



ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

LG Sinha terminates two more govt employees over terror links

Dismissals reach 90

KNO News Desk

Srinagar, Apr 08: Invoking his zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday terminated two more government employees over terror links, taking the total dismissals to 90.

Official sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the employees were terminated under Article 311(2)(c) of the Constitution for their alleged links with Pakistan-backed terror outfits Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen.

They said one of them, Farhat Ali Khandani, a Class-IV employee in the Education Department in Ramban, was found to be operating as a key facilitator for Hizb-ul-Mujahideen.

"Investigations revealed that he used his government position as a cover to revive terrorist networks, channel hawala funds, and strengthen terrorist cadres, even after securing bail in earlier terror-related cases," they said.

They added the second employee, Mohammad Shafi Dar



from Bandipora, employed in the Rural Development Department, was identified as an active terror aide of the LeT. "He provided logistics, safe houses, intelligence inputs, and was involved in weapons recovery during a joint security operation in April 2025".

Sources told KNO that the dismissals are a part of the on-going drive to root out terrorists embedded in the government machinery. "LG Sinha's iron-fisted offensive has led to purging the state apparatus of covertly infiltrated terrorist elements."

It may be recalled that recently the | More on P6

LG directs Cluster University Sgr to implement targeted reforms

KT News Desk

Jammu, April 08: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday chaired the 2nd meeting of the University Council of the Cluster University of Srinagar at Lok Bhavan, Jammu.

The meeting was attended by Prof. Mohammad Mobin, Vice Chancellor Cluster University Srinagar; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu; Prof. K.S Chandrasekhar, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University Jammu; Shri Shailendra Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Prof Rama Shanker Dubey, former Vice Chancellor, Central University of Gujarat; Prof. P. K. Abdul Aziz, former



Vice Chancellor Aligarh Muslim University; Prof. Syed Wilayat Hussain Rizvi, Registrar, Cluster University Srinagar and other members of the Council.

The University Council, which met under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, accorded in-principle approval to various agenda items and proposals, including the establishment of Abdul Ahad Azad Chair and the adoption of postgraduate curriculum

framework under NEP 2020 as per UGC guidelines.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the Cluster University Srinagar to implement targeted reforms aimed at bolstering academic excellence and student welfare. He further directed the University to implement the e-office systems fully to modernise university administration and enhance operational efficiency.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised | More on P6

Counter Terror Operations in Jammu

DGP's strategy to establish TOBs on high ridges, mid contours prove decisive



- Over 100 cops felicitated by out of turn promotions
- Absorption of SPOs as Constables
- Cash rewards for bravery, courage

Yogesh

Jammu, Apr 08: For the first time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir Police, a three-digit number of brave personnel were given out of turn promotions and cash reward besides absorption of SPOs, for their exemplary contribution to CT Ops in Jammu Zone.

A top official while talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Between 2021 and 2023, Jammu region witnessed resurgence of terrorist activities, with outfits such as LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammed succeeding to re-establish their presence in the mountainous areas of the Jammu Zone."

"To combat the challenge and reverse the tide of terrorism,

DGP Nalin Prabhat decided to establish TOB (Temporary-Ops Bases) on high ridges and mid contours. Specialised training was given to Special Operations Groups (SOG), in terms of Guerilla, Jungle and Mountain warfare. SOGs were re-vitalized with fresh-blood, appropriate weaponry and special equipment.

Besides within SOGs specialised units such as Snow Leopards and Markhor, too, have been recently created," he added.

"To intensify efforts in tracking and neutralizing Pakistani terrorists, JK Police have also substantially enhanced its reward policy. In specific cases, the reward amount has been increased substantially.

In recent months, the Jammu and Kashmir Police, in close coordination with other security forces, have achieved notable success in counter-terrorism operations conducted across the challenging mountain terrains of Jammu Zone," the official said.

It's in place to mention here that 1,620 personnel of the Jammu and Kashmir Police have sacrificed their lives in fight against terrorism. (KNO)

LG Sinha prorogues J&K Legislative Assembly

KT News Desk

The Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, has prorogued the Legislative

Assembly of the Union Territory, formally winding up the Legislative Assembly session. According to a bulletin issued by the Assembly Secretariat, the order dated April 7, 2026, was

issued by the Lieutenant Governor in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 18(2) (a) of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019.

Landslides, highway closure 'Avoid travel, don't risk lives': DIG Mughal

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Apr 08: Deputy Inspector General (Traffic) Jammu, Haseeb Mughal, on Wednesday urged commuters to avoid travel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, saying continuous rainfall over the past two to three days has triggered multiple landslides and made road conditions unsafe.

"For the past 2-3 days, there has been continuous rain across the entire Jammu zone," DIG Mughal said, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He said the major landslides have been reported from Nashri, Karol, Khandar (Kunfar) Nallah, Banihal and Shalgari.

He said restoration work has been taken up at several locations, particularly in Karol, where partial clearance has been achieved. "Work has been done in Karol and is still ongoing," he said.

Highlighting the scale of efforts, he said the National Highways Authority of India



(NHAI) is working round the clock to restore connectivity. "NHAI is carrying out restoration work 24x7, but due to continuous bad weather, the road is not being cleared immediately," he said.

The DIG said traffic has been stopped from both sides as a precautionary measure. "We have halted traffic at Qazigund for vehicles coming from Srinagar and also stopped vehicles at Udhampur for those heading towards the Valley," he said, adding that the highway has not been restored yet. He urged | More on P6

CM Omar bats for promoting heritage tourism Calls for transforming neglected forts, shrines, properties into revenue-generating attractions

KNO Desk

Jammu, Apr 08: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday called for a major push to turn Jammu & Kashmir's heritage into a driver of tourism and economic growth, urging adaptive reuse of over 600 identified monuments and cultural sites across the region.

In a high-level meeting on Heritage Promotion and Cultural Tourism, CM Omar as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), stressed the need to blend conservation with commercialization and leverage public-private partnerships (PPP) to transform neglected forts, shrines and other heritage properties into revenue-generating attractions.

"J&K's heritage is not just about history, but it is a source of livelihoods, tourism and identity. We must act now to preserve and promote it," CM



Omar said, stressing structured consultations with national and international experts to adopt best practices in adaptive reuse.

The meeting also reviewed the proposed reconstitution of the J&K Heritage Conservation and Preservation Authority, aiming to strengthen its institutional capacity, expand its powers and ensure active leadership

under the Chief Minister. Officials further highlighted that the current legal and institutional framework under the 2010 Heritage Act has been limited by inactive authorities, fragmented coordination and outdated structures.

Similarly, the Secretary Culture presented data showing that while over 600 sites have been | More on P6

Collective action key to social transformation: CM Omar Leads pledge on mental health, drug de-addiction, env & road safety

KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 08: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday underscored the need for a collective responsibility in addressing key social challenges, stating that while several responsibilities lie with the government, many others must be shared by society as a whole.

He made these remarks while launching a three-day divisional-level awareness programme organised by the School Education Department at the Convention Centre here.

Addressing a large gathering of students and stakeholders, the Chief Minister drew a clear distinction between responsibilities that fall solely within the domain of the government, such as building roads, bridges and hospitals, and those that



require active public participation. "Besides the government, public has crucial role in maintaining environmental safeguards and key public assets as part of their civic responsibility," he said.

Highlighting the issue of civic responsibility, he expressed concern over the common

tendency to shift blame entirely onto the government, particularly in matters like cleanliness. He urged citizens to adopt responsible behaviour in their daily lives, stressing that a cleaner and better society can only be achieved through collective efforts.

The Chief Minister

emphasized that if society actively participates in such initiatives, Jammu & Kashmir can match global standards. "If you act on the pledges taken today, we can compete not just within the country but with the world," he said, calling upon the younger generation to carry forward a better and more responsible society.

Touching upon mental health, Omar Abdullah noted that it continues to be stigmatized in society. He urged people to show empathy and understanding towards those facing psychological challenges. "Even a few words of sympathy can make a difference and give someone the courage to overcome difficult times," he said.

On drug abuse, the Chief Minister stressed that the fight against the | More on P6

J&K leaders welcome Iran-US ceasefire, call for dialogue

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Apr 08: Political leaders in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday welcomed the ceasefire between Iran and the United States, calling it a step towards de-escalation and urging sustained dialogue to ensure lasting peace in the region.

Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), questioned the outcome of the nearly 39-day conflict, asking what the United States had achieved.

"What exactly did this war achieve?" CM Omar said, referring to the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, which he noted had been operational before the conflict.

He said the ceasefire, though



significant, raised questions about the costs and consequences of the confrontation.

JKNC chief, Farooq Abdullah, said war was not a solution to any conflict and stressed that dialogue was the only way forward. He expressed relief over the development, saying both countries had shown the

"courage to sit at the table." "Without conversation, there is no way forward. War has never solved any problem," he said, adding that the global community had been impacted by the tensions.

Abdullah warned that prolonged conflict could worsen global | More on P6

Dr Jitendra Singh chairs DISHA meeting, reviews development projects

Directs PDD to ensure transparent, consumer-friendly smart metering

KT NEWS DESK

DODA, APRIL 08: The District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meeting of District Kishtwar was held Wednesday under the chairmanship of Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry for Science & Technology and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office.

The meeting, as per an official statement, involved a comprehensive review of all the ongoing projects and public welfare measures being implemented in the district.

The Union MoS emphasized improved inter-departmental coordination, strict monitoring and timely execution to ensure effective grassroots delivery. He had a detailed discussion on various vital issues including development of airstrip facilities to boost regional connectivity and tourism and road works. He directed the officials to ensure adherence to quality parameters and project completion timelines under schemes like PMGSY.

He also reviewed construction of cremation sheds, rehabilitation of Kandani inhabitants affected by power projects and promotion of local produce such as kala zeera and saffron through better market linkages and branding.

Dr. Jitendra Singh stressed the youth engagement through Sansad Khel



initiatives so that their energy is channelized in a right direction.

He directed the Power Development Department to ensure transparent and consumer-friendly smart metering. He further called for wider awareness of government schemes and prompt grievance redress to achieve inclusive development.

The meeting was attended by Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Sajad Ahmed Kitchloo, MLA Kishtwar Shagun Parihar, nominated members of the DISHA Committee besides other district officers, who deliberated on key points related to previous Action Taken Reports (ATRs) and other developmental issues. Dr. Jitendra Singh

issued prompt directions to the senior district officers and officials from concerned departments to ensure timely resolution of all matters raised during the meeting.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma, presented a detailed overview of the district's developmental profile and social sector priorities. He highlighted the progress under various centrally sponsored and UT schemes, the status of key ongoing projects and sector-wise performance across health, education, rural development, agriculture and social welfare besides elaborating the actionable strategies to strengthen the service delivery and public outreach.

DC Srinagar reviews progress of upgradation, renovation works at Banquet Hall-Conference Complex

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Apr 8: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Wednesday conducted an on-site inspection of the ongoing upgradation and renovation works at the Banquet Hall-Conference Complex at M.A. Road, Srinagar.

He also reviewed the progress of renovation and upgradation works being carried out within the complex.

During the visit, the DC, as per an official statement, was accompanied by Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer Hydraulic, Sajad Kawoosa, Executive Engineer R&B, Khalid Mehmood, Executive Engineer, UED, Shabir Hussain and other senior Officials and Engineers.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner assessed the progress and quality of works being executed at the site. He emphasized the need for maintaining high standards

and ensuring timely completion of the project in accordance with the prescribed specifications. He also emphasized the need for a robust and efficient Audio-Visual (AV) system at the Conference Complex to enhance its overall functionality and ensure seamless conduct of official proceedings.

The DC underscored the importance of creating a well-equipped and efficient space in district to cater to official meetings, high-level interactions and other administrative engagements.

The DC further reviewed the ongoing renovation and allied works of the other units within the Banquet Hall Complex. He conducted a detailed assessment of the progress achieved so far and the quality of execution.

The DC directed the executing agencies to ensure that the upgraded and renovated Banquet Hall-cum-Conference Complex is

completed in all respects by the end of this month, enhancing its overall utility and functionality while preserving its historical and administrative significance.

Highlighting the importance of the facility, the Deputy Commissioner stated that the Banquet Hall on M.A. Road serves as a vital venue for hosting government meetings, delegation-level discussions, official functions, and citizen-centric awareness programmes.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the renovation process of gutted security huts. He was informed that approximately 90 percent of the work has been completed. He also assessed measures being undertaken to address drainage-related issues within the premises.

The DC directed the concerned departments to expedite the remaining works and ensure seamless completion within the stipulated timeframe.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE, GARDENS & PARKS, KASHMIR EMPORIUM GARDEN, SRINAGAR

Ph. No: 0194-2482032, 474234 Email: kash.flori@jk.gov.in

Subject: Verification of Character and Antecedents of the Mst. Attiqahano W/o Late Mohammad Amin Bakshi (Ex-Gardener) 11/o Beehama, Ganderbal for considering her appointment on compassionate grounds in terms of SR-43 of 1994.

Subject: O. M. No. GAD-SRO/142/2025-09-GAD (7668263) dated:24/03/2026, subsequent approval conveyed by the Administrative Department, Floriculture, Gardens & Parks, J&K, vide No. FLORI-NGZ/5/2021-09 (79195) dated: 01/04/2026.

NOTICE

Pursuant to the approval conveyed, vide No. FLORI-NGZ/5/2021-09 (79195) dated: 01/04/2026, by Administrative Department, Floriculture, Gardens & Parks, J&K, Mst. Attiqahano W/o Late Mohammad Amin Bakshi (Ex-Gardener) R/o Beehama (at present Qasba Lar, Tehsil: Lar) District Ganderbal, is hereby informed to submit her email ID and contact details in Directorate of Floriculture, Kashmir (Emporium Garden, Srinagar) in person or email id: kash.flori@jk.gov.in within a period of 21 (twenty one) days, so that link is provided to her on given number/ mail ID for uploading respective credentials on the designated Employee Verification System (EVS) for obtaining necessary CID verification report/ Character & antecedents in terms of the instructions issued by the General Administration Department vide Circular No. 18-JK(GAD) of 2022 dated: 20/05/2022, failing which, right of appointment shall be forfeited without further notice.

Mathora Masoom (JKAS)
DIRECTOR
Floriculture Department Kashmir

DIPK-232/26 DATED: 08-04-2026

Rana chairs facilitation programme for tribal livestock beneficiaries in Mendhar



KT NEWS DESK

MENDHAR, APRIL 08: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Wednesday chaired a facilitation programme at Mendhar, organized jointly by the Animal Husbandry and the Tribal Affairs Department.

The event, as per an official statement, aimed to strengthen the livelihood opportunities among the tribal communities through focused

development interventions. It was conducted under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) Scheme, a targeted initiative aimed at uplifting the economically disadvantaged tribal populations.

Under the scheme, the beneficiaries from five remote villages in the Sub-Division Mendhar successfully procured 52 Murrah buffaloes from outside J&K.

The initiative follows a structured funding pattern, wherein 90 percent of the cost is borne by the government while the remaining

10 percent is contributed by the beneficiaries, ensuring both support and participation.

This approach is intended to promote sustainable income generation by encouraging livestock-based economic activities among the tribal farmers.

The Minister, as per an official statement, described the initiative as a meaningful step towards promoting livestock-based livelihoods and highlighted its potential to significantly improve the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities in the area.

During the facilitation programme, emphasis was laid not only on asset distribution but also on ensuring the long-term productivity and health of the livestock.

Each beneficiary who acquired a Murrah buffalo was provided with a medicine-cum-first aid kit to address basic veterinary needs, along with a certificate of participation acknowledging their involvement in the scheme.

These measures are aimed at enhancing the animal care practices and improving dairy productivity, thereby contributing to the economic stability of the beneficiaries.

The event was attended by the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Poonch besides Veterinary Assistant Surgeons and other departmental officials.

Rana inaugurates free medical camp

KT NEWS DESK

MENDHAR, APRIL 08: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, on Wednesday inaugurated a two-day free medical camp at Dak Bungalow Mendhar.

The camp has been organised by the Kathryn Kelley Memorial Charitable Society in collaboration with the Al-Faizan Charitable Trust. Addressing the gathering, the Minister, as per an official statement, commended the organisers for their efforts in delivering specialised healthcare services directly to the residents of border and remote areas. He highlighted that such initiatives are crucial in strengthening the preventive and primary healthcare systems, particularly in areas where access to medical facilities remains limited.

The camp witnessed significant participation, with a large number of residents from Mendhar and surrounding areas evincing keen interest in availing the medical services being offered in the camp.

The medical camp provided comprehensive care under a single roof with consultations across multiple specialties and providing free medicines and basic diagnostic support to the patients.

During interaction with the beneficiaries, the Minister reiterated the government's commitment towards expanding the healthcare outreach in underserved and remote locations.



He noted that medical camps play a pivotal role in addressing the gaps in access to quality healthcare services and expressed optimism that such initiatives to continue in future for the larger good of the society.

He also assured full government support for similar humanitarian efforts aimed at improving the public health and overall community welfare.

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

Email: xenrnb.doru@jk.gov.in
Final Notice

Mr. Ghulam Mohi U Din Wani RIO: Wangund Verinag Anantnag, Ph.No: - 9622751533

No: EED/113-16
Dated: 07-14-2026

Subject: Construction of Elementary CW 5N Toilet at M5 Nowgam Nard. Reference: Allotment No. EED/4927-30, Dated: 09-03-2026.

In continuation to this office letter no. EED/5156-58 Dated: 27-03-2026, wherein you were directed to start the work which has been allotted to you vide above referred allotment no. but you failed to execute the work as reported by the concerned Assistant Executive Engineer till date, which clearly shows that you are not interested in execution of the work. Despite the repeated instructions verbally and through notices issued by this office and concerned Assistant Executive Engineer for execution of work but you do not pay any heed to these notices which clearly indicates that you are not serious about the execution of work as the intending department is pressing hard for early completion of the said work.

As such you are directed through the medium of this final notice to mobilise your resources and start the work within 02 day from the issuance of this notice otherwise it shall be presumed that you are not serious about the completion of the work and this office left no option to take the action under rules against you as per the conditions of NIT/allotment and your performance security shall be forfeited and your registration card shall be recommended for blacklisting.

Er. Mohd Ashraf Khan
Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Dooru

DIPK-213/26 DATED: 08-04-2026

CS initiates AAY beneficiary identification for 200 free power units

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Apr 08: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir has initiated the process for identification of eligible beneficiaries under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) category across all districts for providing 200 units of free electricity, in line with its commitment to extend targeted relief to economically weaker sections.

The progress of this initiative was reviewed in a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, focusing on accelerating reforms in the power sector with a balanced emphasis on social welfare, sustainability, and efficiency. The meeting also assessed the implementation of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) and scaling up of rooftop solar adoption under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.

The free electricity initiative is expected to benefit over 2.22 lakh AAY households across the districts of the UT, ensuring near-universal district coverage. The process of identification and extension of this benefit to the eligible population is going on in coordination with the respective district administrations with many of the targeted beneficiaries living in far off areas.

On this occasion Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department, Ashwani Kumar, informed that extensive field



verification and data validation exercises are underway in close coordination with district administrations to ensure that only genuine beneficiaries are covered.

He highlighted that efforts are being made to address challenges such as discrepancies between ration card and electricity consumer databases, cases of migration, locked or inaccessible households, and reluctance among certain beneficiaries.

Special emphasis is being placed on ensuring inclusion of households in remote and mountainous areas, where logistical constraints such as scattered habitations and extended power distribution networks pose significant challenges.

Alongside this welfare initiative,

the Union Territory has registered significant progress under the rooftop solar programme. The PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana is facilitating adoption through consumer-friendly financing options, including access to bank loans at attractive interest rates. Managing Director, Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited, Gurpal Singh, informed that over 28,600 applications have been received in Jammu Division, with more than 11,000 installations completed, reflecting a progress of around 67 percent.

Similarly, Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited, Mehmood Ahmad Shah, stated that Kashmir Division has witnessed an overwhelming response, with over 73,000

applications received and more than 17,700 installations completed, with several districts surpassing their assigned targets.

It was further informed that the scheme is largely being implemented under the RESCO (Renewable Energy Service Company) model, wherein private developers undertake installation and maintenance without requiring upfront investment from consumers, thereby making solar energy accessible to a broader population.

The meeting also reviewed progress under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), a flagship reform initiative aimed at strengthening the power distribution infrastructure. Key interventions under RDSS include

smart metering, infrastructure augmentation, feeder segregation, energy accounting, and reduction of Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses.

It was informed that works amounting to 5,762 Cr are being executed across districts through various Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs), including 1,053 Cr for smart metering and ₹4,709 Cr for loss reduction measures.

The meeting was apprised that over 7.10 lakh smart meters have been installed across Jammu and Kashmir, including nearly 3 lakh installations in the past six months alone. Significant improvements in operational efficiency were also reported, with the ACS-ARR gap reduced to 0.3 by FY 2025-26, billing efficiency increased to 77 percent, collection efficiency to 94 percent, and AT&C losses brought down to 30 percent.

The Chief Secretary reiterated that the integrated approach combining direct financial relief through free electricity with long-term structural reforms such as solarisation and RDSS-backed infrastructure upgrades is expected to substantially improve power reliability, reduce losses, and promote clean energy adoption across the Union Territory. These measures are seen as a significant step towards ensuring inclusive growth, energy security, and sustainable development across all districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

Dy CM pledges continued focus on public welfare



KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Apr 08: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary met with various public delegations in Jammu, reaffirming the government's commitment to pro-people governance and addressing the community concerns.

He engaged with the representatives from different sectors, discussing development initiatives and welfare schemes aimed at improving the quality of life for citizens.

"The present dispensation remains committed and steadfast towards responsive, transparent and pro-people governance in Jammu and Kashmir", maintained the Deputy CM.

He emphasized that sustained efforts are being made to ensure an amicable resolution of public grievances while

facilitating robust, inclusive and time-bound development across all regions of J&K.

Delegations from several districts, including Jammu, Srinagar, Baramulla, Anantnag, Rajouri, Samba, Ramban and other areas apprised the Deputy CM of a range of issues and demands.

The concerns raised primarily pertained to road development, employment opportunities, industrial expansion and other day-to-day challenges faced by the people.

Responding to the issues raised by the delegates, the Deputy Chief Minister discussed various matters with the concerned officials for prompt resolution. He assured the delegations that all their genuine issues would be taken up with the relevant authorities and addressed on priority.

KCC&I welcomes US-Iran ceasefire

Urges sustained peace to boost trade, recovery in J&K



KNO

Srinagar, Apr 08: The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCC&I) has welcomed the ceasefire between the United States and Iran, expressing hope that the development will ease geopolitical tensions and restore economic stability across regions impacted by the conflict.

The Chamber, in a statement said that conflicts in West Asia have far-reaching and cascading effects on economies worldwide, and Jammu and Kashmir has not remained immune to these disruptions. The recent tensions, it noted, had adversely affected trade and business sentiment in the region.

KCC&I said that exports from Kashmir witnessed a decline during the period of heightened tensions, while several sectors faced operational challenges. "In particular, issues related to the supply of commercial LPG to hotels and restaurants created additional strain on the hospitality sector, which is already navigating a fragile

recovery phase," it said.

The Chamber observed that the overall business sentiment remained subdued amid uncertainty, with traders and entrepreneurs facing disruptions linked to supply chains and market access. "Stability in West Asia is crucial not only for global markets but also for regional economies like Jammu and Kashmir that are closely tied to external trade dynamics," it said.

Welcoming the ceasefire, KCC&I expressed hope that it would not be a short-term arrangement but would lead to sustained peace and long-term stability in the region.

"The business community sincerely hopes that this ceasefire will not be limited to a brief period but will pave the way for enduring peace, which is essential for economic recovery and growth," the Chamber said.

KCC&I reiterated that lasting geopolitical stability is vital for restoring confidence among businesses and ensuring uninterrupted trade and supply chains in Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

CAG audit flags major financial lapses in J&K

RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Apr 08: The Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) Compliance Audit of revenue receipts and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in Jammu and Kashmir has flagged deep-rooted systemic failures in financial oversight, exposing significant revenue leakages, weak enforcement under GST, and serious irregularities in public sector operations.

The report points to a doubtful recovery of 104.51 crore, wrongful disbursement of 59.21 crore, and blocking of 85.75 crore in funds. It also highlights a five-year delay in the implementation of GST scrutiny mechanisms and extremely low compliance in the submission of PSU accounts, raising serious concerns over transparency and fiscal accountability in the Union Territory.

According to the audit, there was a delay of over five years in issuing the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for scrutiny of returns for the financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19, which resulted in minimal scrutiny being conducted. The Special Investigation Unit (SIU), tasked with providing inputs for scrutiny and enabling necessary action by the State Taxes Officer (STO), was constituted only in 2022-23.

The audit found that intelligence inputs meant to be shared with jurisdictional authorities between 2017-18 and 2020-21 were not forwarded, raising the



risk of undetected revenue losses.

It noted that minimal scrutiny of returns such as GSTR-3B and GSTR-9 led to mismatches in turnover, tax paid, and ITC going unnoticed. The report also flagged inaction against non-filers, failure to cancel registrations of defaulters, and non-levy of penalties and interest.

Additionally, discrepancies were observed between MIS reports and data provided by State Taxes Officers (STOs), indicating gaps in monitoring and enforcement.

The audit observed that administrative inaction led to the delayed issuance of the SOP for scrutiny of returns and the late constitution of the internal audit wing. It also noted that key records, including GSTN red-flag reports and year-wise scrutiny details, were not produced to the audit despite repeated requests.

The CAG has recommended strengthening scrutiny through risk-based analysis and fixing year-wise targets to address discrepancies highlighted in the audit.

As of March 31, 2022, 42 PSUs were under CAG audit in Jammu and Kashmir, including 39 government companies, two statutory corporations, and one government-controlled entity. Six PSUs were inactive, with investments of 57.57 crore and outstanding loans of 0.83 crore. Only three out of 34 government companies submitted their accounts for 2021-22 within the stipulated timeline, while accounts of key entities like J&K Road Transport Corporation and J&K Financial Corporation remained pending.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Govt mulls inclusion of AI in school curriculum

RIYAZ BHAT

Srinagar, Apr 08: The government is mulling to include Artificial Intelligence (AI) in school curriculum across Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the official notes, authorities have said that the School Education Department has said that the introduction of AI as a subject or discipline is under active consideration in the department in alignment with NEP 2020.

Furthermore, the department has said that coding and vocational education subjects have already been introduced at different levels of schooling in a phased manner depending upon the levels of institution and availability of infrastructure, trained manpower and other requisite facilities.

It also said that the components relating to General Studies, Digital Literacy, Computer Education and vocational

skill-based learning have been introduced at different levels depending on infrastructure and trained manpower.

The official notes further reveal that Computer Science, Information Practices and IT have already been introduced as separate subjects at the higher secondary level, covering Classes XI and XII.

It also reveals that vocational education with 15 trades is being implemented in high and higher secondary schools in line with the National Education Policy 2020.

About the curriculum review, the official notes said that 21st century skills outlined in the National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023 are being implemented in a phased manner. These include critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, digital literacy and problem solving.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Over 1400 teaching posts vacant in Kupwara

WARIS FAYAZ

Srinagar, Apr 08: North Kashmir's Kupwara district is facing a major shortage of teaching staff, with over 1,400 posts of lecturers, masters and teachers lying vacant across government schools, official data reveals. Figures from the School Education Department, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), reveal that 421 lecturer posts are vacant out of 675 sanctioned. In the Masters category, 365 posts remain unfilled against 866 sanctioned, while 629 teacher posts are vacant out of a total strength of 3,500.

The combined shortfall of 1,415 teaching posts has put pressure on the education system, affecting classroom teaching and subject coverage, particularly in remote and far-flung areas of the district.

The minister in charge, recently said the department is addressing the shortage through rationalisation of available staff in line with norms. Cluster Resource Coordinators are also being deployed where required to ensure continuity of academic activities, the minister said—(KNO)

Pampore Karewas bloom into a tulip tapestry

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Apr 08: The picturesque Karewas of Pampore—widely celebrated as Kashmir's saffron hub—are once again in the spotlight, this time for a breathtaking display of wild tulips that has captivated tourists and locals alike. Following the bloom of mustard fields that blanketed the landscape in shades of yellow, the elevated plateaus of Pampore have now transformed into a stunning mosaic of colours. Delicate wild tulips in hues of pink and white have sprung up across the Karewas, creating a striking visual contrast against the golden mustard backdrop.

The natural spectacle has sparked a fresh wave of tourist activity in the area, with visitors frequently stopping along the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway to soak in the scenery. The blooming fields have become a magnet for photography enthusiasts, nature lovers, and



casual travellers, many of whom are seen capturing the fleeting beauty of spring in the saffron town. According to locals, the wild tulip bloom has emerged as an unexpected

seasonal attraction, adding to Pampore's already rich tourism appeal.

Visitors are increasingly drawn to the serene charm of the Karewas, where the gentle sway of

tulips in the spring breeze offers a tranquil escape from urban life. The area has also become popular for informal photo shoots and leisurely nature walks.

Local youth, traditionally engaged in selling the region's famed saffron, say the influx of visitors has increased significantly in recent days. "People used to come mainly during the saffron harvest in autumn, but now we are seeing large crowds even in spring because of these tulips," a local vendor said.

The blooming fields have also turned into an educational outing spot, with several local schools organising excursions for students. Teachers say such visits provide children with an opportunity to experience Kashmir's natural beauty firsthand while learning about its ecological diversity.

Continued on
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EDITORIAL

Modernising Agriculture Only Answer To Unpredictable Climate

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's candid admission that "you can't trust the weather anymore" calls for an urgent and strategic action. When a hailstorm in Shopian can destroy an entire season's harvest in hours, when rain arrives in month-long doses within a single day, and when droughts parch the land precisely when moisture is most needed, traditional farming—dependent on the farmer's age-old faith in seasonal predictability—becomes a gamble with livelihoods and lives. The facts are stark. Climate change has made weather patterns erratic and

extreme. The farmer who once read the sky with confidence now watches helplessly as unseasonal rain, hailstorms, and prolonged dry spells destroy crops at critical stages. Traditional knowledge, while invaluable, is no longer sufficient. The choice is not between modern and traditional agriculture but between adapting and perishing. The inauguration of the Centre of Excellence for Entrepreneurship in Precision Vegetable and Floriculture Farming at Talab Tillo is a timely and necessary response. Developed at a cost of Rs 5.93 crore, this hi-tech facility will provide

high-quality plant material and seeds—addressing the fundamental injustice of a farmer putting in backbreaking labour only to have poor-quality seed undermine the entire effort. Quality inputs are the first prerequisite for quality output. Yet one Centre of Excellence, however advanced, cannot transform an entire agricultural economy. The government's announcement that such centres will be established in all 20 districts under the Budget 2026-27 is therefore the most significant takeaway. District-level replication ensures that the benefits of modern agriculture reach

every corner of the Union Territory, not just the vicinity of Jammu. The CM's emphasis on multiple complementary measures is equally important. Crop insurance must be expanded and made hassle-free so that when nature strikes, farmers are compensated without bureaucratic delays. Assured irrigation—not just cleaning main canals but ensuring water reaches the tail-end farmer—is critical. The commitment to clean the last part of the canals addresses a long-standing grievance of farmers at the margins. The challenge now is execution. The technology exists. The

policy framework is being built. What remains is ensuring that quality seeds and plant material reach every farmer at the right time, that insurance claims are settled swiftly, that irrigation infrastructure functions reliably, and that farmers are trained in modern techniques. The farmer's faith in the weather may be broken, but faith in government can be built through visible, tangible, and effective support. The Centre of Excellence is a promising start. Now it must become the template for a resilient, productive, and prosperous agricultural future for Jammu and Kashmir.

Together, Let Us Empower Our Nari Shakti!

On April 16, Parliament will convene to discuss and pass an important bill advancing women's reservation. Women constitute nearly half of India's population. Their representation in legislative bodies has not been commensurate with their role in society.



Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

In the coming days, India will be immersed in a festive season, with celebrations taking place across the length and breadth of the nation. The people of Assam will mark Rongali Bihu while Odisha will celebrate Maha Bishuba Pana Sankranti. In West Bengal, Poila Boishakh will usher in the Bengali New Year and in Kerala, Vishu will be observed with immense enthusiasm. In Tamil Nadu, Puthandu will be celebrated while in Punjab and other parts of Northern India, it will be Baisakhi, which will usher in a spirit of hope as well as positivity. I convey my best wishes to all those across India and the world who are marking these festivals. May these auspicious occasions bring happiness and prosperity to everyone's lives. Furthermore, on the 11th of April, we

will commence the 200th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Phule and on the 14th, India will pay homage to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar on Ambedkar Jayanti.

In addition to these special occasions, when the spirit of renewal fills our hearts and minds, our nation stands at the threshold of another historic occasion. It is an opportunity to deepen the foundations of our democracy and to reaffirm our collective commitment to equality and inclusion.

On the 16th of April, Parliament will be convened to discuss and pass an important bill that advances women's reservation. To describe this merely as a legislative exercise would be an understatement. It is a reflection of the aspirations of crores of women across India. It is an affirmation of a principle that has long guided our civilisational ethos, that society progresses when women progress.

Women constitute nearly half of India's population. Their contributions to our nation are vast and invaluable. Today, India is witnessing remarkable achievements by women across every field. From science and technology to entrepreneurship, from sports to the armed forces and from music to the arts, women are at the forefront of India's progress. Over the years, sustained efforts have been made to create an enabling

environment for women's empowerment. Greater access to education, improved healthcare, enhanced financial inclusion and better access to basic amenities have strengthened the foundations of women's participation in economic and social life.

Yet, their representation in the world of politics and legislative bodies has not always been commensurate with their role in society. This is particularly unfortunate because when women participate in administration and decision-making, they bring with them experiences and insights that enrich public discourse and improve the quality of governance.

It is imperative that the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and the Assembly elections to the various states in the coming times are conducted with women's reservation in place. Over the decades, there have been repeated efforts to provide women with their rightful place in democratic institutions by the previous governments. Committees were made, bill drafts were introduced but they never saw the light of day. But the broad consensus has remained that women's representation in legislative bodies has to increase. In September 2023, Parliament passed the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam with the same spirit of consensus. I consider it to be among the most special occasions of my life.

This opportunity to ensure women's reservation also resonates deeply with the spirit of our Constitution. The makers of our Constitution, envisioned a society where equality is both enshrined and realised in practice. Strengthening women's participation in legislative institutions is an important step towards fulfilling that vision. It reflects our commitment to building a society where every citizen has an equal stake in shaping the nation's destiny.

This is a moment that cannot be deferred any longer. Every delay in advancing women's representation is, in effect, a delay in strengthening the quality and inclusiveness of our democracy. For decades, the need for greater participation of women in legislative institutions has been acknowledged, discussed and reaffirmed. To postpone action now would mean extending an imbalance that we already recognise and have the capacity to correct. At a time when India is moving forward with confidence and purpose, it is essential that our institutions reflect the aspirations of all citizens, especially those who form half our population. Timely action will not only honour long-standing commitments but also ensure that the momentum of progress is sustained. This is truly a historic opportunity to make our

democracy more representative, responsive and future-ready.

This moment calls for collective action. It is not about any one government, party or individual. It is about the nation as a whole recognising the importance of this step and coming together to realise it. It is what we owe to our Nari Shakti. That is why the passage of a bill for women's reservation should reflect the broadest possible consensus and be guided by the larger national interest. Such opportunities call upon us to act not for ourselves, but for future generations. They remind us that the true strength of a democracy lies in its ability to evolve and to become more inclusive over time.

As we approach this historic Parliament sitting, I appeal to all Members of Parliament, across party lines, to come together in support of this important step for the women of India. Let us seize this opportunity with a sense of responsibility and purpose. Let us act in a manner that reflects the highest traditions of our democracy.

India has always shown that when it comes to matters of national importance, it can rise above differences and act with unity. This is one such moment. Let us move forward together and strengthen Constitutional values and empower our Nari Shakti for national progress.

From First Steps To Future Dreams: Reimagining Learning For Every Child



Dharmendra Pradhan
Union Minister of Education

Every year, when school gates open to a new academic session, India witnesses one of its most profound acts of collective resolve. Across mountains and coasts, in cities and remote villages, millions of children—sometimes inspite of challenging personal circumstances belying their young lives—step into their classrooms with fresh vigour, new aspirations and immense possibilities. It is a quiet yet powerful national moment. This year too nearly two crore children have enrolled into Class 1, which carries both hope and a shared national responsibility.

India's school ecosystem is humungous. It encompasses over 14.7 lakh schools, nearly 25 crore enrolled students and more than one crore teachers. These numbers are not merely a measure of administrative scale. They herald a firm commitment to shaping the future of our nation through education. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has placed curiosity, understanding and holistic development at the centre of learning and moving beyond rote memorisation. Every academic year is a meaningful step forward in realising that vision.

With the implementation of Balvatika, early childhood learning is now integrated into the formal school system ensuring children enter Grade 1 with better readiness and strong foundational skills. A child's entry into school marks the beginning of a lifelong relationship with knowledge and society; schools must ensure this journey is rooted in joyful learning, well-being and a strong sense of belonging.

The Learners' Journey: From First Steps to Finding Confidence

The first day of school is seldom



uneventful. It carries a mix of hesitation and joys of new beginnings. Tiny hands hold big emotions and curious eyes capture a whole new world. When children feel safe and valued, they begin to open up. They participate more. Their curiosity begins to flourish. Confidence grows slowly, but steadily. The early years must centre on play, exploration, discovery and define the beginning of a lifelong journey.

Relationships matter deeply. A caring teacher can change a child's path. A supportive classroom can turn silence into participation, and participation into confidence. When a child feels truly seen and heard, curiosity turns into courage. A child who feels a sense of belonging begins to find her voice.

At the heart of these early years lies a strong national commitment to foundational literacy and numeracy. Through the NIPUN Bharat Mission, India has set a clear goal: every child should be able to read with understanding and perform basic arithmetic by the end of Grade 2. The focus shifts from memorising answers to understanding

concepts. Classrooms must inspire children to ask questions, not just reproduce answers.

This vision goes beyond academics. Arts, sports and values are essential parts of the learning process. Education must shape the 'whole child'—not just the mind, but also the body and the heart. Physical activity and nutrition is integral to everyday school life. A healthy child learns better, participates more and grows with a healthy sense of self.

Addressing Emerging Challenges Globally, the lifestyles of children has shifted significantly. Changing dietary habits and reduced physical activity has become a concern across nations. India is responding proactively to this challenge. Measures such as mandatory physical education, 'Oil Boards' and 'Sugar Boards' in schools to address obesity and a strengthened PM-POSHAN scheme with a sharper focus on nutritional quality is reorienting schools toward health and active living. These efforts aim to build a generation that values health as central to overall development.

While technology is a powerful enabler

for access and learning, growing exposure to social media raises concerns around screen time, attention and mental well-being. Again, this is a global concern and not unique to India. Schools and families must ensure it is used as a tool for learning, not distraction.

Equally central to this vision is the mental and emotional well-being of our children. School curriculum and pedagogy have integrated socio-emotional learning to support the child's journey, in an age when children are navigating a more complex and stimulating world than any previous generation. Creating safe, stress-free environments requires a shared effort by schools, parents, teachers and communities.

The Role of Teachers

Reform does not reach children merely through policy documents; it is implemented through teachers. They are the true architects of educational transformation bridging the gap between vision and classroom reality. Teachers must teach in a multi-lingual setting and also ensure that a child's mother

tongue is respected and used as a powerful tool for learning. By valuing this, we ensure that the transition to formal education is seamless, confident, and rooted in their own identity.

I call upon our teachers to prioritise competency-based learning while respecting each child's pace, personality and remaining attentive to the emotional and mental well-being of every student under their care.

The Role of Parents

Education does not begin or end at the school gate. The home is the first classroom, and parents are the first teachers. What children experience at home shapes how they learn in school.

Promoting reading habits and patient engagement with a child's questions are subtle acts to nurture the quest for knowledge. I urge parents to ensure that children get balanced nutrition and adequate sleep; that they get enough daily physical activity and outdoor exposure. Parents must engage actively with the school and measure the child's success not only in grades, but in confidence, kindness and a sustained interest in learning. The greatest gift the parents can give a child is the belief that learning itself is truly joyful.

A Shared National Commitment

Education is a shared responsibility. It belongs to governments, schools, teachers, parents and communities. Every stakeholder has a role to play.

Every child deserves to be seen, heard and gently guided in their learning journey. The true measure of our education system is not a few high achievers but whether every child regardless of background, learns with confidence and joy. Let us reaffirm our national commitment to building an education system that is inclusive, innovative and future-ready. Together, we can ensure that every classroom becomes a place where dreams take flight and where the leaders of tomorrow are shaped. The harbingers of a Viksit Bharat by 2047 are in our classrooms today. Let us give them the golden wings to soar.

The author is the Union Minister of Education

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

Sakeena Itoo interacts with visiting Parliamentary Standing Committee in Srinagar

'Govt committed to nurturing academic excellence, encouraging innovation in J&K'

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JAMMU 08: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo Wednesday interacted with the members of Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports (EWCY&S) who are on two day visit of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the interaction, the Minister presented a comprehensive overview of the initiatives undertaken by the Government to enhance the quality, accessibility and inclusivity of education sector across Jammu and Kashmir. She emphasized that the Government is focused on creating a robust academic ecosystem aligned with national educational priorities and global standards.

Sakeena Itoo, as per an



official statement, highlighted key reforms aimed at improving academic infrastructure, promoting research and innovation, strengthening faculty development programmes and expanding digital learning facilities in schools, colleges and universities. She informed the Committee that sustained

efforts are being made to modernize schools, college campuses, introduce industry-oriented courses and ensure skill-based education to improve employability among students.

The Minister also underscored the importance of equitable access to education, stating that special attention

is being given to students from remote and underserved areas through scholarship schemes, upgraded facilities and enhanced connectivity initiatives.

The Members of the Committee appreciated the progress achieved in the higher education sector and held detailed deliberations on challenges, opportunities, and future strategies for academic growth. The discussion focused on improving research output, fostering innovation-driven learning, and strengthening institutional governance mechanisms.

Sakeena Itoo reiterated that the Omar Abdullah led Government remains committed to nurturing academic excellence, encouraging innovation and creating a learner-centric environment that empowers youth and contributes to socio-economic development of Jammu and Kashmir.

Div Com Jammu reviews stocks, supply position of essential commodities

KT News Desk

JAMMU, APRIL 08: Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar Wednesday reviewed the supply and stock position of essential commodities across the districts of Jammu Province.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Deputy Commissioners and SSPs of all Districts of Jammu division, Controller Legal Metrology-J&K, Director Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Director Health Services, Joint Director Information Jammu, HODs, Senior officers and representatives from School Education, Industries & Commerce, SMVDDU, Tribal Affairs, Cluster University, Jammu University, SKUAST Jammu, Agriculture, IOCL, HPCL, LPG BPCL and premier educational and medical institutions.

The Divisional Commissioner sought the details of district wise availability of stock



of LPG, Petrol, Diesel, Food grains, provision of food, meals in Hospitals, Hostels of Educational Institutions including Government Medical Colleges and other premier institutions from the respective officers and District Administrations.

He also took appraisal of the availability and supply of commercial LPGs to Hotels, Industries, stock availability of fertilizers and urea while seeking the action taken against any hoarding and black marketing. Concerned Officers and

District Administrations were directed to take stringent measures to prevent hoarding of essential commodities and ensuring fair distributions to the consumers.

The Divisional Commissioner was also apprised on the grievances received regarding the essential commodities and the disposal of the same in each district. He emphasized on the distributors for completing the e-KYC of the pending customers for smooth and speedy supply of domestic LPG to consumers.

Training programme on e-Office 2.0 held in Shopian



KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, APRIL 08: A training programme on e-Office 2.0 was Wednesday conducted at the Mini Secretariat, Shopian for e-Office dealing assistants and concerned staff from various Sectoral Departments of the district.

Prior to the training session, Additional District Development Commissioner Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone undertook a brief review of the status of e-Office implementation across departments in the district.

He directed all concerned to promptly resolve any pending issues and bottlenecks to expedite smooth and effective functioning of the e-Office system.

He emphasized that all sections must actively utilize the platform to ensure efficiency, transparency, and timely

disposal of official work.

The training programme was attended by e-Office dealing assistants and concerned officials from different departments.

During the session, Master Trainer, Mohd. Iqbal imparted detailed hands on training, covering key aspects of e-Office including file handling, digital workflow, and system operations.

NIC Shopian provided technical support during the session, addressing queries, resolving technical issues, and guiding participants on system functionalities.

It was also highlighted that around 20 other Trainers have been designated to facilitate the smooth implementation of e-Office, including creation of login credentials and providing continuous technical assistance to departments.

DC Srinagar conducts review of water supply projects

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR APRIL 08:- Deputy Commissioner(DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Wednesday chaired a comprehensive meeting here at DC Office to conduct a detailed project-wise review of major water supply projects being implemented under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation(AMRUT) 2.0 aimed at strengthening and augmenting the water supply and quality of water across the district.

The Meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer, Er. Ambreen Anjum, Executive Engineer Water Works Division, Aijaz Rafiq, Water Supply Master Plan Division, Muzamil Ahmad, Executive Engineer, I&FC, Executive Engineer, UEED, Executive Engineer, Ground Water, Executive Engineer PHE Mechanical Division and other concerned Officers.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner was given a detailed overview through a detailed presentation highlighting the progress of different projects under the scheme aimed to augment and boost the water supply in the district.

The DC was informed that 19 projects have been approved for



Srinagar City under AMRUT 2.0, with work progressing in full swing and several major water supply projects nearing completion to boost and augment water supply in Srinagar District.

On the occasion, the DC conducted an in-depth review of each project, focusing on critical parameters including infrastructure quality, operational efficiency and citizen-centric outcomes. He emphasized the importance of quality execution and strict adherence to timelines to ensure that residents benefit at the earliest.

Highlighting the significance of AMRUT 2.0, the DC stated that the scheme prioritizes water security for urban areas through sustainable and modern solutions. He observed that the completion of key water supply projects will strengthen existing

networks, enhance groundwater availability and supplement traditional water sources to meet the growing demand of Srinagar's expanding population.

The DC directed the concerned Officers to ensure that all projects are completed with enhanced functionality, durability and efficiency. He stressed the need for regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms to maintain transparency and accountability throughout project execution. He also issued actionable directions to expedite pending works and address operational challenges, ensuring completion within the stipulated timeframe.

He directed for coordinated inter-departmental synergy to resolve impending bottlenecks, if any, to further expedite the completion.

DC Budgam reviews Hajj-2026, SANJY-2026 arrangements at Srinagar Airport

KT News Desk

Budgam, April 08: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan Wednesday visited Srinagar International Airport Humhama, to review the arrangements put in place for the smooth dispatch of Hajj pilgrims 2026, scheduled to commence 18th of this month, and also assessed preparedness for the upcoming Shri Amarnath ji yatra (SANJY) 2026.

During the visit, the DC conducted a comprehensive inspection of facilities available for pilgrims and passengers.

He reviewed arrangements related to clean drinking water, medical facilities, refreshment counters, volunteer assistance, traffic regulation within and outside the airport premises, immigration processes, baggage handling systems, Zam Zam water storage etc.

Emphasis was laid on ensuring seamless coordination among departments for efficient passenger management and timely facilitation.

While reviewing the arrangements for Hajj pilgrims, the DC stressed the need for maintaining high standards of hygiene, adequate seating, proper guidance mechanisms, and hassle-free movement of

pilgrims from entry points to boarding areas.

He underscored the importance of deploying sufficient manpower and ensuring round-the-clock assistance for elderly and special-needs pilgrims.

On the Occasion, the DC also reviewed the preparedness for SANJY-2026, focusing on co-ordination among stakeholder departments, logistical readiness, and facilitation measures for pilgrims expected during the Yatra period.

He highlighted the importance of proactive planning, effective traffic management, and public convenience to ensure smooth conduct of the pilgrimage.

The DC reiterated the need for close inter-departmental coordination and continuous monitoring to ensure that all arrangements are executed efficiently and in a timely manner for the convenience of pilgrims.

Officers present during the visit included Director Airport Authority Srinagar, Javed Anjum; Senior Superintendent of Police Budgam, Hariprasad K.K.; Chief Planning Officer Budgam, Executive Officer Hajj House Bemina, CMO, DIO, DSWO and officers and officials from various departments.

DDC Anantnag convenes Public Durbar at Dooru

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, APRIL 08: To address the concerns and grievances of the local community and ensure efficient public service delivery, the District Development Commissioner(DDC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat Wednesday convened a Public Durbar and outreach cum grievance redressal camp, at Rasool Mir Auditorium, Dooru.

The program was attended by ADC, CPO, ACD, CAO, CEO, CAHO, DD Fisheries, ARTO, ALC, BMO, BDOs, CDPO, Exens R&B, PHE & PDD, AEEs, TSWO, EO MC, officials from various other departments besides Ex DDC & PRI members and representatives from SHGs, civil society and general public.

During the program, the DDC gave a patient hearing to the residents who raised issues pertaining to road connectivity, healthcare services, banking facilities, rationalization of teaching staff and school infrastructure, beautification and tourism promotion, electricity bills, ration stores, irrigation facilities, urban amenities and infrastructure, relocation of government offices, among others.

The demands included upgradation of Anantnag Dooru Verinag Road and widening of Sabdran & Dooru bridges, Mini Secretariat at Dooru, specialists at SDH Dooru, commissioning of Water Filtration Plant, parking space, public toilets and solar lights in town areas, development of Rasool Mir & Bakshi Park, construction of Munsif Court and shopping complexes,



beautification of Dooru Lisser Road, Bus Service from Dooru to Srinagar and aligning movement of SRTC Buses with school timing in Kapran, career counseling programs for students and youth, irrigation facilities in Dooru, Bragam, Nowpora and Nathipora areas, utilisation of services of Marriage Hall at Mehmoodabad, water supply to Naidpora and Larkipora, Naidpora-Hakura, Arampora & Trajan Nowgam Nad Road construction, ambulance for hilly areas of Shahabad, connecting Kapran with ADV Road widening, minimising wild animal attacks in upper areas, separate PDD feeders, culvert bridge, circular road and children park Nowgam, upgradation of Verinag Qazigund Road, fencing of retrieved state land, construction of HS Batagund and Samagra School Chowgund, SBI Branch Qamar Shahabad, Kapran Drangmang Filtration Plant and playfields for Gawas and other areas.

The DDC issued on spot directions to revenue authorities to identify suitable land required for Schools at Batagund and Chowgund in consultation with the School Education

Department.

R&B and Revenue authorities were instructed to take appropriate actions on ADV and other roads as demanded by the public. Directions were issued to PHE Department to submit a detailed report on the alternate source proposed for Water Supply Schemes under JJM for Naidpora and Larkipora Villages.

Regarding Water Filtration Plant Dooru, the PHE authorities informed that the same will be commissioned within next 2-3 weeks while as 95 percent work has been completed on Kapran Drangmang Filtration Plant.

ARTO was directed to explore the feasibility of Dooru Srinagar Bus Service as well as changing the timing of SRTC Buses for students in Kapran areas. ULB and Revenue authorities were asked to make field survey to provide parking space and public toilets in urban areas.

Addressing the gathering, the DDC assured that major issues would be taken up with the suitable authorities and emergent ones shall be resolved by the concerned departments in a time bound manner. For sustainable, inclusive and holistic

development, it is imperative that people participate in planning process at grassroot level, he remarked.

Terming public welfare paramount responsibility of district administration, the DDC enjoined upon the officers to visit the panchayats and villages frequently and get valuable feedback from the people so that the beneficiary oriented schemes and development initiatives are implemented effectively.

Regarding playfields, the DDC said these facilities will be developed at Panchayats and the existing sports infrastructure will also be upgraded across the district.

Advising youth to avail benefits of self employment and livelihood generation schemes, the DDC asked the concerned departments to create proper awareness of the flagship initiatives like Mission YUVA, HADP, Spurring Entrepreneurship, PMEGP etc. and conduct awareness/registration camps in far flung areas of the district for their facilitation and enrollment. He further asked the people to engage with the administration on fight against drug abuse so that this menace is eliminated from the society.

2 days orientation programme on Sustainable Sewage Treatment Technologies commences in Anantnag

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, APRIL 08: Two Days Orientation Programme on efficient Operation and Maintenance and Sustainable Treatment Technologies for Sewage Treatment Plants commenced Wednesday at Mehndi Kadal Anantnag.

The program is being organised by UEED in collaboration with JAKNAP Projects Private Limited.

The event, as per an official statement, was graced by Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat as Chief Guest and witnessed active participation of SE and Exen UEED, other engineers, technical and field staff of the department.

In his address, the DC laid focus on greater public awareness of sewage network and sewage treatment technologies for safeguarding the environment towards a better future. He said there is high need the younger generation including youth and students are acquainted about these modern scientific techniques and practices so they contribute towards sustainable and balanced development.

Dr. Bilal described modern sewage treatment plants as essential public utilities especially amid growing urban needs and challenges and urged the participants to preserve water bodies through responsible and proactive approach.

The programme is aimed to enhance the technical



knowledge and operational skills of engineers, field staff, and stakeholders involved in the management of sewage treatment infrastructure.

On the first day, experts and resource persons delivered insightful sessions on best practices in operation and maintenance (O&M), energy-efficient processes, sludge management, and adoption of sustainable and cost-effective treatment technologies.

Interactive discussions and knowledge-sharing segments allowed participants to exchange field experiences and

practical solutions. Additionally, over the course of two days, the sessions will focus on addressing key challenges faced in the functioning of STPs, including process optimization, troubleshooting, regulatory compliance, and overall efficiency and performance.

The initiative reflects a strong commitment of the department towards improving sanitation infrastructure and environmental protection and is expected to strengthen the capacity of personnel and long-term sustainability of sewage treatment systems.

Foreign Secretary Misri launches India-US Trade Facilitation Portal

PTI
Washington, Apr 08: Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Wednesday launched the India-US Trade Facilitation Portal here as the two countries eye the USD 500 billion bilateral trade target.
Misri, who is on a three-day visit to the US, launched the portal at a virtual event that was attended by India's Ambassador to the US Vinay Mohan Kwatra, and officials and trade representatives from the two countries.
"It will serve as a bridge ensuring continuity and ensuring that existing supply chains are reinforced, and at the same time will enable new commercial

linkages to emerge and grow," Misri said.
In a video message to the inaugural function, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal urged exporters and businesses in India and the US to make greater use of the India-US Trade Facilitation Portal to boost bilateral trade.
He also said that the bilateral trade is growing towards the USD 500 billion mark, an ambitious target set by both sides.
Goyal said that the portal is a "runway" to the US for domestic services exporters, and it will also provide opportunities across businesses, from a farmer in Punjab to a jeweller in Surat and a software expert

in Bengaluru to pharma firms in Telangana.
Misri on Wednesday began his three-day visit to the US to meet with senior officials to review bilateral trade and defence relations and discuss global developments, including the crisis in West Asia.
Misri's visit comes as both the US and India work to stabilise the ties after a spell of uncertainty and strain. The relations witnessed a major downturn after Washington imposed punitive tariffs on New Delhi and President Donald Trump made controversial assertions regarding his role in de-escalating the India-Pakistan military clashes last May.
In February, the US and

India reached a framework for an Interim Agreement regarding reciprocal and mutually beneficial trade (Interim Agreement).
Misri noted the efforts of the India's Consulate General in New York in putting together the portal along with all the stakeholders, export promotion councils, industrial bodies, and government departments from India and the United States.
"In just the last year for instance, our bilateral trade reached a record USD 241 billion, making it the fourth consecutive year that the United States has been India's largest bilateral trading partner," the foreign secretary said.

Misri said several B2B platforms exist already, but a dedicated India-US platform unlocks the full potential of this bilateral partnership.
"This is especially timely as we re-engage on the shared bilateral ambition towards Mission 500, doubling our bilateral trade to 500 billion dollars by 2030," he said.
Misri said the portal reflects a broader evolution in the approach because governments are not merely facilitators and witnesses from the sidelines, but actively stepping into the role of matchmakers connecting buyers and sellers, reducing friction wherever they might come up, and fostering trust.

Delegations call on LG Manoj Sinha



KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 08: A delegation of spiritual leaders and representatives of Jammu Kashmir Sant Samaj Nyas called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday. The delegation comprised Swami Hridayanand Giri Ji Maharaj, Mahant Shri Rajesh Giri Ji, Mahant Shanti Giri

Ji, Mahant Ram Narayan Shastri Ji, Swami Vinay Muni Ji, Mahant Mohan Bharti Ji and Shri Rajesh Gupta, President Vishwa Hindu Parishad (J&K and Ladakh).
Sukhmandan Choudhary, former Minister and S Taranjit Singh Tony, former member, District Development Council Suchetgarh, also called on the Lieutenant Governor.

J&K first to secure MeitY nod for establishing Centre of Excellence in AI

IT Parks for Jammu & Srinagar in offing

KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 08: In a significant stride towards strengthening the digital and innovation ecosystem of the Union Territory, Jammu & Kashmir has secured formal approval from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for the establishment of a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Artificial Intelligence (AI) at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Jammu.
Terming the development as a landmark achievement, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo stated that with the visionary support of MeitY, Jammu & Kashmir is poised to emerge as a vibrant hub for artificial intelligence and advanced technologies,

positioning the UT at the forefront of India's digital transformation with the establishment of IT parks at Srinagar and Jammu too in pipeline.
He maintained that the establishment of the CoE will open new avenues for the youth of the region by equipping them with cutting-edge skills in AI and allied domains so as to have local manpower available for the proposed IT parks for which land and other logistics are being worked out by the Department. He further observed that these initiatives will significantly enhance employability prospects and foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among our young population.
Highlighting the strategic importance of the initiative, the Chief Secretary observed that the CoE is expected to catalyse the development of a robust research and innovation ecosystem. He envisaged that meaningful collaborations with

premier national and international institutions, startups, and industry leaders, will further strengthen J&K's position in the technology landscape.
He further emphasized that the CoE together with these IT Parks will act as a catalyst for attracting investments in the technology sector, encouraging startups and leading industry players to establish a footprint in the Union Territory. This, he said, will contribute significantly to economic growth and large-scale job creation.
Reiterating the government's commitment to inclusive development, the Chief Secretary stated that the Centre will ensure that the benefits of advanced technologies like AI permeate even to the remotest areas of Jammu & Kashmir, thereby supporting equitable and sustainable development.
Secretary, Information Technology, Dr Piyush Singla, described the initiative as a



"game-changer" for the UT's innovation ecosystem. He remarked that the CoE will bridge the gap between academia and industry, empower youth with future-ready skills, and enable

the transformation of citizen-centric services through the adoption of AI-driven solutions.
It is pertinent to mention that the proposal from J&K was approved in the inaugural Project Approval Board (PAB) meeting under MeitY's pan-India initiative for setting up AI Centres of Excellence under the IndiaAI framework. The swift approval reflects the UT administration's meticulous planning, strong institutional coordination, and high-quality proposal submission.
The Centre of Excellence will be established within a dedicated 10,000 sq. ft. built-up space at IIT Jammu, which will serve as the anchor institution and implementation agency for the project.
With a total outlay of 20 Cr under a 90:10 funding pattern between MeitY, Government of India, and the UT Government, to be disbursed over a period of four years, the CoE will operate

through a robust Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) framework under the oversight of the Information Technology Department.
The Centre will foster a collaborative ecosystem involving academia, government, industry, and corporate stakeholders, guided by MeitY's IndiaAI Division. This convergence of students, researchers, innovators, and industry leaders is expected to drive cutting-edge AI applications and solutions.
The CoE is going to spearhead advanced research and development in key sectors such as governance, healthcare, agriculture, and disaster management, while also nurturing startups and enhancing skill development. Aligned with the broader objectives of the IndiaAI Mission, the initiative is set to play a pivotal role in accelerating technological growth and socio-economic development across Jammu & Kashmir.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

LG Sinha terminates

Lieutenant Governor had said that he will not rest until every last thread of the terror cancer is torn from the body of government machinery. He had also asked that security agencies to decisively and permanently end the scourge of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.
FARHAT ALI KHANDAY
"Farhat Ali Khanday, was a class-IV employee of Education Department in Ramban. However, in reality, Farhat was a terror operative for terror outfit Hizb Ul Mujahideen and used his government position as a cover to revive terrorism and build a larger terrorist network in Ramban and surrounding areas," sources said, adding "Farhat first came under the watch of security and intelligence agencies in 2011, when a hawala network tasked with distributing money to families of killed terrorists was exposed. Later, fresh inputs revealed that terror funds were being channelled to revive and sustain Hizb-Ul-Mujahideen terrorist network in Jammu Division."
"Farhat's name came out in April 2011, during interrogation of a Hizb-Ul-Mujahideen terrorist, who was nabbed by J&K Police for distributing terror money to 7 terrorist families. J&K Police picked up Farhat and he was put behind the bar but later in October 2011 he managed bail and continued his terror activities," sources revealed.
It was learnt from the investigators that Farhat had shown no remorse or change of mind. His activities were monitored and a charge sheet was filed against him in a special court in 2022. "Farhat was making contacts with local terrorist networks for furthering terrorist activities and strengthening the cadres of Hizb-Ul-Mujahideen. Detailed investigation in his case and huge inputs gathered by the agencies revealed that Farhat continued to act as a facilitator and conduit of terrorists," sources said, adding, "The presence of a terrorist within an educational environment is a matter of grave concern. Moreover, he was part of the government machinery, an institution tasked with serving the public and responsibly using taxpayers' money. While drawing a salary from the government exchequer, he was in fact working for terrorists—an inconceivable betrayal in any civilised society," sources further added.
MOHAMMAD SHAFI DAR
Another government employee sacked by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha is Mohammad Shafi Dar from Bandipora. He was working as a Class-IV employee in Rural Development Department. His appointment was made on compassionate grounds following the death of his father, who was working as a plantation watcher in Rural Development Department.
Investigation revealed that Mohammad Shafi Dar was working as a terror aide of LeT and he was providing logistical and operational support to LeT terrorists operating in Bandipora.

Sources said Shafi was tasked by Pakistan-based terror outfit to provide safe houses to terrorists, facilitate their movement and transportation, sharing sensitive information related to movement and deployment of police and security forces and raising OGW network of LeT in the area.
"In April 2025, Shafi and one of his terror aides Rayees Ahmad Dar were apprehended during a routine check at a joint Naka. One-Ak 56 rifle, grenade and other ammunitions were recovered from Shafi," sources said.
The investigation further revealed that Shafi had evolved from a mere facilitator into an active operational terror accomplice, and that his network was plotting an attack on security forces.
"Appointed on compassionate grounds after his father died in government service, Shafi repaid that mercy with treachery. His descent into terrorism is not merely a crime—it is a cold-blooded betrayal of the very state that sheltered him and sustained his family," sources said.
Sources pointed out that Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has already shown that he means business—more than 90 government employees with terror links have been sacked.
Pertinently, LG Sinha has made an iron-clad promise to the people of J&K UT that every terrorist will be hunted down and eliminated, without exception and without mercy. (KNO)
LG directs Cluster
the need for uniformity in recruitment rules for non-teaching positions across all universities within the Union Territory to ensure a transparent and streamlined process. He directed the Cluster University of Srinagar for increased youth participation under the "Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect" and various other national integration programmes. He called for intensifying the awareness campaigns under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan.
"Universities and educational institutions must discharge their responsibility towards society and lead the fight against the drug menace," the Lieutenant Governor said.
Prof. Mohammad Mobin, Vice Chancellor Cluster University Srinagar presented the progress report of the University. The Registrar of the University presented the various agenda items before the Council for report, consideration and ratification.
Intermittent snowfall
generally cloudy skies and intermittent light to moderate rain and snowfall over higher reaches expected.
The MeT department said scattered areas may witness brief spells of light rain or thundershowers on April 9 and 10, while April 11 and 12 are likely to remain partly cloudy with light rain at isolated places.
Dry weather is expected from April 13 to 14, followed by generally cloudy conditions with light rain at a few places on April 15 and 16.

The department has issued an advisory warning of thunder, hailstorms and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph at isolated places, and the possibility of landslides in vulnerable areas.
Farmers have been advised to resume operations from Wednesday, while a gradual rise in day temperatures by 4-6 degrees Celsius is expected over the next few days. (KNO)
CM Omar bats
identified, many remain underutilized and are gradually deteriorating due to technical gaps and insufficient funding. "The discussion focused on examples from Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, such as Qila Mubarak (Patiala), Neemrana Fort and Orchha Fort, where adaptive reuse has successfully turned historic structures into hotels, museums and experiential tourism spaces."
As per the details with KNO, key proposals include developing heritage tourism circuits, promoting heritage hotels via PPP frameworks and strategic branding of J&K as a cultural and wedding destination. CM Omar also stressed that conservation should engage local communities to ensure sustainable management and economic participation.
Notably, the meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretaries Dheeraj Gupta and Tourism & PWD officials, Commissioner Secretary Information, Secretary Culture and other senior officials.
'Avoid travel, don't
people not to take risks. "We request people not to put their lives in danger in such situations. Those who have reached Qazigund should go back and plan their journey again," he said.
He added that commuters on the other side should also avoid proceeding. "People in Udhampur are advised to either stay in Jammu or return until the highway is cleared," he said.
The DIG said that travellers must verify road conditions before setting out. "Before starting your journey, please contact the traffic control room, police, or security agencies to ensure your journey is safe. Travel only after proper clearance," he said.
He reiterated that authorities are closely monitoring the situation and restoration efforts are ongoing. "If the weather improves, we will try to restore the highway as soon as possible," he added. (KNO)
Collective action key
menace cannot be won by the government alone. He called upon civil society, educational institutions, religious leaders and citizens to actively contribute towards making Jammu & Kashmir drug-free. "If we leave it to the government alone, we will not succeed. Everyone has to play their part," he asserted.
He also encouraged students to explore new avenues through career counselling initiatives, stating that such programmes can open up

opportunities that many may not have previously considered.
Highlighting environmental responsibility, the Chief Minister advocated for plantation drives, suggesting a shift from ceremonial gestures to meaningful contributions. "Instead of shawls, plant trees in our name. Even if a few survive, it will be a lasting contribution," he remarked, adding that environmental protection is a shared duty.
On traffic awareness, he stressed that by following safety norms such as wearing helmets and seat belts is not a favour to the government but a responsibility towards oneself and one's family. He urged people to adopt road safety measures sincerely rather than merely complying with regulations.
The Chief Minister also advised students to reduce excessive screen time and focus on holistic development. He expressed confidence that the younger generation, with its broader outlook, can drive meaningful change if guided properly.
On the occasion, Omar Abdullah administered a pledge focusing on mental health awareness, drug de-addiction, career counselling, traffic safety and environmental protection.
He also distributed innovation kits and stationery kits sponsored by Bharti Airtel, sanitation kits sponsored by SBI Foundation, and outdoor equipment under Early Childhood Care and Education (ECE). The Chief Minister also felicitated resource persons and experts associated with the programme.
Addressing the gathering, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo said that the enthusiastic participation of students reflects their commitment towards societal development. She described the awareness campaign as a unique opportunity to address pressing issues such as mental health, drug addiction, environmental protection, traffic awareness and career guidance.
She called upon all stakeholders to actively participate in the campaign and emphasized the importance of collective action. "If every student, ICDS worker and healthcare professional plants a tree, it can bring significant change in environmental protection and sustainability," she said.
The Minister also stressed the need for united efforts to combat drug abuse, urging the youth to come forward to safeguard their future and that of Jammu & Kashmir.
Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, in his address, emphasized the importance of adhering to laws and instilling awareness among younger generations from an early age. He also highlighted the need for continuous awareness campaigns to combat drug abuse.
MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta called for active involvement of civil society in eradicating the drug menace and appreciated the leadership of the Chief Minister, expressing optimism about the region's progress and

prosperity.
The event was attended by Director School Education Jammu Naseem Javaid Choudhary, Director Social Welfare Department Jammu, other senior officers, and a large number of students. Participants from all ten districts of Jammu division also joined the programme through online mode.
J&K leaders
challenges, particularly due to disruptions in energy supplies. He said people in Jammu and Kashmir were also affected, especially families dependent on remittances from those working in Gulf countries.
J&K Congress chief, Tariq Hameed Karra termed the ceasefire a "prudent and timely step" towards global stability and said the 40-day confrontation carried a message of restraint.
Drawing a historical parallel with the Battle of Khaybar, Karra said the duration of the conflict reflected "endurance, strategic patience, and clarity of purpose."
"The message from these 40 days is unmistakable: restraint, backed by resolve, ultimately shapes the pathway to peace," he said.
Karra urged the international community to convert the pause into a structured peace process based on dialogue.
PDP Chief, Mehbooba Mufti also welcomed the ceasefire, expressing hope that it would pave the way for long-term peace and stability in the region.
She said the truce appeared to be the result of sustained diplomatic efforts and highlighted the role of regional cooperation in de-escalating tensions.
"Dialogue and sustained diplomatic engagement remain the only viable path forward," Mufti said, urging the international community to strengthen such peace initiatives and build on the ceasefire.
People's Conference chief Sajad Lone welcomed the ceasefire, saying he was relieved that the war had ended and reiterating that war is not a solution to any issue, while expressing hope for lasting peace in the Middle East.
In a separate statement, Chief spokesperson of AIP, Inam Un Nabi said the ceasefire was a necessary step after weeks of escalation involving missiles and drones.
"Violence is no solution. What the world has witnessed is destruction and fear," he said, adding that the return to dialogue underscored the importance of engagement over confrontation.
He called for strengthening the ceasefire through sincere talks, saying peace could only be achieved through "conversations, patience and the will to resolve differences."
Apni Party chief, Altaf Bukhari welcomed the Iran-US ceasefire and expressed hope that it would lead to lasting peace and stability, saying the truce was a positive step towards reducing tensions and must be strengthened through sustained dialogue and diplomatic engagement. (KNO)

US-Iran ceasefire, drop in crude oil prices fuel rally in stock markets

● Sensex jumps 4 pc

PTI

Mumbai, Apr 8: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty were trading sharply higher on Wednesday afternoon trade in tandem with an impressive rally in global markets and a drop in crude oil prices after the US and Iran announced a two-week ceasefire.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 2,988.82 points or 4 per cent to 77,605.40. The 50-share NSE Nifty surged 890.35 points or 3.85 per cent to 24,014.

From the 30-Sensex firms, InterGlobe Aviation jumped the most by nearly 10 per cent. Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, UltraTech Cement and Mahindra & Mahindra were also among the prominent gainers.

Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharma and Power Grid were the laggards from the pack.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, tumbled 13.70 per cent to USD 94.44 per barrel.

"The key trigger is the announcement of a two-week pause in US military action, alongside Iran's agreement to facilitate safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz. This has significantly reduced immediate concerns around energy supply disruptions, which had been a major overhang for global markets," Hari Prasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong



Wealth, said.

He further added that the easing of geopolitical stress has led to a sharp fall in global crude oil prices, which is particularly positive for India from both inflation and currency perspectives.

Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of India kept its key policy rate unchanged on Wednesday, adopting a cautious wait-and-watch stance as policymakers assessed the fallout from the six-week Iran conflict on energy supplies, inflation and growth.

The central bank's six-member Monetary Policy Committee voted unanimously to keep the benchmark repurchase rate at 5.25 per cent, flagging heightened uncertainty after the West Asia conflict drove crude prices sharply higher, weakened the rupee and disrupted trade flows.

"RBI MPC meeting outcome was largely along expected lines,

with both rates and stance maintained given ongoing geopolitical uncertainty," Naval Kagalwala, COO & Head of Products, Shriram Wealth Ltd, said.

In Asian markets, South Korea's benchmark KOSPI surged nearly 7 per cent and Japan's Nikkei 225 index jumped over 5 per cent. Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also recorded sharp rallies. US markets ended flat on Tuesday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 8,692.11 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs), however, bought stocks worth Rs 7,979.50 crore.

On Tuesday, the Sensex jumped 509.73 points or 0.69 per cent to settle at 74,616.58. The Nifty climbed 155.40 points or 0.68 per cent to end at 23,123.65.

PM to address three rallies in Bengal today

PTI

Kolkata, Apr 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will intensify the BJP's election campaign in West Bengal on Thursday with rallies in Haldia, Asansol and Siuri.

The choice of venues underlines the BJP's attempt to consolidate its support in areas where it has made major gains while also pushing into regions considered strongholds of the ruling TMC.

According to the schedule shared by the BJP, Modi will address his first rally at 9.30 am in Haldia Township in Purba Medinipur district, followed by another at the Outdoor Stadium in Polo Ground in Asansol at noon. The third public meeting is scheduled to be held at Chandmari Field in Siuri town of Birbhum district at 2 pm.

Haldia is regarded as the backyard of Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari and remains one of the strongest bases of the BJP in the state. The party had won eight of Purba Medinipur district's 16 assembly seats in the 2021 polls and swept both Lok Sabha seats in the district in the 2024 general election.

The Haldia rally assumes significance as the BJP seeks to retain its hold over the district and project Adhikari's influence in a region that has emerged as one of the epicentres of the party's challenge to the TMC.

The PM's second rally in Asansol will be held in the industrial belt of Paschim Bardhaman, once considered a BJP bastion. The party had won the Asansol Lok Sabha seat and one of the two assembly segments under it in 2021. Asansol Dakshin was won by BJP's Agnimitra Paul in the last assembly polls.

However, the political equations changed after former Union minister Babul Supriyo switched from the BJP to the TMC in 2021. The ruling party subsequently wrested the Asansol Lok Sabha seat, with actor-turned-politician Shatrughan Sinha winning a bypoll and



retaining the constituency in the 2024 parliamentary election.

The BJP is hoping Modi's rally will help it regain lost ground in the coal and industrial belt, where the party had earlier built a strong organisational base.

The Prime Minister's final meeting of the day will be in Siuri in Birbhum district, considered a TMC stronghold. Birbhum has traditionally remained under the influence of the ruling party, though parts of the district have long had deep organisational networks of the RSS.

The BJP sees Birbhum as a district where it can expand its footprint by tapping into anti-incumbency and its existing cadre base.

Modi had kicked off his campaign in West Bengal after the announcement of the poll schedule with a mega rally in Cooch Behar on April 5.

With the BJP seeking to revive its momentum after setbacks in parts of Bengal in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the Prime Minister's back-to-back rallies are being seen as an attempt to energise the party cadre and sharpen the contest with the TMC just weeks ahead of the first phase of the assembly polls. The elections to the 294-member West Bengal assembly will be held on April 23 and April 29. Votes will be counted on May 4.

CJI Surya Kant applauds hard work, legal acumen of SC judge Rajesh Bindal



PTI

New Delhi, Apr 8: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant on Wednesday gave his best wishes to Supreme Court judge Rajesh Bindal, who will be demitting office on April 15.

The CJI was speaking at a felicitation event organised for Justice Bindal by the All India Senior Advocates Association.

He commended the outgoing judge for his hard work and legal acumen.

"I am quite sure that for Justice Bindal, there are several innings left after the completion of his professional innings.... My best wishes for Justice Bindal for a happy life, health and everything," the CJI said.

The association's secretary general and senior advocate, Adish C Aggarwala, said, "The function is being held in recognition of Justice Bindal's distinguished personality, reflecting wisdom, integrity, humility and an unwavering dedication to justice. His clarity of thought, balanced approach and compassionate outlook have earned him deep respect and admiration across the global legal fraternity."

Born in Haryana's Ambala in 1961, Justice Bindal was elevated as a Supreme Court judge on February 13, 2023.

Pawan Khera moves Telangana HC seeking anticipatory bail in case filed by Assam govt



PTI

Hyderabad, Apr 8: Congress leader Pawan Khera on Wednesday moved the Telangana High Court seeking anticipatory bail in a case filed against him by the Assam government in connection with his allegations against Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife.

Khera, who showed his residential address in Hyderabad, requested the court to release him on bail in the event of his arrest.

The petition was filed on April 7.

The Congress leader had alleged on April 5 that Sarma's wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sarma, has multiple passports and foreign property, which were not declared in the chief minister's election affidavit.

Khera named the DCP Guwahati Crime Branch P S and the Telangana government as respondents to the petition.

An Assam police team had earlier visited the Delhi residence of Khera for questioning in connection with the case.

Kharge expresses regret over 'illiterate' remark

Says he has highest of respect for Gujaratis



PTI

New Delhi, Apr 8: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday expressed regret over his controversial statement calling the people of Gujarat "illiterate", and said he has always had and will continue to have the highest of respect for the people of the state.

In a post on X, the Congress president said, "Some remarks of mine in a recent election speech in Kerala are being deliberately misinterpreted. Even so, I express my sincere regret.

"It was never my intention to hurt the sentiments of the people of Gujarat for whom I have always had and will continue to have the highest of respect."

Kharge on Sunday had sparked a row during his Assembly poll campaign in Kerala, calling the people of Gujarat "illiterate" and claiming they were being "fooled" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

At the same time, Kharge said neither Modi nor Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan could fool the people of Kerala, describing them as "very clever and educated".

"Don't misguide the people of Kerala. They are very clever and educated. Modiji, Vijayan, you both can fool people who are illiterate in Gujarat or other places, but you cannot fool the people of Kerala," the Congress chief had said.

He made the remark while alleging that both Modi and Vijayan were following the same path, with no difference between them except the parties they lead.

The BJP on Tuesday had demanded an apology from Kharge for his remarks, saying that the comment was "shameless, demeaning and utterly despicable."

Addressing a press conference here, senior BJP leader and former Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad asked Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to clarify whether they agreed with Kharge's statement.

Interest rates to remain low in medium to long term: RBI Governor

PTI

Mumbai, Apr 8: Reserve Bank Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Wednesday expressed confidence that interest rates will remain low in the medium to long term, given the benign inflationary conditions.

Addressing the media, in a post-monetary policy conference, Malhotra said the Indian economy is very strong, resilient and robust.

"We are in a neutral state... possibility either way, any ways cannot be ruled out that low rates (would) continue for a long time," he said.

Despite shocks, he said, the RBI is projecting a GDP growth of 6.9 per cent for the current financial year.

"Structurally, long-term, macroeconomic fundamentals, because of various measures which the government has taken, which the RBI has taken, which various institutions have taken, remain very strong and continue to drive growth on the one hand and at the same time keep price pressures contained."

"So, it's quite possible that even in the short to medium



term, we will continue to have low rates," he added.

Earlier in the day, the Reserve Bank of India kept its key policy rate unchanged, adopting a cautious wait-and-watch stance as policymakers assessed the impact of the six-week-long Iran conflict on energy supplies, inflation and growth.

The central bank's six-member Monetary Policy Committee voted unanimously to keep the benchmark repurchase rate unchanged at 5.25 per cent, flagging heightened uncertainty after the West Asia conflict drove crude prices sharply higher, weakened the rupee and disrupted trade flows.

Malhotra also emphasised that the ceasefire has been taken into account in the monetary policy review.

The US has agreed to a two-week ceasefire with Iran, President Donald Trump announced 90 minutes before his deadline to wipe out civilisation from the West Asian nation was to end.

Trump made the dramatic announcement on Tuesday evening (US time) even as Democrats called for his removal over unhinged threats to wipe out the Iranian civilisation.

On GDP growth, the RBI projected a 6.9 per cent expansion of the Indian economy in the

current financial year, lower than the expected 7.6 per cent growth in FY26. Inflation is estimated at 4.6 per cent for 2026-27 (April 2026 to March 2027), which is within the RBI's 2 per cent to 6 per cent target range.

With regard to the transmission of a series of rate cuts by the RBI, Malhotra said banks have passed on about 90 basis points reduction on the lending side against 125 basis points moderation in repo rate.

"Similarly, on the deposit side, it's more than 100. So, there has been a satisfactory transmission," he said.

Asked about measures taken on currency market curbs, he said these steps were taken to check excessive volatility of the rupee, and these are not in any sense a structural change.

"We stand committed to the development, broadening and deepening of these markets... obviously, these are not measures which are going to remain there forever," he said.

These measures were taken in view of heightened volatility in the forex market in the last few weeks of last month, he added.

Adani wins US court hearing in push to throw out SEC fraud suit

PTI

New York, Apr 8: A US judge granted a request from billionaire Gautam Adani to schedule a hearing in his effort to dismiss a US Securities and Exchange Commission fraud case, which he says lacks necessary jurisdiction as well as fails on multiple reasons.

This followed lawyers of Adani and his nephew, Sagar filing a plea seeking dismissal of the case.

"The court has received Defendants' letter requesting a pre-motion conference on their anticipated motion to dismiss the Complaint. The court GRANTS that request and DIRECTS the parties" to schedule the pre-motion conference, the Eastern District court of New York said in its order.

In the filing, the Adanis' lawyers said there was no credible evidence supporting the alleged

bribery scheme.

The SEC, they said, lacked necessary jurisdiction over the two men and that the alleged misstatements underpinning the case weren't actionable.

The case brought by SEC in November 2024 alongside a criminal complaint by the US Department of Justice, alleges that the Adanis sought to pay over USD 250 million in bribes to Indian officials to secure solar energy contracts and concealed the scheme from US investors and banks when they raised funds.

The Adani Group has denied all allegations, stating that none of its entities or executives have been charged under the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, and that Adani Green Energy - the renewable energy arm that raised the funds - is not a party to the proceedings.

Railways account for 28-30% of freight movement, well below global benchmarks: ASSOCHAM

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 8: Railways account for 28 to 30 per cent of freight movement, which is significantly lower than global benchmarks, indicating substantial headroom for growth, according to a joint report released by the industry body, the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), and business consultancy firm ASCELA.

The report, titled "Future Ready Railways for Viksit Bharat," added that as India targets 3,000 million tonnes of freight capacity by 2030, the sector is witnessing accelerated transformation, driven by initiatives such as Dedicated Freight Corridors and

near-complete electrification, enhancing both efficiency and sustainability.

It further emphasised the need to increase rail's modal share through capacity augmentation, expansion of Dedicated Freight Corridors, enhanced private participation, and improved last-mile connectivity. It also underlined the importance of reducing logistics costs -- currently at 7.97 per cent of GDP -- by leveraging railways as a more cost-efficient and sustainable mode of transport, which is critical to strengthening India's global competitiveness.

"ASSOCHAM-ASCELA presented the report at a national conference held on Wednesday in New Delhi, bringing together senior policymakers, industry leaders, and sector

experts to deliberate on the evolving role of Indian Railways in driving economic growth and logistics transformation," a press note from ASSOCHAM said.

Addressing the gathering, Surendra Kumar Ahirwar, Executive Director (Traffic Commercial), Railway Board, highlighted that Indian Railways is undergoing a phase of accelerated transformation, moving beyond incremental progress to a more dynamic, future-ready system.

He underscored that railways today serve a dual role, not only as a catalyst for economic development but also as a significant contributor to it through their extensive manufacturing and service ecosystem.

US, Israel & Iran agree to 2-week ceasefire but much remains unclear and some attacks continue

AP

Tehran, Apr 8: Iran, the United States and Israel agreed to a two-week ceasefire in an 11th-hour deal that headed off US President Donald Trump's threat to unleash a bombing campaign to destroy Iranian civilization. But hours after the announcement, Iran and Gulf Arab countries reported new attacks Wednesday.

It was not clear if the strikes would scuttle the deal, which US Vice President JD Vance called "fragile."

Even before the new attacks, much about the agreement was unclear as the sides presented vastly different visions of the terms.

Iran said the deal would allow it to formalise its new practice of charging ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial transit lane for oil. But the details were not clear, nor was it known whether vessels would feel safe using the channel or whether ship traffic had resumed. It also was unclear whether any other country agreed to this condition.

Pakistan, which helped to mediate the deal, and others said fighting would pause in Lebanon, where Israel has launched a ground invasion against the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group. Israel said it would not, and strikes hit Beirut on Wednesday.

The fate of Iran's missile and nuclear programs — the elimination of which were major objectives for the US and Israel



in going to war — also remained unclear. Trump said the US would work with Iran to remove buried enriched uranium, though Iran did not confirm that.

In the streets of Tehran, pro-government demonstrators screamed: "Death to America, death to Israel, death to compromisers!" after the ceasefire announcement and burned American and Israeli flags.

The chants underscored the anger animating hard-liners, who have been preparing for what many assumed would be an apocalyptic battle with the United States. Trump warned Tuesday that "a whole civilisation will die tonight," if a deal wasn't reached.

Varying reports of ceasefire's terms Trump initially said Iran proposed a "workable" 10-point plan that could help end the war the US launched with Israel on Feb. 28. But when a version in Farsi emerged that indicated Iran would be allowed to continue enriching uranium — which is key to building a nuclear weapon — Trump called it fraudulent without elaborating.

Vance later said the deal was being misrepresented within Iran, though he did not offer details.

Iran's demands for ending the war include a withdrawal of US combat forces from the region, the lifting of sanctions, and the release of its frozen assets.

In his post Wednesday, Trump said: "We are, and will be, talking

Tariff and Sanctions relief with Iran."

It was not clear if other Western nations would agree to that, and the other points are likely non-starters. United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres's personal envoy arrived in Iran for talks on "the way forward." Pakistan said talks to hammer out a permanent end to the war could begin in Islamabad as soon as Friday.

Israel backed the US ceasefire with Iran, but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the deal does not cover fighting against Hezbollah.

Israeli Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir said Israel will continue to "utilise every operational opportunity" to strike Hezbollah. The Israeli military said it struck more

than 100 targets within 10 minutes Wednesday across Lebanon, the largest wave of strikes since March 1.

Hezbollah has not confirmed if it will abide by the ceasefire, though the group has said it was open to giving mediators a chance to secure an agreement. An official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to comment publicly, said the group would not stop firing at Israel unless Israel agreed to do the same.

Iran and Oman will collect shipping fees in Strait of Hormuz

While Iran could not match the sophistication of US and Israeli weaponry or their dominance in the air, its ability to control the Strait of Hormuz proved a tremendous strategic advantage.

Iranian attacks and threats deterred many commercial ships from passing through the waterway, through which 20 per cent of all traded oil and natural gas passes in peacetime.

That roiled the world economy and raised the pressure on Trump both at home and abroad to find a way out of the standoff.

The ceasefire may formalise a system of charging fees in the strait that Iran instituted — and give it a new source of revenue.

The plan allows for both Iran and Oman to charge ships, according to a regional official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss negotiations they were directly involved in. The official said Iran would use the money it raised for reconstruction.

Strategic reset: India, Bangladesh signal commitment to strengthen relations



PTI

New Delhi, Apr 8: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday conveyed to his Bangladeshi counterpart Khaliur Rahman India's desire to engage "constructively" with the new government in Dhaka and further strengthen bilateral ties.

In their meeting, Jaishankar and Rahman deliberated extensively on charting a new path of cooperation, leaving behind more than 18 months of heightened diplomatic tension witnessed during the tenure of Bangladesh's interim government.

Rahman, accompanied by the Bangladesh prime minister's advisor for foreign affairs, Humayun Kabir, arrived in New Delhi on Tuesday.

It is the first high-level visit to India by a senior member of the new Bangladesh Nationalist Party government led by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman that came to power in February following the parliamentary elections.

"We discussed strengthening our bilateral relationship in its various facets. Also exchanged views on regional and global developments. Agreed to remain in close touch," Jaishankar said in a social media post after meeting Rahman.

The Bangladeshi side also reiterated its request to extradite former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to Bangladesh who have been awarded the death penalty by the International Crimes Tribunal in that country, it is learnt.

At the same time, the two sides were of the view that Sheikh Hasina's stay in India should not be allowed to impede ties between

the two countries, people familiar with the matter said.

The previous government led by Muhammad Yunus had requested India to extradite Hasina as she was convicted of "crimes against humanity" for the crackdown on the student-led protests.

The Bangladesh foreign minister also met Oil and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Puri.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval hosted Rahman for a dinner meeting last evening.

"The external affairs minister reiterated India's desire to engage constructively with the new government and further strengthen bilateral ties," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

"The two sides agreed to explore proposals for deepening the partnership through the relevant bilateral mechanisms. Follow-on official meetings are expected to take place at an early date. Further, both sides exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest," it said.

In the meeting, Rahman stated that the BNP government under the leadership of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman would pursue its foreign policy in accordance with the principle of "Bangladesh First" approach and on the basis of mutual trust and respect and reciprocal benefit.

The Indian side assured that issuance of visas to Bangladeshis, particularly medical and business visas, would be eased in the coming weeks.

In his talks with Puri, Rahman conveyed thanks for the recent supply of diesel to Bangladesh and requested that the volume of supply of diesel and fertiliser be increased.

Xi tells Chinese military to carry out pol rectification: Be loyal to Communist Party

PTI

Beijing, Apr 8: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday asked the top brass of the military to carry out political rectification and remain loyal to the ruling Communist Party and Marxist ideology.

Addressing a training session for high-ranking military officials at the National Defence University here, Xi said being part of the Party and the military means having firm faith in Marxism and being loyal to the Party.

Xi, who also heads the Party and military, called on high-ranking military officials to take the lead in carrying out intra-party political activities in earnest and in speaking the truth.

The Central Military Commission (CMC), the overall high command of the Chinese military, headed by Xi, has carried out major purges in recent months, which included the removal of the highest-ranking PLA official Gen Zhang

Youxia.

Zhang was the Vice Chairman of the CMC. After his removal, the six-member CMC was reduced to two: Xi and Gen Zhang Shengmin, secretary of the discipline inspection body.

Besides corruption, which is the main allegation against the sacked military officials, indiscipline and disobedience of the CPC leadership were stated to be the reasons for the action against them.

Since he came to power in 2012, Xi has been insisting that the military should function under the leadership of the CPC.

Critics say that through the anti-corruption movement, Xi consolidated his power, emerging as the core leader of the party, next only to the founder leader Mao Zedong.

In his address, Xi also called for a fresh political outlook to greet the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army, which will be marked in 2027.

Commonwealth Sport delegation begins 4-day Gujarat visit to review preparations for 2030 Games

PTI

Ahmedabad, Apr 8: A delegation of Commonwealth Sport began its four-day Gujarat visit on Wednesday to review preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games to be held in Ahmedabad city. The five-member delegation, led by Commonwealth Sport president Donald Rukare, along with officials from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), will be in the state from April 8 to 11, officials said.

Gujarat's Ahmedabad city was formally awarded the hosting rights of the 2030 Commonwealth Games during the Commonwealth Sport's general assembly in



November last year, paving the way for the multi-sport event's return to the country after two decades.

The delegation began its tour with a courtesy meeting with state Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel in state capital Gandhinagar.

Commonwealth Sport president Rukare and CEO Katie Sadleir appreciated the

warm welcome and hospitality they received in Gujarat, an official release said.

CM Patel wrote on X, "It was a pleasure to meet the Commonwealth sport delegation in Gandhinagar during their first official visit to Gujarat to review preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games, led by President Donald Rukare."

IPL 2026: Gill, Washington Sundar, Buttler smash fifties each, power GT to 210/4 against DC

FIANS

New Delhi, April 8: Captain Shubman Gill, Jos Buttler, and Washington Sundar hit blazing fifties each as Gujarat Titans posted 210/4 in their 20 overs against Delhi Capitals in match 14 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi on Wednesday. Yet GT could be left wondering if they could have got more runs, considering they made only 58 runs in the last six overs.

Buttler was back to his devastating best with the bat by hitting a 27-ball 52, laced with three fours and five towering sixes. Gill, back in action after a muscle spasm in his neck ruled him out in the last game, was elegant in collecting the majority of his runs through leg-side to top-score with 70 off 45 balls, laced with four boundaries and five sixes.

He also shared a commanding 104-run partnership with Washington, who hit his first IPL fifty via a 32-ball 55, studded with six boundaries and two sixes. For DC, Lungi Ngidi changed the complexion of the match in the back end with his slower balls to end up with 1-24 in his four overs, even as the rest of his bowling counterparts had an economy rate above eight.

Sai Sudharsan got GT's innings going by clipping Mukesh Kumar



for four, before Gill unleashed a backfoot drive racing through backward point for another boundary. After leaning into an exquisite cover drive off Ngidi, Sudharsan got out for a score before fifty for the first time in IPL games in New Delhi by chopping on to his stumps off Mukesh. Buttler showed signs of his old blistering self when he lofted Mukesh for six, before going inside-out and lofting Axar Patel for four and six respectively. Buttler showcased his full range in Mukesh's third over — a scoop over fine leg for six was followed by a maximum launched clean down the ground, and then a lofted drive over extra cover cleared the

ropes easily, as 23 runs came off it.

Gill, meanwhile, had the best seat in the house to watch the carnage from the other end — as Buttler swatted Ngidi for four, before getting his fifty in 24 balls. But Kuldeep Yadav's short ball ended Buttler's fun — it didn't bounce much as he went for the pull, and was castled.

With T Natarajan giving away 13 runs in his first two overs, Gill and Sundar kept the scoreboard ticking via strike rotation and hitting occasional boundaries. But it was in the 12th over, bowled by Vipraj Nigam, where both Sundar and Gill broke free to raise fifty for their partnership in 26 balls.

MOVIES WATCHLIST

Thursday, 9th April

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

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

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

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