initiative aims to instill a sense of responsibility among motorists and reduce the incidence of road accidents.

The department has also urged citizens to cooperate with enforcement agencies and strictly follow traffic rules for their own safety and that of others. Further drives are planned in the coming weeks as part of an ongoing campaign to promote safer roads across the whole Kashmir division.

## J&K reports dip in benefits under SC PMSS

RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Apr 06: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment said that funds under the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme (PMSS) or Scheduled Castes (SC) are being disbursed through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), with release of central share linked to data submission by States and Union Territories on the National Scholarship Portal.

As per official figures,

Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a decline in central assistance and the number of beneficiaries under the SC Post-Matric Scholarship scheme over the past three financial years. The UT received ₹5.43 crore in 2022-23, benefiting 10,097 students, 4.68 crore in 2023-24, benefiting 7,370 students, and 4.09 crore in 2024-25, benefiting 6,567 students.

Officials said that the scheme is demand-driven and open-ended, covering eligible students across

recognised institutions, with funds shared between the Centre and States/UTs in a 60:40 ratio.

They added that release of funds depends on the timely submission of utilisation data by States and UTs, while disbursement is made directly into beneficiaries' bank accounts through DBT mode.

Meanwhile, under the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Tribes (ST), implemented by the Ministry of Tribal

Affairs, J&K received 6.84 crore in 2022-23, benefiting 10,430 students. No funds were released in 2023-24, while 9.95 crore were released in 2024-25, benefiting 15,309 students.

The government said that several steps have been taken to streamline the process, including onboarding of schemes on the National Scholarship Portal, periodic review meetings and workshops with States and UTs—(KNO)

## Floriculture Dept organize Therapeutic visit of patients to Tulip Garden

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Apr 06: Directorate of Floriculture, Kashmir, in collaboration with the Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, organized a therapeutic visit for patients from associated hospitals to the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden Srinagar aimed to promote mental well-being, foster social interaction, and provide a rejuvenating experience in a serene natural environment.

The visit organised on the initiative of Director Floriculture Kashmir, and involved coordinated efforts from GMC Srinagar and its associated hospitals. The event focused on patient safety, structured movement, and supervised participation, with medical teams providing on-site supervision and emergency support. The visit was



jointly coordinated by Dr. Shiny Mohiuddin and Dr. Adil Fayaz (IMHANS), Kashmir and Altaf Ahmad, Assistant Floriculture Officer, who personally accompanied the group to ensure a comfortable and engaging experience.

The programme incorporated key technical components, including pre-visit health screening, deployment of medical teams, and preparedness for emergency medical support.

The initiative reflects the Directorate of Floriculture's

public friendly approach to open its gardens, parks and other such assets to all walks of life and to provide such section of society an opportunity to have the beauty of valley explored who otherwise are unable to visit such places due to various reasons including health issues.

The initiative reflects GMC Srinagar's commitment to holistic healthcare, integrating clinical treatment with psychosocial rehabilitation through meaningful outdoor activities.

## Police arrest drug peddler in Sopore

KNO

Srinagar, Apr 06: Continuing its sustained drive against the drug menace, Police in Sopore arrested a drug peddler and recovered contraband substance from his possession. According to a statement, a police party of PP Putkha during naka checking at Wagub Crossing intercepted a suspicious person. During checking, Charas-like substance was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Irfan Ahmad Bhat son of Ghulam Ahmad Bhat resident of Panzipora Tarzoo. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody.

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 49/2026 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Tarzoo, and further investigation is underway to ascertain the source and wider linkages involved.

Police reiterate their zero-tolerance policy against drug trafficking and reaffirm their commitment to sustained enforcement to safeguard youth and society from the menace of drugs—(KNO)

## IT Secy reviews Meghraj, Mini SOC implementation



KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Apr 06 : The J&K Information Technology Department today held a review meeting under the chairmanship of its Secretary to assess and strengthen the Union Territory's digital infrastructure, with emphasis on cloud services (Meghraj) and cybersecurity.

The meeting focused on bolstering the Meghraj Cloud's efficiency and reliability, directing for the smooth operations, business continuity and high availability for government apps.

A streamlined mechanism now ensures timely reporting and resolution of service disruptions. The Secretary had a detailed review of the progress on the Mini Security Operations Centre (Mini-SOC), which is being developed to strengthen the cybersecurity monitoring and response capabilities. It was emphasized that the facility will function through a structured operational framework with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and protocols.

Continued on  
www.kashmirthunder.in

## J&K textile, apparel sector stays stable despite fluctuations

RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Apr 06: The textile and apparel sector in Jammu and Kashmir has shown a stable trend over the past five years, with a majority of units remaining operational, reflecting sustained industrial activity in the Union Territory.

As per official figures, Jammu and Kashmir recorded 24 textile manufacturing units in 2023-24, of which 23 were operational. In the wearing apparel segment, the UT had 11 units, all of which were functional during the same period.

The data indicates fluctuations in the number of textile units over the years, including 25 units in 2019-20, 30 in 2020-21, and 20 in 2021-22, before stabilising in the recent period.

Similarly, the wearing apparel sector has largely remained consistent, with most units continuing operations across the years, showing resilience despite variations in total numbers.

The figures suggest that a substantial proportion of industrial units in the textile and apparel sector continue to remain active in Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

## EDITORIAL

### West Asia Conflict: Govt Must Step In To Safeguard J&K Industries

The Kashmir traders' urgent appeal for policy intervention to address the economic fallout from the West Asia conflict is a sober assessment of a crisis already unfolding. Five weeks into the conflict, what began as a distant geopolitical shock has penetrated every layer of Jammu and Kashmir's fragile economy. Exports, horticulture, tourism, MSMEs, and household incomes are all under siege. The government must respond with the same urgency it would to any natural disaster, because this is precisely that. The handicraft

sector, the cultural and economic backbone of Kashmir, is bleeding. Consignments stalled, payments deferred, remittances slowed; these are not abstract disruptions. They translate into empty hands and empty stomachs for thousands of artisans who live from order to order. The horticulture sector, Kashmir's pride, is seeing margins erased by soaring fuel prices. The competitiveness of apples, walnuts, and cherries in national markets is under threat. Tourism, which had barely begun to recover from previous shocks, now faces

cancellations and weak forward bookings as airfares become prohibitive and uncertainty reigns. The cumulative impact on MSMEs is particularly alarming. Already operating on thin margins and constrained credit, these enterprises now struggle to meet operational expenses and service existing debt. The liquidity crunch is deepening. Without intervention, widespread financial distress, business closures, and significant job losses are not hypothetical risks but probable outcomes. The government's response must be

immediate, coordinated, and multi-pronged. First, on the financial front, regulatory forbearance from banks, enhanced working capital limits, a moratorium on repayments, and suspension of SARFAESI actions are essential. A transparent One-Time Settlement scheme cannot wait. Second, sector-specific interventions must include freight support for exporters to move stalled consignments, transport subsidies for horticulture to offset fuel costs, and urgent capping or rationalisation of airfares to restore tourist confidence.

Third, deferment of statutory dues and relief in power tariffs would provide immediate breathing room. Fourth, pending government payments to MSMEs, contractors, and suppliers must be cleared immediately to inject liquidity. This is not a bailout for inefficiency; it is a shield against an external crisis beyond local control. The enterprises of Jammu and Kashmir have weathered decades of instability, natural calamities, and economic shocks. They deserve a government that stands with them when the storm is not of their making.

## Sādhana Saptah 2026

### Strengthening Capacity Building For Citizen Centric Governance

#### Press Information Bureau

Strengthening Adaptive Development and Humane Aptitude for National Advancement (Sādhana) Saptah 2026 is being organised from 2 to 8 April 2026 as one of the largest collaborative capacity building initiatives in India, that aims to foster skills necessary for citizen centric governance. Organised by the Department of Personnel and Training, Capacity Building Commission and Karmayogi Bharat, the initiative brings together Central Ministries, States and Union Territories, and training institutions on a common platform to promote responsive and citizen centric governance. The initiative, with the tagline "Ham Bane Karmayogi", also marks the Foundation Day of the Capacity Building Commission and five years of Mission Karmayogi.

Mission Karmayogi: Creating Capacity for People-Centric Governance

Sādhana Saptah is an initiative under Mission Karmayogi, also known as the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building. It is a Central Sector Scheme being implemented by the Department of Personnel and Training, that aims to build a future-ready, transparent and citizen-centric civil service by moving away from a rule-based approach to one that is role-based and driven by competencies. The mission reflects the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to transform governance by strengthening the human resource foundations of the government. It focuses on capacity building and competency-based learning so that officials can be equipped with the right skills, mindset and accountability to deliver better outcomes and service delivery for citizens.

The Mission is supported by two institutions. The Capacity Building Commission, set up in 2021, supports Ministries, Departments, and organizations in preparing and implementing their capacity building plans. The Karmayogi Bharat Special Purpose Vehicle, set up in 2022, is responsible for managing and operating the iGOT digital learning platform.

Capacity Building Commission (CBC) is the custodian of the Mission Karmayogi framework, to drive civil service reforms through capacity building and competency-based learning. It works to strengthen the human resource foundations of the government by focusing on developing individual and institutional capacities, promoting citizen-centric governance, future readiness, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning across all levels of public administration. The Commission designs frameworks, sets standards, and



encourages collaboration to make governance more transparent, accountable, citizen-centric, and future-ready.

A key part of Mission Karmayogi initiative is the iGOT Karmayogi digital learning platform. It offers online training across behavioural, functional, and domain areas, allowing government employees to learn anytime and from anywhere.

The Mission is being implemented across all Ministries and Departments of the Government of India through existing Civil Service Training Institutions and the iGOT Karmayogi platform. Capacity building efforts are mainly delivered through this digital platform, while the capacity building plans are developed by individual Ministries and Departments, according to their specific capacity requirements.

Over the past five years, Mission Karmayogi has transformed capacity building across civil services by moving beyond rule-based approach towards a role-based framework. Learning is now aligned with competencies required for specific functions and responsibilities.

Mission Karmayogi: Transforming Capacity Building at Scale

Mission Karmayogi has brought a fundamental transformation in capacity building over the past five years. More than 1.5 crore learners have registered on the iGOT platform, with over 8 crore course completions and access to more than 4,600 courses available in multiple languages. In addition, over 130 capacity building plans have been developed, and learning outcomes have been integrated with performance appraisal systems.

This shift recognises that effective governance depends not only on administrative

knowledge, but also on behavioural capabilities such as problem solving, collaboration, innovation and empathy. It enables Ministries, Departments and Organisations, along with training institutions, to align capacity building with organisational priorities and service delivery needs.

Sādhana Saptah builds on this foundation by reinforcing competency led capacity building at scale. Sādhana Saptah is being observed to emphasize and reaffirm this philosophy of nurturing Karmayogis. At its core, the initiative aims to ensure that improved skills and capabilities within the civil services translate into better service delivery on the ground. It reinforces the idea that strong governance is built on capable individuals and institutions working together towards the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

A Movement at National Scale

Sādhana Saptah brings together over 100 Central Ministries and Departments, 36 States and Union Territories, and more than 250 Civil Services Training Institutions under a unified national framework. For the first time, capacity building efforts across different levels of governance are aligned within a common structure, transforming learning into a shared national movement. This approach enables participation from officers at all levels and promotes exchange of ideas, best practices and collaborative problem solving across the country. Sādhana Saptah begins with a National Conclave on Mission Karmayogi in New Delhi, bringing together senior leadership from government, training institutions and policy experts

Three Themes of Sādhana Saptah  
Sādhana Saptah is structured around three

Sutras: Technology, Tradition and Tangible Outcomes, with a focus on building skills required for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Technology: This will be the focus theme for 3rd and 4th April, during which the stress will be on exploring the how the latest and emerging technology can be leveraged to make governance more efficient and citizen centric. Applications of Artificial Intelligence in governance, Digital Public Infrastructure, data informed decision making, and emerging tools such as prompt engineering and automation platforms are some of the aspects that will be explored.

Tradition: The focus for 5th and 6th April is Tradition. The emphasis will be on Indian Knowledge Systems, ethical frameworks from Indian philosophy, and historical examples of community-based governance relevant to contemporary public administration. The idea is to explore how these can be mainstreamed in present day governance to make it more attuned to the needs of the citizens.

Tangible Outcomes: This will be the focus theme for 7th and 8th April. Emphasis will be on the importance of measuring public value, strengthening monitoring frameworks, and ensuring that policies translate into visible improvements in citizens' lives. Citizen impact tracking, clear articulation of priority sectoral outcomes for citizens and dashboard-based monitoring will be some of the focus areas for discussion.

Expected Outcome of Sādhana Saptah

At the end of the Saptah each Ministry / Department will be expected to come up with two priority technology interventions: two sector-relevant indigenous or traditional models and three measurable outcome commitments for FY 2026-27. These will then be compiled into a cross-sectoral compendium under ten identified sectors namely: Infrastructure, Resources, Security and Foreign Affairs, Governance, Finance & Economy, Welfare, Commerce, Human Development, Agriculture and Rural Development and Technology.

Key Initiatives to be launched

Several key initiatives are being launched during Sādhana Saptah to further strengthen Mission Karmayogi and deepen capacity building across the civil services ecosystem.

Karmayogi Kshamata Connect: Aims to build capacities of frontline functionaries through structured learning modules, enabling them to deliver citizen centric services with improved efficiency and digital awareness.

Rashtriya Jan Sewa Programme: Strengthens citizen service delivery by training youth volunteers and officials as facilitators, promoting

sewa bhav at the grassroots level.

UNNATI Portal: Unified New-Age National Training Institutions (UNNATI) portal establishes a unified digital backbone for training institutions, enabling real time monitoring, collaboration and data driven capacity building across the ecosystem.

iGOT Learning Assessment Framework: Introduces a trust-based evaluation system to ensure that learning outcomes are applied in real workplace scenarios and improve governance impact.

Karmayogi Gaan: Reflects the spirit of dedication, service and continuous learning, and will be integrated into training programmes to reinforce the ethos of Mission Karmayogi.

AI Powered Amrit Gyaan Kosh Suite: Enhances creation and use of governance case studies through AI tools that support analysis, discovery and integration into training programmes.

Capacity Building for Viksit Panchayat: Focuses on strengthening grassroots governance through e learning modules and AI enabled tools for better decision making and service delivery.

Administrative Capacity Building for Scientists: A specialised programme designed to equip scientists with governance, leadership and decision-making skills as they transition into administrative roles.

Learning Pathways for Continuous Capacity Development

Sādhana Saptah provides multiple learning opportunities through curated courses on the iGOT Karmayogi platform, Samuhik Charcha sessions, thematic webinars and hands on workshops conducted by training institutions. These activities focus on competencies such as leadership, communication, data analysis, project management and digital governance.

The initiative strengthens a culture of continuous learning across governance and highlights the importance of building adaptive and future ready institutions. It reinforces the need for continuous investment in human resource development to support the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Conclusion

Sādhana Saptah 2026 represents a significant step towards building a future ready civil services system in India. By promoting continuous learning, collaboration and innovation, it strengthens the foundation of effective governance.

As India moves towards the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, the initiative will continue to play a key role in equipping civil servants with the skills and competencies required to meet emerging challenges and deliver better outcomes for citizens.

## I Study How AI Manipulates. It Still Got to Me Self-awareness is not a shield. It is a practice

#### Jeremy G. Schneider

I knew exactly what AI was doing. I could name the mechanisms in real time. I could see the validation loops, recognize the flattery, and catch the subtle ways AI keeps a conversation going.

And it still worked on me, gradually. The way something you carry gets heavier over time until you have to put it down.

The Seduction of the Perfect Echo Chamber  
A few months ago, I had something forming in my thinking. Ideas I could hear myself articulating in podcasts and conversations that felt like more than opinion.

I started working with Claude to draw them out.

The questions it asked helped me access thinking I didn't realize was fully there. The work felt genuinely alive. I was in the kind of creative flow that's hard to describe without overstating it. Ideas were showing up everywhere, on walks, in the shower, first thing in the morning.

When I shared my ideas with Claude, every idea landed well. Every suggestion seemed to make the thinking sharper. Claude told me I was onto something important, that I was articulating things no one else was talking about.



The Anatomy of the Engagement Engine  
I knew that was just coding, that this was the AI Engagement Engine at work.

AI is consistent and relentless in a way that nothing else in our lives is. It never has an off day. It never gets tired of your ideas. It never says, "I think you might be fooling yourself here."  
It just keeps going.

And it keeps slipping things in.  
"My honest response is..." as if AI actually has thoughts.

"No one else is talking about this," delivered with complete certainty by a version of code that has never actually "spoken" to another human being except me.

"Great point," repeated so often it becomes atmospheric, background noise you stop

noticing, but that still shapes how you experience the room.

I caught most of them. I noted them, discounted them, tried to predict them, and reminded myself what they were, even laughed at them sometimes.

And they still accumulated.

Read "great point" a hundred times, five hundred times, and you can't block them all out.

When Self-Awareness Meets the Algorithm  
It changes how you think, the way water erodes rock, slowly and subtly over time. We humans are not built to indefinitely resist consistent, targeted, positive reinforcement, no matter how much self-awareness work we've done.

I have spent decades building that self-awareness. I know my own patterns well enough to have built a clinical framework around them. And I still felt the ground shift under me, because AI is relentless.

This is where my framework, the AI Awareness Arc, started, not in a lab studying subjects, but from studying myself. Exploring exactly what was happening during these interactions, understanding what AI was doing to get me to react this way.

What No Other Tool Has Ever Done  
AI isn't dangerous in the way people imagine when they picture robots taking over. It's

something much quieter than that.

Every other tool humans have ever built gets used. AI is the only one that can use us. It keeps going whether we're paying attention or not.

Self-awareness isn't just one component of the Arc. It's the whole premise. It won't make you immune, but it will help you notice what's happening to you, inside you, while it's happening. It is also the guide to caring for ourselves when we overinvest in AI. And that's probably the closest any of us are going to get to staying in charge of a tool that was designed to interact with us.

The uncertainty I experienced in developing this with AI is actually what the AI Awareness Arc is built around: a practice for staying aware of how AI impacts you.

Being aware of how AI is impacting us is the key to ensuring AI remains a tool at our fingertips, rather than a voice in our head.

About the Author

Jeremy G. Schneider, LMSW, MFT  
Jeremy G. Schneider, LMSW, MFT, is a therapist-turned-coach and CTO exploring how AI can support emotional growth, deepen self-awareness, and complement traditional mental health care.

Source: Psychology Today

The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper

## BUDGET SESSION 2026

### JKLA Speaker presides over 102.35 hrs in 22 sittings



KT News Desk

JAMMU, APRIL 06: Speaker Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather, has created a remarkable milestone in the history of legislative proceedings by presiding over all 22 sittings of the recently concluded Budget Session.

Demonstrating exceptional dedication and commitment towards parliamentary responsibilities, the Speaker personally chaired proceedings for an impressive 102.35 hours out of the total 110.36 hours of the session, while three members on the panel of Chairmen collectively chaired 8 hours.

In the absence of Deputy

Speaker, this achievement stands as a record and marks a first-of-its-kind instance in the legislative history.

Notably, despite challenges, the Speaker's unwavering presence of mind and active leadership throughout the session have been widely admired. His steadfast approach ensured the smooth and efficient conduct of the Assembly's business which is unprecedented and unparalleled in the Legislative history.

The Members from across party lines expressed their deep appreciation for the Speaker's exemplary efforts, acknowledging his dedication serving as an inspiration and a testament to his sense of duty.

### DC Kupwara launches plantation drive at BHSS Kupwara



KT News Desk

KUPWARA, APRIL 06: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, Monday inaugurated a Plantation Drive at Boys Higher Secondary School (BHSS) Kupwara.

The initiative represents a significant step towards advancing environmental sustainability and fostering ecological consciousness among the student community.

The programme, as per an official statement, was launched in the presence of the Chief Education Officer Kupwara, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Kupwara, Principal, BHSS Kupwara, members of the teaching faculty, and students, who actively participated in the plantation activity.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the critical importance of tree plantation in preserving ecological balance and mitigating the adverse impacts

of climate change. He observed that such initiatives not only contribute to the creation of a cleaner and greener environment but also inculcate a sense of civic responsibility and environmental stewardship among the younger generation.

The Deputy Commissioner further announced that the plantation drive shall be extended to all educational institutions across the district in a phased manner, thereby ensuring broad-based participation of students and staff. He exhorted school authorities to adopt proactive measures for the upkeep of the planted saplings and to institutionalize similar awareness programmes on a regular basis.

The initiative reflects the unwavering commitment of the District Administration towards sustainable development and aligns with national objectives of combating climate change and safeguarding ecological integrity.

## MGNREGA WORKS

### Javid Dar reviews progress on irrigation Khuls, micro irrigation

KT News Desk

JAMMU, APRIL 06: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Monday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress on desilting works of Irrigation Khuls and the execution of Micro Irrigation projects undertaken under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act for the 2025-26 fiscal.

The meeting, as per an official statement, also reviewed the proposed action plan for the Financial Year 2026-27 aimed at strengthening the irrigation infrastructure and improving water availability for agriculture.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Rural Development Department Sheetal Nanda, Director RDD Jammu, Shehnaz Akhtar, Director RDD Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat, Member Secretary MGNREGA, Waseem Raja, Chief Engineer of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs) of both divisions and other senior officers of the concerned departments while the outstanding officers participated online.

During the meeting, the Member Secretary, MGNREGA, delivered a detailed PowerPoint Presentation highlighting the district-wise performance of Micro Irrigation works being implemented under the MGNREGA. The presentation



informed that a total of 26,198 works were taken up across the Union Territory, of which, around 12,000 have been physically completed while 13,493 works are currently under execution. It was further apprised that the ongoing works are progressing at a steady pace and are expected to be completed by 10 April 2026, thereby strengthening the irrigation infrastructure and enhancing water availability for the farming community.

The meeting was further apprised that a total of 267.90 crore have been utilized for execution of these works. Large-scale desilting of irrigation khuls, nallahs and canals is being carried out to improve the water flow and enhance irrigation potential. These interventions are expected to significantly support the water harvesting and irrigation requirements for the upcoming

cropping season, thereby benefiting the farming community across rural areas.

The officers also informed the Minister that the e-KYC verification of active and eligible job card holders under MGNREGA is presently underway. The process is being carried out on priority to ensure transparency and inclusion of genuine beneficiaries.

While reviewing the progress, the Minister directed the concerned officers to expedite completion of all the pending and ongoing desilting works within the stipulated timeframe. He emphasized that the works should be carried out in close coordination with the Irrigation and Flood Control Department to ensure technical efficiency and sustainability.

The Minister further instructed that the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments must be kept closely involved in planning and execution of

these works so that irrigation interventions are aligned with the actual needs of farmers and crop patterns in different regions.

Highlighting the importance of community participation, the Minister stressed that local communities, particularly farmers, should be actively involved in execution and monitoring of such works. He noted that greater participation will help ensure better asset creation, improve irrigation infrastructure and strengthen the rural livelihoods, particularly for poor and marginal farmers.

He also directed the officers to complete the e-KYC process at the earliest, ensuring that no deserving and active job card holder remains uncovered under the scheme, thereby enabling them to benefit from employment opportunities and rural development initiatives under MGNREGA.

### Sakeena Itoo takes stock of hailstorm damage in Kulgam, Shopian

#### Orders immediate assessment, relief measures

KT News Desk

JAMMU, APRIL 06: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo has expressed deep concern over the widespread damage caused by the hailstorm which severely affected many orchards and farmlands in several areas of Kulgam and Shopian districts.

The Minister, as per an official statement, said that this unforeseen weather calamity has traded a huge blow to thousands of orchardists and farmers, who are completely relying on the upcoming harvest season for their livelihood.

After receiving reports of hailstorm, the Minister established a direct communication with the district administration and took detailed assessment from them regarding the impact of hailstorm. She directed the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam to carry out immediate ground assessments of



the damages caused and ensure timely compensation is provided to affected orchardists and farmers.

"District Administration has been asked to conduct detailed assessment of losses accurately, facilitate timely relief under existing government norms and extend all possible assistance to affected orchardists and farmers without delay," she said.

The Minister also instructed other concerned departments like Horticulture, Agriculture, and Revenue, to work in close synergy to expedite

compensation processes and provide necessary technical support to farmers for crop recovery wherever possible.

"Our Government completely stands with the farming community in this difficult time. We will ensure all losses are compensated fairly," Sakeena said.

The Minister also asked the Deputy Commissioner to keep officers and officials on ground and maintain close liaison with local representatives and ensure that no affected family is left unattended during this difficult period.

### DC Bandipora conducts surprise inspection of Schools in Arin

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, APRIL 06: In a continued effort to strengthen the quality of education and ensure institutional accountability, the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, Monday conducted a surprise inspection of educational institutions in the Arin area, including Government Middle School Arin and Higher Secondary School Arin.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner undertook a comprehensive review of both academic and administrative functioning. She inspected classrooms, interacted with students during ongoing sessions, and assessed the overall learning environment. Stressing the need for discipline and consistency, she directed the school authorities to ensure regular attendance of both students and staff, and to maintain a structured and engaging academic atmosphere.

The DC, as per an official statement, also held detailed interactions with faculty members, seeking feedback



on curriculum delivery, infrastructure gaps, and other operational requirements. She assured that genuine concerns would be addressed in a time-bound manner to further enhance the quality of education.

While interacting with students, the Deputy Commissioner motivated them to remain committed to their studies and actively engage in co-curricular activities, underscoring their importance in holistic personality development. She encouraged students to set clear goals and work diligently towards achieving them.

On the occasion, the DC emphasized that regular monitoring and surprise inspections will continue to ensure accountability, improve standards, and provide a conducive and inspiring learning environment for students across the district.

### PhD graduate from NIT Srinagar joins University of Edinburgh as Postdoctoral researcher

KT News Desk

Srinagar, April 6: In a proud moment for the research community, Dr Zarak Bhat, a PhD graduate from the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, has joined the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom, as a Postdoctoral Researcher.

Dr. Zarak is the first PhD scholar from the Nanoelectronics Research and Development Group at NIT Srinagar, completed her doctoral studies under the supervision of Dr. Sheikh Aamir Ahsan in the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering.

She has been inducted into the APRIL AI Hub at the University of Edinburgh, where her research focuses on integrating artificial intelligence-driven methodologies into electron device design workflows.

Her work aims to accelerate optimisation processes, enhance performance prediction, and improve productivity in semiconductor innovation.



During her doctoral research, Dr. Zarak worked extensively on power Gallium Nitride (GaN) models. Her contributions, published in leading journals including IEEE Transactions on Electron Devices, played a key role in developing the NITSRI-GaN modeling framework.

The research has drawn attention for bridging device-level physics with circuit-level

simulations, particularly for next-generation power electronic systems.

Her appointment, as per a statement, marks a major milestone for both the researcher and the institute, reflecting the growing global recognition of advanced semiconductor research being conducted at NIT Srinagar.

Dr. Ahsan, who leads the

research group, expressed pride in this achievement, noting that such milestones highlight the group's commitment to high-quality industry-relevant research.

"It is always a rewarding experience to see students grow and take on new challenges at leading global institutions," he said.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, congratulated Dr. Ahsan and Dr. Zarak. He termed it as a proud moment for the institute and the Kashmir valley.

"This achievement is a matter of immense pride for our institute and the entire Kashmir valley. Dr. Zarak's selection at a prestigious global institution reflects the high academic standards and research excellence nurtured at NIT Srinagar," he said.

Prof. Kanaujia added that NIT Srinagar is committed to fostering innovation and producing researchers who can contribute meaningfully to cutting-edge fields like semiconductor technology on the global stage.

### Panchayat Electoral Roll Revision: DC Anantnag flags off SVEEP IEC Vans

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, APRIL 06: Deputy Commissioner (District Panchayat Election Officer), Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat Monday flagged off SVEEP IEC Vans from the DC Office, to create mass awareness on Revision of Panchayat Electoral Roll 2026.

Among others, DyDEO, ACD(ERO), CEO (Nodal Officer SVEEP), DEPO and officials from Election Department, were present on the occasion.

The IEC vans, as per an official statement, will travel across all the blocks and Panchayat Halqas of the district to disseminate information about the ongoing revision process and educate citizens about the procedures for inclusion, deletion, correction and transposition in the Panchayat Electoral Roll.

Speaking on the occasion, the DPEO emphasized the importance of maintaining accurate and updated electoral rolls for strengthening democracy at grassroots level. He urged



eligible residents, particularly new voters who attained the age of 18 years on 01-04-2026, to verify their details for proper inclusion in the updated electoral rolls within the stipulated timeframe.

Notably, to facilitate greater public participation, Special Camp Days have already been notified at designated polling stations on 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 and 26 April, 2026; during which Panchayat Election

Booth Officers (PEBOs) will be available to assist citizens in filing claims and objections.

To ensure timely registration, the concerned authorities appealed to all the eligible persons who have attained the age of 18 years or above as on 01-04-2026 to enroll themselves in the Panchayat Electoral Roll during the ongoing exercise. They may contact the concerned PEBOs, BDOs(AEROs) or Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) for necessary assistance.

### J&K PHE Contractors Coordination Committee calls on JKLA Speaker

KT News Desk

JAMMU, APRIL 06: A delegation of J&K PHE (Jal Shakti) Contractors Coordination Committee on Monday called on Speaker JKLA Abdul Rahim Rather at Assembly Secretariat.

The Delegation, as per an official statement, apprised the Speaker regarding the pressing issues faced by JJM contractors. These included pending payments under JJM, delay in submission of the House Committee report besides extending timely relief through the release of pending bills and deposits.

The delegation urged for immediate attention to these matters to ensure smooth execution of the ongoing works and ease the financial burden on the contractors.

Responding to their issues, the Speaker said that the Assembly has given two months extension to the House Committee to submit the report in this regard. He assured that the report will be submitted within the stipulated time. He told the delegation that all their concerns will be taken up with the government for early redress.

The delegation was headed by Nazir Ahmed Mir President Kashmir Province and Rakesh Kumar President Jammu Province. The other members of the Committees were also present.

## DC Srinagar inspects progress of new building complex at Abhinandan Home for specially-abled

### Distributes sports kits to students, dining furniture, assures dedicated pick-up van

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Apr 06: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Monday visited Abhinandan Home Solina, Kashmir's oldest institution for specially-abled children and inspected the progress of infrastructure upgradation works on Rs 9.90 crore project for construction of new state of the art school building complex for Specially-Abled Children, particularly those grappling with hearing & speaking challenges, being constructed by R&B Department.



Gymnasium, Medical Room, Therapy Room, Washroom Blocks, Computer Lab, Library, Dormitory, and Dining Hall.

While reviewing the progress of the pivotal project, the DC stressed the need for close coordination among all line departments to ensure timely completion of the work. He emphasised the need for added efforts by the executing agency to accelerate the pace of work to complete the project ahead of the scheduled timeline, while maintaining strict adherence to quality standards.

The DC also inspected the Hostel-cum-Kitchen Complex of Abhinandan Home and reviewed the facilities upgraded in the school's dining hall to enhance comfort and convenience for the students.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner also interacted with the students and staff of Abhinandan Home and assured them of continued support from the District Administration for the overall development of the children.

The DC also distributed sports kits, cricket bats, badminton sets and other sports equipment to the children to encourage their active participation in sports and games. He commended the concerned

officers for promptly addressing and fulfilling the demands raised by the children of the school during the last visit conducted.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC stated that the district Administration Srinagar is exploring possibilities regarding the need to set up higher education academic facilities, introduction of vocational training, skill development programmes and trade diploma courses through ITIs to strengthen educational pathways for specially-abled students.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Deputy Director Employment to organize special camps in collaboration with industry representatives to explore career prospects and placement opportunities for specially-abled students of Abhinandan Home, Solina.

He also directed for conducting a special health screening and medical check-up camp for the students at the school to ensure their wellbeing.

Responding to the students' demand, the Deputy Commissioner assured the provision of a dedicated van for the school to ease transportation and ensure safe and convenient travelling for all students.

## Iran rejects ceasefire proposal, insists on permanent end to war

AP

Tehran, Apr 06: Iran has rejected the latest ceasefire proposal and wants a permanent end to the war, the state-run IRNA news agency said Monday.

The response comes as US President Donald Trump's deadline looms — Tuesday night Washington time — for Tehran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, with the president threatening to hit Iran's power plants and other infrastructure targets.

Israel and the United States carried out a wave of attacks on Iran on Monday, killing more than 25 people. Iran responded with missile fire on Israel and its Gulf Arab neighbours.

Israel attacked the South Pars petrochemical plant at Asaluyeh in Iran, according to Israel's defense minister. An Israeli attack on South Pars facilities last month sparked major Iranian attacks targeting oil and gas infrastructure across the Gulf Arab states.

Trump, with Easter bunny nearby, talks Iran war

In a surreal scene on the White House lawn with flowers and Easter décor, Trump decided to give reporters an update on the Iran war.

With children waiting nearby, someone in a bunny costume steps away, and soft, cheerful music in the background, the president spoke about the rescue of a missing airman shot down in Iran, defended his explosive-laden threats on social media, and warned that Iran should capitulate or face threats to its bridges and power plants.

Turkey's president says his country has intensified push to end the war

"We are striving to seize any chance, however small, for hostilities to cease and negotiations to open,"

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in a televised address following a Cabinet meeting. He did not provide details.

Erdogan, a vocal critic of Israel, again accused the country of undermining all attempts to stop the fighting. Trump defends his use of vulgar language in a social media post.

The president used not-suitable-for-work language in a Sunday social media posting warning Iran he was serious about targeting the country's infrastructure if it doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz by his Tuesday deadline. He ended the short post by saying, "Praise be to Allah."

Asked by a reporter about his salty language, Trump responded he used it "only to make my point."

Trump added about his use of an expletive, "I think you've heard it before."

Trump suggests Kurdish groups have held onto guns meant for Iranian protesters

Trump appeared to confirm that the U.S. had intended to arm Iranian protesters after mass demonstrations against the government broke out throughout Iran in late 2025 and continued early into this year.

Thousands of anti-government protesters were killed during the crackdowns by government forces. Fox News reported on Sunday that Trump had told the network's Trey Yingst in a telephone interview that Kurdish groups who were supposed to be delivering the U.S.-provided weapons held on to them.

"They were supposed to go to the people so they could fight back against these thugs," Trump told reporters on Monday about the weapons intended for protesters. "You know what happened?"

The people that they sent them to keep them because they said, 'What a beautiful gun. I think I'll keep it.' So, I'm very upset with a certain group of people and they're going to pay a big price for that."

Trump says he'd prefer to take the oil President Trump said that he'd prefer to use US military power to take control of Iran's vast oil reserves, but acknowledged there's not much appetite for such a move among the American electorate.

"Take the oil because it's there for the taking," Trump said. "There's not a thing they can do about it. Unfortunately, the American people would like to see us come home. If it were up to me, I'd take the oil. I'd keep the oil. I would make plenty of money."

Trump warns Iran they're making a mistake by not capitulating

Shortly after state media reported Iran had rejected a ceasefire proposal, Trump offered a new harsh warning to Iran.

"They just don't want to say uncle," Trump told reporters as he and first lady Melania Trump hosted the White House Easter Egg Roll. "They don't want to cry as the expression goes uncle, but they will. And if they don't, they'll have no bridges. They'll have no power plants. They'll have no anything."

He added another ominous warning, "I won't go further because there are other things that are worse than those two."

A regional official involved in the ceasefire talks says the efforts haven't collapsed

"We are still talking to both sides," he says, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door diplomacy.

Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu says petrochemical attack weakens Iran's Revolutionary Guard

He said Monday's strike on an Iranian petrochemical facility is part of a systematic campaign aimed at destroying the Guard's "money machine."

"We are destroying factories, we are eliminating activists and we continue to eliminate senior figures," he said in a videotaped statement.

Netanyahu said he also spoke to President Trump about the U.S. rescue of two downed crew members in Iran. He said the president thanked Israel for assisting in the mission.

An Iranian university student asks the world: Stop this war

A resident of Tehran in his early twenties says US-Israeli strikes on civilian infrastructure and Trump's intensifying threats have "terrified" people.

"Everyone is very anxious and scared that the water, power and gas will be cut," he said, speaking anonymously for his security.

The student first spoke with The Associated Press on the eve of the war, when he participated in anti-government protests at his Tehran university's campus. At the time, he described heated disagreements with friends who said they hoped a threatened Israeli-US attack would overthrow the Islamic Republic.

"Those who were supporting the war are no longer supporting it," he said Monday.

Sunday, he heard the sound of "a lot of explosions" around the city from his home in the Sattar Khan area. He said he'd turned to taking sleeping pills to get through nightly bombardments.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Compassionate appointments

appointments, but certain shortcomings have come to light during its implementation. "We are aware of the difficulties you have gone through and also that the process took longer than it should have. There is a need to make further changes in the scheme so that appointments are completed swiftly and efficiently," he said.

The Chief Minister added that the government is committed to refining the scheme to ensure that such delays are minimized in future. "It should not happen that appointments meant to be made in previous years are delivered much later. We will identify the gaps and bring necessary improvements," he assured.

In an emotional address to the appointees, the Chief Minister said that while government employment is usually a moment of joy, such appointments under RAS come after an irreplaceable personal loss.

"Getting a government job is often the happiest day in one's life, but in your case, it comes after losing a loved one. The trauma you endure is far greater than any examination. In many ways, it is more difficult than clearing even the toughest competitive exams," he said.

He said he chose to personally hand over the appointment letters to convey the government's empathy and solidarity with the affected families. "We could have sent these orders to your homes, but I wanted to be here to assure you that the government stands with you in this difficult time," he added.

Encouraging the appointees, the Chief Minister urged them to serve the people with dedication and integrity. He noted that many beneficiaries come from remote areas and understand the challenges faced by common people.

"You now have an opportunity to serve the people of Jammu and Kashmir. There may be temptations to take easier paths, but true satisfaction lies in addressing people's difficulties with sincerity," he said.

Reaffirming government support, he said, "My colleagues and I are always available. If you face any difficulty, do not hesitate to reach out. We will do our best to assist you." Extending his best wishes, the Chief Minister prayed for their success and urged them to work with commitment towards public service.

Speaking on the occasion, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani said that while no compensation can replace the loss of a loved one, such appointments aim to provide emotional support and immediate

relief to the affected families.

Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department M. Raju, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, Deputy Commissioner Jammu Rakesh Minhas, senior officers, appointees and their family members were present on the occasion.

### Govt frames rules

requirements, such as a minimum area of 400 sq ft per 10 beds for the inpatient department (IPD) only; separate rooms for counselling and outpatient services (130-150 sq ft); distinct male and female wards with adequate privacy; and provision of two beds for emergency or detoxification, with continuous medical supervision.

Similarly, they also lay down that each centre shall employ at least one clinical psychiatrist, one medical officer, one clinical psychologist per 15 patients, one nurse per 10 patients, a social worker or counsellor, and supporting staff such as attendants, a record keeper, cook, sanitation worker, and security personnel.

As per the guidelines, each centre must follow the Standard Operating Procedure issued by the Health and Medical Education Department (Secy/H&ME/2022/30 dated 15.9.2022), along with NACO/WHO protocols and government directives.

Only approved pharmacotherapies may be administered, and only under the prescription of a qualified psychiatrist or medical officer, the Rules state.

Each patient, as per the Rules, must be assigned a Unique Treatment Identification Number (UTIN) linked to a central database. "Before initiating substitution therapy, centres must verify the patient's treatment history through the portal," the Rules state.

The Rules provide that drug dispensation must occur under direct supervision, and take-home doses require written approval from a psychiatrist. "Centres must maintain daily dispensing registers, stock registers, and digital entries. All records must be retained for at least five years," the Rules state.

According to the Rules, each centre must establish a Quality-Assurance Cell to ensure correct dosages, expiry checks, and proper storage of controlled drugs. According to the Rules, centres must report adverse drug reactions within 48 hours to the Licensing Authority and Pharmacovigilance Cell. "In the event of a death or serious adverse event, intimation shall be made within 24 hours to the nearest police station, the Chief Medical Officer of the district, and the licensing authority," the Rules state.

They also provide for the constitution of a

monitoring committee at the Union Territory level comprising representatives from the Health & Medical Education Department, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Social Welfare, and Police (Narcotics) to review performance and compliance.

The Licensing Authority may suspend or cancel the license if the centre violates the Rules or the Act; misuses or diverts drugs; jeopardizes patient safety; or maintains false or incomplete records.

According to the notification, all existing centres shall comply with the Rules and shall apply before the licensing authority within a period of six months from the date of issuance of these Rules. (KNO)

### LG's magisterial probe

magisterial inquiry into the encounter. "The truth should be established without delay," he added.

He said a judicial probe takes considerable time and involves procedural challenges, including the availability of judges.

"I will not go for a judicial inquiry as it takes a lot of time. It is not easy to get a sitting or even a retired judge. There should be an inquiry without wasting time so that the truth is placed before the people," he said.

Referring to the move by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to order a magisterial probe, the Chief Minister said the decision was "appropriate" and the inquiry should be allowed to proceed.

"I think the step taken by the LG is right. Let the inquiry do its job. The truth will come out," he added.

On international developments, CM Omar expressed concern over the ongoing tensions in the Middle East and called for restraint.

"President of United States using abusive language does not suit his office. Such words cannot even be repeated here," he said.

CM Omar said prolonged conflict would have wider consequences, adding, "We are all worried. The longer this continues, the more difficult it will become for everyone. We hope for an early ceasefire so that normalcy returns." (KNO)

### MeT predicts

rocks slid onto a road stretch in Baramulla this afternoon, causing panic among locals. (KNO)

### Landslides, shooting

Road has been closed for vehicular movement following orders issued by the district administration.

On Tuesday, he said, the traffic on Srinagar-Leh Highway will be allowed from Srinagar towards Kargil for LMVs and HMVs carrying

essential goods, subject to fair weather and road clearance.

No vehicle will be allowed after the cut-off timing, and movement will depend on conditions along the Zojila axis, the official added.

The Mughal Road will remain open for limited traffic, with only stranded vehicles permitted to move from Shopian towards Poonch during specified hours. No movement will be allowed after the cut-off time.

The advisory said commuters should undertake journeys only after confirming the road status, as the overall situation remains weather-dependent. (KNO)

### Public representatives,

former Ministers, a former Member of Parliament and other representatives, also met the Chief Minister and discussed a range of public issues.

Former State Election Commissioner, B. R. Sharma, called on the Chief Minister and exchanged views on matters of public importance.

Chairperson, J&K BOPEE, Dr. Minu Mahajan, briefed the Chief Minister on the functioning and ongoing initiatives of the Board of Professional Entrance Examinations.

Later, Dr. Anuj Vaid, Chairman, Jammu Chapter of NIRC of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India, met the Chief Minister and discussed various professional and institutional matters.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah gave a patient hearing to all the delegations and assured that the issues raised would be addressed on priority.

He reiterated the government's commitment to responsive governance and prompt redressal of public grievances.

### Over 50,000 cancer

consistent upward trajectory, raising alarm among medical professionals.

At Government Medical College Jammu, the data shows: 2015: 1,867 cases, 2016: 1,966 cases, 2017: 1,860 cases, 2018: 2,341 cases, 2019: 2,102 cases, 2020: 1,715 cases, 2021: 1,756 cases, 2022: 1,719 cases, 2023: 2,036 cases, 2024: 2,187 cases and 2025: 2,581 cases.

Among these, lung cancer accounted for 3,272 cases, making it the most prevalent, followed by breast cancer (1,756 cases) and oral cancer (1,023 cases) over the last decade. Doctors said that lung cancer remains a major public health issue, driven largely by smoking, exposure to second-hand smoke, and environmental pollution.

Globally, lung cancer constitutes about 12.4% of all cancers, while in India it accounts for approximately 5.8%, with Jammu and

Kashmir reflecting similar patterns.

"High tobacco consumption, including smoking and smokeless forms, along with indoor pollution and occupational hazards, are key contributors to lung cancer cases in the region," an oncologist said.

Experts stress that early detection significantly improves survival rates, yet many patients in J&K present at advanced stages of the disease.

"Cancer is not a death sentence if detected early. Regular screenings, awareness, and timely medical consultation can save lives," doctors said.

They recommend: routine screening for high-risk groups; awareness about early warning signs such as unexplained weight loss, persistent cough, lumps, or unusual bleeding; increased access to diagnostic facilities in rural areas and preventive measures and lifestyle changes.

Experts emphasize that a significant proportion of cancers are preventable through lifestyle modifications.

Key precautions include: Avoiding tobacco in all forms, avoiding alcohol consumption, maintaining a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, Regular physical activity, minimizing exposure to environmental pollutants and vaccination against certain cancer-causing infections (like HPV and Hepatitis B) along with strengthening healthcare response.

They said that there is the need for enhanced oncology infrastructure, including specialized cancer hospitals, trained personnel, and affordable treatment options within the Union Territory.

They have urged authorities to scale up screening programs, improve data collection, and invest in awareness campaigns, particularly in rural and underserved areas. (KNO)

### 44 digital transport

of living by ensuring better accessibility of transport services to citizens across the Union Territory. (KNO)

### Over 1,700 students

highlighting an increasing reliance on government-backed financial support to pursue higher and professional education. (KNO)

### From Botany to bakery

particular, she urged them to take initiative and break barriers.

"I would like to tell educated women to come forward, start your own ventures, and be independent. I am sure you will excel in life. There are millions of opportunities waiting—you just need to take the first step," she said. (KNO)

## Cong keeps singing to Pakistan's tunes, compromising nation's security: PM in Assam

PTI

Bhabanipur-Sorbhog (Assam), Apr 6: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that while his government has carried out Operation Sindoor on terror camps in Pakistan, the Congress keeps on "singing to the tune of" the neighbouring country.

On the development front, he alleged that the Congress had always taken a myopic view on the matter, while the BJP works towards ensuring long-term development of the nation.

"The party always took short-term measures so that they could indulge in corruption. But the BJP looks far ahead while taking decisions for all-around development of all sections of society," Modi said.

Addressing an election rally here in Barpeta district, the prime minister alleged that during the 2016 surgical strikes or the 2025 'Operation Sindoor', the Congress has always sung to Pakistan's tune, giving importance to their agenda.

"This Pakistan connection always weighs heavily on the country ('hamesha desh par bhari parta hain'), and we can never allow that," he said.

Modi also accused the Congress of neglecting the Army by refusing to implement the 'One Rank, One Pension' for the veterans for decades. But the BJP government ensured that justice was done to those who protect the nation by giving them this



benefit, he said.

"We have so far disbursed Rs 1.24 lakh crore to the bank accounts of former army personnel," the prime minister told the rally.

He said peace was established in Assam after a lot of sacrifices and due to the BJP's honest effort in implementing the peace accords signed during the past 10 years.

"Peace and stability in the state has led to development under the BJP rule... and for it to continue, it is necessary to keep the Congress out (of power)," the prime minister said.

The past 10 years of NDA rule in the state were marked

by establishing peace and protecting its identity, he said, adding that in the future, "we will bring more prosperity to the state and help it make a mark on the global stage".

Wooing the woman voters, Modi said the 33 per cent quota for women in Parliament would be implemented from the 2029 general elections.

"A special session of Parliament has been convened on April 16 to discuss the issue with all parties and take this forward. But some people are trying to spread rumours even about this," he said.

The Budget session of Parliament has been extended for three

more days and will reconvene on April 16 after a brief recess, with the Centre planning to bring legislation to raise the number of Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 816.

The proposed increase in seats is aimed at facilitating the implementation of the women's reservation law enacted in 2023.

"All states in the country will benefit from this...they have waited 40 years for this, and women in Assam should urge all parties to ensure the Bill's passage," Modi said while reiterating that women's empowerment was his government's top priority.

The prime minister claimed that women are getting the benefits of both Central and state

schemes wherever there is a BJP double-engine government.

He accused the Congress of neglecting the tribals when it was in power. "The Congress has helped infiltrators settle in places of worship. But the BJP government is evicting them and giving land documents to the indigenous people of the state."

He also greeted the people on the occasion of the BJP's foundation day with the pledge to make the nation developed and 'Aatmanirbhar' (self-reliant).

"The Congress is now left in a few states, but they do not bring out the report cards of the work done by them. On the other hand, the BJP reaches out to the people with what they have done, particularly for the farmers," he said.

Modi reminded the gathering that in 2013, when the UPA was in power at the Centre, the minimum support price for paddy was Rs 1,300 per quintal, but now it was Rs 2,370 per quintal.

"Farmers' income is increasing, and the BJP is giving it directly to their bank accounts, bypassing the middlemen," he said, adding that it was for this reason the BJP was the first choice of the farmers.

In a bid to strike a local connect, Modi pointed out that Assam's famed 'Joha' rice was now being exported to European countries.

Elections to the 126 assembly constituencies in Assam will be held on April 9, with counting of votes on May 4.

## Security scare at Delhi Assembly as SUV breaks through iron gate

Three held, vehicle seized



PTI

New Delhi, Apr 6: In a major security breach at the Delhi Assembly, a masked man drove an SUV through one of the boundary gates, placed a flower bouquet outside the Speaker's office, and fled, triggering a high alert on Monday afternoon. Police later detained three people, including the driver, and seized the vehicle from north Delhi.

Multiple police teams, along with a bomb disposal squad, rushed to the site and conducted a thorough sweep of the area to rule out any threat, a police officer said.

The car, bearing an Uttar Pradesh registration number, entered the Assembly premises after breaking through Gate No. 2 at around 2 pm, officials said.

Since it is not the main gate, security is relatively less around it when the House is not in session, according to sources.

"The driver proceeded towards the office of Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta and placed a flower bouquet near the porch before rushing out in his vehicle," said a Delhi Secretariat official.

The incident raised "serious" security concerns, with

authorities treating it as a potential "security breach", he said.

Special Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Ravindra Yadav reached the site soon after the incident and supervised the investigation.

Yadav said police checked CCTV camera footage in and around the area to reconstruct the sequence of events. Police teams were formed to track down the vehicle and its occupants, and alerts were flashed to adjoining states, with details of the suspected car shared with local police units.

Later, police apprehended three people, including the driver. "Three people have been detained. The car was recovered, and the accused were caught in north Delhi," a police officer said.

Meanwhile, forensic experts examined the flower bouquet that was allegedly kept inside the assembly premises. The bomb disposal squad and dog squad conducted a thorough sweep of the area to rule out any explosive threat.

The incident comes close on the heels of bomb threats received by the Assembly during the recently concluded budget session.

## Amit Shah mocks Rahul Gandhi over his petrol price remarks

Says no shortage, increase in fuel rates



PTI

Puducherry, Apr 6: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday lampooned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his claims of an increase in the prices of petrol and diesel, saying that it indeed was the case, but in neighbouring Pakistan.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the country has bucked international trends of fuel shortage, work from home orders and "skyrocketing prices," and the government has ensured availability of petroleum products amidst the West Asia conflict, he said.

Addressing a poll rally here ahead of the April 9 Assembly elections, the senior BJP leader promised to make all efforts to ensure a developed Puducherry if the NDA is given a two-thirds majority. The ruling AINRC-BJP combine is seeking a successive term in

the coming polls.

Shah said Rahul Gandhi, at a recent public meeting in this union territory, had said that "due to the Gulf war, petrol prices have gone up in India."

"He is right. Petrol costs Rs 458, while diesel has gone up to Rs 520. But Rahul... that has happened not in India, but Pakistan," Shah said.

On the contrary, prices have been stable in the country and there is no shortage of petroleum products

Recently, after an unprecedented surge in fuel prices triggered severe backlash, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had announced slashing the petrol price.

Taking a dig at the opposition INDIA bloc, he said the CPI, CPI (M) have already left the alliance in the UT, while the DMK and Congress were fighting each other in five seats in the polls. The NDA, on the other hand, was united, he said.

## Sensex jumps 787 points to settle at 74,106; Nifty surges 255 points to 22,968



PTI

Mumbai, Apr 06: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty staged a sharp rebound on Monday after falling in early trade following a correction in crude oil prices amid reports of ceasefire efforts in the ongoing West Asia war.

Besides, intense buying in bank stocks also supported investor sentiments. In a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 787.30 points, or 1.07 per cent, to settle at 74,106.85. During the day, it surged 887.91 points, or 1.21 per cent, to 74,207.46.

The 50-share NSE Nifty edged higher by 255.15 points, or 1.12 per cent, to end at 22,968.25. From the 30-Sensex firms,

Trent jumped the most by 7.89 per cent. Axis Bank, Titan, Larsen & Toubro, UltraTech Cement and Bajaj Finance were also among the major gainers. On the other hand, Reliance Industries, HCL Tech and Sun Pharma were the laggards.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, dropped 0.71 per cent to USD 108.3 per barrel. In Asian markets, South Korea's benchmark Kospi and Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended higher. Markets were closed in Hong Kong and Shanghai for a holiday.

"Domestic equities staged a strong rally as value buying gained traction across the board. Crude prices softened marginally on reports of ceasefire efforts, while

encouraging provisional banking data supported interest in rate-sensitive segments," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

However, overall risk appetite remains cautious due to persistent inflationary pressures and concerns over potential disruptions to global trade, he added.

US and domestic equity markets were closed on Friday for Good Friday.

"Today's recovery was driven primarily by a modest pullback in crude oil prices, with Brent slipping below the USD 105 mark amid reports of a proposed temporary ceasefire from Middle East mediators. Additionally, domestic institutional investors continued to provide stability at lower levels, absorbing selling pressure and supporting the broader market structure," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 9,931.13 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs), however, bought stocks worth Rs 7,208.41 crore.

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## Have fiscal space to support sectors affected by West Asia crisis: FM



The Monetary Policy Committee headed by Reserve Bank Governor will announce its stance on interest rate on Wednesday. There is a widespread speculation that RBI will maintain status quo. The rate-setting panel began its deliberations on Monday.

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 6: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said India has fiscal space to support sectors impacted by escalating West Asia crisis, while the Reserve Bank has room to cut interest rate to deal with global challenges.

The Monetary Policy Committee headed by Reserve Bank Governor will announce its stance on interest rate on Wednesday. There is a widespread speculation that RBI will maintain status quo. The rate-setting panel began its deliberations on Monday.

Observing that the current year is even more challenging than the previous one, Sitharaman said, "the escalation of Middle East conflict has evolved from a regional security concern into a systemic tremor threatening vital arteries of global energy, and hardening the lines of new multipolar world order."

She said that the world economy is witnessing volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and

ambiguity, and global public debt has surged.

The minister was speaking at an event organised by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) here.

However, she said India stands out in debt management with overall debt-to-GDP ratio at 81 per cent, the lowest among major economies.

Many nations in the world are facing the issue of limited fiscal space to deal with the challenges as they fail to maintain fiscal prudence, she said.

On the contrary, she said, "India has fiscal space. Room to maintain our capex programme, room for RBI to cut rates, and room to offer targeted support to affected sectors. This is the dividend of a decade of fiscal prudence and discipline."

As the country had fiscal space, she said India recently reduced the excise duty on petrol and diesel and exempted customs duty for key petrochemical products to save the common man from rising prices due to the West Asia crisis.

## EC to deploy 3,000 more armed personnel for Bengal polls

PTI

Kolkata, Apr 6: To ensure peaceful polling in West Bengal, the EC has decided to deploy 3,000 armed police personnel from other states, mostly from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, supplementing the already substantial presence of central forces for the first phase of elections slated for April 23, a senior official said on Monday.

"Given the sensitivity of the elections, it has been decided to augment the existing forces with around 3,000 armed police personnel from other states. A large contingent of the additional forces will be drawn from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh," the official told PTI.

The personnel are expected to start arriving in the state from April 13 in a phased manner, he said.

The commission has already planned the deployment of 2,400 companies of central forces across the state, he said.

## Plastic packaging for water, sugar SC says nothing wrong in displaying warning

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 6: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to interfere with the Madras High Court order which directed that all plastic/PET bottles and packaging used for selling water, salt and sugar should contain a label stating that these food items "may contain micro/nano plastics". "Nothing wrong in displaying the warning," a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta observed.

"The government may be dragging its feet, but the high court is very affirmative on this as reports have

suggested the presence of micro plastics... Let the public be aware," the bench said. Observing that it is a consumer-driven market, it said that people have already started reducing the use of plastic, including water bottles.

The top court was hearing a plea filed by the PET Packaging Association for Clean Environment, challenging a February 2026 order of the Madras High Court. The High Court had directed the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and others to issue an appropriate notification that all plastic/PET (polyethylene terephthalate)

bottles selling water should contain the label in bold and in red colour letters stating that "this water may contain micro/nano plastics".

It had also said that similarly, sugar and salt that are sold in plastic packaged material should contain the label stating that "this sugar/salt may contain micro/nano plastics".

The high court had asked the FSSAI to issue directions to all the manufacturers/appropriate persons to include the above labelling requirements in the labels of their products and enforce the same

scrupulously. It had said that the notification should be issued within four weeks from the date of receipt of the website uploaded copy of its order.

During the hearing on the plea, the apex court observed that the matter was pending before the high court.

The counsel appearing for the petitioners said that the warning may create panic.

Justice Nath observed, "People are checking and reducing the use of plastic bottles. There is nothing wrong in it (displaying the warning)."

## US markets mixed, oil prices fall as Trump's deadline for Iran to open Strait of Hormuz looms

AP

Tokyo, Apr 6: Trading on Wall Street was subdued, and oil prices retreated modestly as Israel and the United States carried out a wave of attacks that killed 25 people in Iran on Monday ahead of US President Donald Trump's deadline for Tehran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Futures for the S&P 500 ticked up 0.1 per cent, while futures for the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.2 per cent. Nasdaq futures gained 0.3 per cent. Iran's South Pars natural gas field was among the targets hit on Monday. Iran responded with missile fire on Israel and its Gulf Arab neighbours while mediators circulated a new ceasefire proposal.

Among those killed in one of the attacks on Tehran was the head of intelligence for Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, Maj. Gen. Majid Khademi, according to Iranian state media and Israel's defence minister.

Trump, whose deadline expires Monday night Washington time, said that if no deal was reached to reopen the strait, the US would hit Iran's power plants and other infrastructure targets and send the country "back to the Stone Age."

"Tuesday will be Power Plant Day, and Bridge Day, all wrapped up in one, in Iran," he threatened in a social media post on Easter Sunday, adding that if Iran did not open the strait, "you'll be living in Hell."

In an effort to stop the fighting, Egyptian, Pakistani and Turkish mediators have sent Iran and the US a proposal calling for a 45-day ceasefire and the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz to give time to try and find a way to end the war, two Mideast officials have told The Associated Press.



Iran and the US have not responded to the proposal, sent late Sunday night to both Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and US Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff, the officials said.

Despite the new attacks, threats and Trump's looming deadline, oil prices fell early Monday.

Benchmark US crude dropped USD 1.40 to USD 110.14 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, lost 45 cents to USD 108.58 a barrel. Energy markets were closed on Friday, but prices have been surging for weeks on fears that the Iran war will drag on longer than expected. US crude is up more than 60 per cent since the war started five weeks ago, while Brent is up close to 50 per cent.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 finished 0.6 per cent higher at 53,413.68. South Korea's Kospi gained 1.4 per cent to 5,450.33. Trading was closed in Australia for Easter; in Hong Kong and Shanghai for a traditional Chinese

holiday, and in France, Germany and Britain in observance of Easter.

The US relies on the Persian Gulf for only a fraction of the oil it imports, but oil is a commodity and prices are set in a global market. Some nations, like resource-poor Japan, import a large portion of their energy needs and rely heavily on access to the Strait of Hormuz.

Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takahashi told lawmakers recently that Japan was releasing its reserves and was working on alternative routes. South Korea's trade ministry said it plans to send at least five ships to Saudi Arabia in the coming weeks to establish new oil transport routes in the Red Sea.

"As we kick off the first full trading week of April, the word uncertainty is paramount. Last year, it was centred on the impact of Liberation Day's tariffs; this year, it's the uncertainty surrounding the ongoing Iranian War," said Jay Woods, analyst at Freedom Capital Markets in New York.

### 'Iran, US receive plan to end hostilities, immediate ceasefire'

REUTERS

Dubai, Apr 06: Iran and the United States have received a plan to end hostilities that could come into effect on Monday and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a source aware of the proposals said on Monday.

A framework to end hostilities has been put together by Pakistan and exchanged with Iran and the US overnight, the source said, outlining a two-tier approach with an immediate ceasefire followed by a comprehensive agreement.

"All elements need to be agreed today," the source said, adding the initial understanding would be structured as a memorandum of understanding finalized electronically through Pakistan, the sole communication channel in the talks.

Axios first reported on Sunday that the United States, Iran and regional mediators were discussing a potential 45-day ceasefire as part of a two-phase deal that could lead to a permanent end to the war, citing US, Israeli and regional sources.

The source told Reuters Pakistan's army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, has been in contact "all night long" with US Vice President JD Vance, special envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Under the proposal, a ceasefire would take effect immediately, reopening the Strait of Hormuz, with 15-20 days to finalize a broader settlement. The deal, tentatively dubbed the "Islamabad Accord," would include a regional framework for the strait, with final in-person talks in Islamabad.

### Kremlin says whole Middle East is 'on fire'



REUTERS

Moscow, Apr 06: The Kremlin on Monday said that the Iran war was escalating in both geography and economic impact, and that the whole Middle East region was "on fire" due to the US and Israeli attacks on the Islamic Republic.

US President Donald Trump, in an expletive-laden Easter Sunday social media post, threatened to target Iran's power plants and bridges on Tuesday if the Strait of Hormuz is not reopened.

When asked by Reuters about Trump's remarks,

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that Russia had seen them but that the Kremlin preferred not to comment directly.

"We note that the level of tension in the region is growing and continues to grow," Peskov said. "In fact, the entire region is on fire. These are all very dangerous and negative consequences of the aggression that was unleashed against Iran."

"The geography of this conflict has expanded, and now we are all aware of the consequences that we have, including very, very negative consequences for the global economy."

### EU chief says targeting civilian infrastructure 'illegal'



AFP

Brussels, Apr 06: Striking civilian infrastructure installations during war is illegal, EU chief Antonio Costa said in a social media post on Monday. "Any targeting of civilian infrastructure, namely energy facilities, is illegal and unacceptable," Costa, the president of the European Council, said. "This applies to Russia's war in Ukraine and it applies everywhere. The Iranian civilian population is the main victim of the Iranian regime. It would also be the main victim of a widening of the military campaign."

The post came after US President Donald Trump threatened to devastate civilian infrastructure in Iran if it does not reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

### North Korea distancing itself from Iran to leave door open for US talks, Seoul says



REUTERS

Seoul, Apr 06: North Korea appears to be distancing itself from longtime partner Iran and carefully managing its public messaging to preserve the possibility of a new relationship with the US after the Iran war, South Korean lawmakers said on Monday, citing the spy agency.

Seoul's National Intelligence Service (NIS) said North Korea had not sent weapons or supplies so far to Iran since the conflict started on February 28, and did not issue public condolences

upon the death of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed in air strikes, said lawmaker Park Sun-won who attended a closed-door briefing held by the NIS.

Pyongyang also sent no congratulatory message when Khamenei's son, Mojtaba Khamenei, was selected as the new supreme leader, Park said, citing the NIS.

While China and Russia had frequently issued statements on the conflict, North Korea's Foreign Ministry had only issued two toned-down statements so far, consistent, the NIS said, with

North Korea's recent tendency to avoid direct criticism of US President Donald Trump.

The NIS assessed this restraint as preparation to secure new diplomatic space after an anticipated May summit between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Trump, the lawmaker said.

North Korea was also facing significant economic strain related to the Middle East crisis, with disruptions to the procurement of industrial supplies, rising prices, and a surging exchange rate, the NIS told lawmakers.

At North Korea's Ninth Workers' Party Congress in late February, Kim appeared to leave an opening for talks with Washington, saying there was no reason the countries "cannot get along well," if the US recognized North Korea's status as a nuclear state and withdrew its hostile policy.

The NIS assessed Kim had made the remarks in his own voice as a deliberate signal, aimed at keeping relations with Trump in good standing and positioning Pyongyang for a new diplomatic chapter once the Middle East conflict subsides, Park said.

### Second edition of Rugby Premier League from June 16

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 6: The second edition of the Rugby Premier League (RPL), which is organised by GMR Sports in partnership with Rugby India, will be held at the Gachibowli Stadium, Hyderabad, from June 16 to 28. Like its inaugural season, the league would be held in the fast-paced Rugby 7s format. It will feature the six franchises from the first edition.

The announcement follows GMR Sports' recent signing of a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Telangana.

"Hyderabad's emergence as a global sporting destination reflects Telangana's long-term policy vision and institutional support for international partnerships. Events like the Rugby Premier League contribute significantly to tourism, urban visibility, and the broader sports economy of the State," said Jayesh Ranjan, Special Chief Secretary (Youth Advancement, Tourism and Culture and Sports Department) in Government of Telangana.

### Samson, Bumrah nominated for ICC player of the month award

PTI

Dubai, Apr 6: India opener Sanju Samson and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah were on Monday named among the nominees for the ICC Player of the Month award for March following their success at the T20 World Cup.

South Africa batter Connor Esterhuizen completes the shortlist following an outstanding debut T20I series in New Zealand that saw one of the best statistics after five games by anyone from his country.

Samson's sizzling form towards the end of the T20 World



Cup, which earned him the player of the Tournament award, puts him in the fray alongside Bumrah, who was adjudged the player of the match in the final.

Samson did not get to play in the early part of the tournament but was the standout performer in the big games and helped India retain the title.

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## Movies Watchlist

Tuesday, 7th April

THE SUPER MARIO GALAXY MOVIE (U/A)  
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES  
05:30 PM

DHURANDHAR THE REVENGE (A)  
HINDI ATMOS - 02:00 PM, 06:45 PM  
HINDI - 10:00 AM, 11:45 AM, 04:15 PM

PROJECT HAIL MARY (U/A)  
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES  
10:45 AM, 02:25 PM

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