

Constitution fully applicable across nation after Art 370 abrogation: PM

» Says Centre's decisions over 10 yrs restored constitutional dignity » Dr Ambedkar opposed Article 370: HM Shah

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Apr 14: Asserting that abrogation of Article 370 ensured full application of the Constitution across the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that its scrapping strengthened constitutional unity.

Paying rich tributes to Dr B R Ambedkar on his 135th birth anniversary, PM Modi, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The Centre's decisions over the past decade have aimed at restoring the dignity of the Constitution and ensuring equal rights."

"Today is also the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar. I pay my heartfelt tributes to him. The policies and decisions taken by our government over the past decade have worked towards restoring the dignity of the Constitution. After the abrogation of Article 370, the Constitution of India is now fully applicable across the



entire nation," he said.

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah also paid tributes to Ambedkar and said the architect of the Constitution had laid the foundation of a democratic framework that guarantees equal rights and opportunities to all sections of society.

In a post on X, Shah said

Ambedkar opposed Article 370, describing it as being against the country's unity and integrity.

"He laid the strong foundation of India's democracy by giving the country a Constitution that grants equal rights and opportunities to every class.

"He (Dr Ambedkar) staunchly

opposed Article 370 for the sake of the country's integrity," Shah said.

Speaking at a separate event, Shah highlighted the government's security measures, linking them to responses to past terrorist attacks.

He said that while earlier governments adopted a different approach, the present dispensation responded to incidents such as the Uri and Pulwama attacks with military action.

"After Uri, surgical strikes were carried out. After Pulwama, air strikes were conducted, and after the Pahalgam attack, Operation Sindoor was launched," Shah said.

He also referred to steps taken to curb Left-wing extremism, stating that the government had acted against Naxalism.

On border security, Shah said land required for fencing along the borders would be made available within a fixed timeline if the BJP returns to power in Bengal. | More on P6

Serving needy highest duty: LG Sinha

Lauds Sewa Bharati's enduring spirit to strengthen communities | Says strong J&K means strong families, strong communities

KNO Desk

Jammu, Apr 14: Asserting that there is no higher duty than serving those in need, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that to feed a hungry soul is to invite grace into your own.

Addressing a ceremony held to mark the upgradation of 'Apna Bhojanalaya' at Government Medical College here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) highlighted the importance of compassion and service. "Feeding the hungry is among the most sacred acts. To feed a hungry soul is to invite grace into your own. When a hand extends in need and another rises in nurture, divine grace moves quietly between them. This is humanity at its absolute finest," he added.

The community kitchen is run by Sewa Bharti and supported by J&K Bank along with other donors.

The Lieutenant Governor lauded the noble initiative



and partook in a meal at Apna Bhojanalaya. "Sewa Bharti's enduring spirit of giving back, empowers individuals and strengthens communities. There is no higher duty than serving those in need. Sewa Bharti has honored that duty by nourishing bodies, restoring souls, and affirming the dignity of every human life. To strengthen Apna Bhojanalaya is to strengthen the very fabric of our society," he said.

"Our aim should be selfless service to the neighbor, the city around us, and the nation that unites us. A strong J&K

means strong families. Strong communities. Citizens empowered to lead, to contribute, to rise. When we lift every sector, we lift the Union Territory itself. Commit to this cause and build a legacy worthy of pride," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He emphasized that the change needs no vast resources but just the spirit for selfless service, vision, persistence and love for the community.

LG Sinha commended Sewa Bharti, volunteers and donors for transforming millions' lives with their selfless service. "You did | More on P6

Won't tolerate 'jungle raj' in J&K: CM Omar

- Inaugurates Rs 4.30 crore fruit & vegetable processing centre in Anantnag
- Assures taking Dry Port at Jablipora Fruit Mandi issue with Centre



Umairsar Gull Ganie

Anantnag, Apr 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the government will not allow "jungle raj" in Jammu and Kashmir and that nobody will be permitted to disturb peace in the region.

Speaking with reporters at the Jashn-e-Amad-e-Bahar event at Jablipora in Anantnag, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the government aims to begin a new phase in Jammu and Kashmir and make a fresh start so that the atmosphere remains peaceful and conditions stable.

He said some elements are trying to create "jungle raj" and disturb the peaceful environment. "There are people who

do not like peace and instead want communal unrest and conflict. I want to make it clear that as long as my government remains in power, we will not allow such things to happen in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Omar urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to ensure strict action against those involved in the Ramban killing and those who attempted to disturb the situation. "This should send a strong message that such disorder and lawlessness will not be tolerated by the present government," he said.

The CM said that a weather-based crop insurance scheme for horticulture will be implemented soon.

"Our farmers and landowners face many challenges. The biggest among | More on P6

Baisakhi boost for Jammu

LG Sinha dedicates Rs 156-cr Tawi Riverfront Phase-I to public

'Riverfront to emerge as key tourism, recreation & economic hub'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Jammu, Apr 14: Describing Tawi Riverfront Project (Phase-I) as a blend of tradition and modern urban development aimed at transforming Jammu into a vibrant, inclusive city, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday dedicated Rs 156-crore Tawi Riverfront Project (Phase-I) to the public on the auspicious occasion of Baisakhi.

Addressing a gathering during the inauguration and the start of the three-day Tawi Mahotsav-2026, the Lieutenant Governor, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the project has been dedicated to the citizens, recalling that performing aarti on the banks of the sacred Tawi



River has been a longstanding tradition.

"In Phase-I, promenades have been developed on the left bank, right bank and the central island, creating four continuous stretches for walking, jogging and cycling," he said, adding that a dedicated ghat has been constructed for the Tawi Aarti.

Highlighting future plans, LG Sinha said a 4-lane connecting road with a bridge to the right bank will be constructed to ease congestion and directly link Bhagwati Nagar rotary with Jewel Chowk.

He also launched the development of green spaces along the top promenade of the left bank, describing | More on P6

5 J&K MLAs to be nominated by Speaker as associate members

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Apr 14: The Speaker of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly will have to nominate five MLAs as associate members of the Delimitation Commission.

According to the proposed delimitation bill, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the commission shall associate 10 members with itself—five from the Lok Sabha and five from the Legislative Assembly—for the



purpose of assisting it in its duties in respect of each State and Union Territory with a legislature.

While the Lok Sabha Speaker will nominate five MPs from J&K, the Speaker of the J&K Assembly will be empowered to nominate five MLAs.

As per the bill, the Speaker of the J&K Assembly will have to nominate the names of five associate members within one month from the date of constitution of the Commission, while the Speaker of the Lok

Sabha will have to nominate five members within two months.

These nominations must be sent to the Chief Election Commissioner. If the nominations are made by a Legislative Assembly Speaker, they must also be sent to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

All five MPs from J&K would be nominated as associate members given that their total strength is similar. All eyes will be on 5 MLAs to be nominated by assembly Speaker. (KNO)

CM thanks PM, Gadkari for tunnels

KT News Desk

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari for their support and approval of the Sudhmahadev-Dranga and Singhpora-Vailoo tunnel projects on NH-244. The Chief Minister said that these vital infrastructure projects will significantly strengthen connectivity, ensure all-weather access, and accelerate economic growth across the Chenab Valley and adjoining regions. The Government of India | More on P6

CM Abdullah calls for stronger banking partnerships to drive J&K's growth

Addresses Axis Bank Senior Management Confluence in Srinagar

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Apr 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday addressed the Axis Bank Senior Management Confluence in Srinagar, underscoring the critical role of the banking sector in strengthening financial inclusion, supporting entrepreneurship, and driving sustainable economic growth in Jammu & Kashmir.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Gulmarg Pirzada Feroq Ahmed Shah, MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq,



Head Branch Banking (North) Reynold D'souza, along with regional heads and senior officials, were present on the occasion.

Appreciating Axis Bank for

organizing the Confluence and its continued engagement with Jammu & Kashmir, the Chief Minister noted that the bank, with its network of 54 branches across Jammu | More on P6

J&K, Ladakh fall back on 1000 MWs coal, gas energy in peak winters

66% imported power recorded in Jan 2026

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Apr 14: In the peak winters of 2025-2026, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh were utilising nearly 1,000 Megawatts (MWs) of coal and gas energy amid dip in hydel power generation.

The official figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveal that in the month of January-2026, Jammu and Kashmir and

Ladakh were utilizing 999.21 MWs of thermal energy including 870.14 MWs of coal and 129.7 MWs of gas energy from the allocated shares in joint and central sector utilities.

The figures reveal that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh were allocated with a total of 3767.44 MWs of power from state, private and central share out of which 999.21 MWs were thermal energy and | More on P6

J&K observes Baisakhi with fervour, enthusiasm

Festivals, river rituals, Tawi Mahotsav mark festival

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Apr 14: Baisakhi was celebrated with religious fervour and cultural enthusiasm across Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, with devotees thronging gurdwaras, riversides and community spaces.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the festival, which marks the harvest season and the foundation of the Khalsa Panth, witnessed large gatherings in Jammu as people took ritual dips in rivers, especially along the Tawi and participated in traditional fairs and community celebrations.

In Jammu city, festivities were amplified with the ongoing Tawi Mahotsav, featuring cultural programmes, traditional melas, food festivals and riverfront activities aimed at celebrating heritage and promoting public engagement.

Officials said the three-day event beginning today included Tawi Aarti, cultural shows and family-oriented activities, drawing large public participation.

Meanwhile, gurdwaras across Kashmir also witnessed special prayers, kirtans and community gatherings, with devotees offering prayers and participating in langars to mark the auspicious day.

Extending greetings, Lieutenant | More on P6

25% drop in fire Incidents, Rs 5,000 Cr property saved in 2025: J&K F&ES

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, APRIL 14: The Fire Service Day was observed Tuesday at the headquarters of Fire & Emergency Services (F&ES) Batamloo, here, with the launching of the week-long Fire Service Week to be held across the Union Territory from April 14 to 20, 2026.

Led by Director Fire & Emergency Services, Alok Kumar, the officers and personnel paid floral tributes to martyrs of the historic Bombay Dock Explosion of 1944, commemorated annually as Fire Service Day. A two-minute silence was observed for the fire fighters who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

Addressing the ceremonial function, Alok Kumar, as per an official statement, said the week aims to promote fire prevention, preparedness and public safety awareness. This year's theme is "Safe School, Safe Hospital & Fire Safety Aware Society-Together for Fire Prevention". Director Fire



Service informed that the department responded to 6,039 fire calls, 59 rescue calls and 53 false calls during 2025. With 322 fire tenders and Quick Response Vehicles and 2,157 personnel deployed, the department saved property worth nearly Rs 5,000 crore while limiting losses to around Rs 300 crore. He said

that the fire incidents fell by 1,994, nearly 25 percent compared to the previous year, attributing the decline to sustained prevention measures and growing public awareness.

Emphasizing the community participation, the Director Fire Service said 10,794 awareness programmes under initiatives

like "Har Ghar Fire Fighter" have reached over 10.7 lakh people across J&K. To strengthen compliance, 3,728 fire safety audits were carried out in the hospitals, schools, hotels and commercial establishments.

The department also played a key role in disaster response, including rescue and dewatering operations during recent floods and safety arrangements for Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2025.

During the Fire Service Week, the department will conduct fire safety campaigns, mock drills, evacuation exercises, lectures and live demonstrations across the UT to educate the citizens on prevention and emergency response. Appealing for public support, the Director urged the citizens to adopt basic fire safety measures and help build a fire-safe society. He reaffirmed its commitment towards safeguarding the lives and property, upholding its motto: "We Serve to Save."

Satish Sharma leads Baisakhi Milan celebrations in Akhnoor Pushes for preserving cultural legacy

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, APRIL 14: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, IT, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Tuesday participated in the grand Baisakhi Milan celebrations at Pambadwan Akhnoor, Jammu.

He extended warm greetings to the people and highlighted deep-rooted cultural, historical and social significance of celebrating Baisakhi. He emphasized that the festival plays a vital role in upholding the rich traditions, agrarian ethos and composite cultural fabric of the region.

The event, as per an official statement, witnessed an impressive public turnout, including the community leaders, youth and local residents, who gathered to celebrate the vibrant festival of Baisakhi, reflecting the spirit of unity and cultural pride.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister reiterated the importance of preserving the cultural heritage and strengthening communal harmony through such celebrations.

"Baisakhi is not merely a



harvest festival but a reflection of our identity and heritage. It symbolizes prosperity, hard work, and unity, and reminds us of our responsibility to preserve and promote our cultural values," the Minister said.

Reiterating the government's commitment to inclusive development, he stressed the importance of maintaining a balance between progress

and preservation of cultural traditions.

The program also witnessed active interaction between the Minister and the public, with several participants putting forth their concerns and suggestions.

Satish Sharma assured timely redressal of their genuine issues, reaffirming his commitment to responsive and people-centric governance.

Nasha Mukh JK Abhiyaan Channelise energy towards sports, education: DC Anantnag Advises youth to denounce drug menace



KT NEWS DESK

ANANTNAG, APRIL 14: As part of the youth engagement initiatives under Nasha Mukh J&K Abhiyaan, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat, Tuesday visited PM Package Employees Colony, Vessu and witnessed a cricket match played between two cricket clubs of the colony. He was accompanied by ADC, ACR and other officials of administration and concerned departments.

On the occasion, the DC, as per an official statement, interacted with the players and appreciated their enthusiasm and sportsmanship. He encouraged players to actively engage in sports and other constructive activities, so they develop into responsible and mature citizens. Advising youth to denounce

the drug menace, the DC highlighted the significance of Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir" campaign and emphasized the vital role of youth in building a drug-free and healthy society. He urged them to channelise their energy towards sports, education and entrepreneurial avenues so they contribute to the society and nation at large.

Dr. Bilal further cautioned about the devastating effects of drugs and expressed hope that with collective efforts of all, the menace can be effectively eliminated from the society.

At the culmination, the DC applauded commendable performance of both teams and felicitated them with awards and sports kits. The residents appreciated administration for the encouragement and support towards youth-centric activities and welfare in the colony.

Shri Machail Mata Ji Temple reopens Div Com, IGP Jammu pay obeisance at revered Shrine

KT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, APRIL 14: The sacred Shri Machail Mata Temple, nestled in the spiritual expanse of Machail Valley in District Kishtwar, was reopened for pilgrims on the auspicious occasion of Baisakhi, Tuesday, heralding the commencement of the annual Shri Machail Mata Yatra 2026.

The religious event, as per an official statement, also marked the shifting of the idol (Murti) of Goddess Machail Mata (Durga) from the house of local priest Pehalwan Singh to the Main temple amid a huge rush of devotees amid religious rituals and a grand fair.

The reopening of the revered temple was attended by Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, IGP Jammu Zone, Bhim Singh Tutti, Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma and SSP Kishtwar, Naresh Singh, who paid their obeisance at the sacred shrine.

After paying the obeisance, the Divisional Commissioner and IGP Jammu took a comprehensive review of the arrangements put in place for the smooth and safe conduct of the Shri Machail Mata Yatra 2026.

The review included an assessment of security protocols, provision of electricity, water supply, sanitation, langar sewa, accommodation, transportation and healthcare facilities for the devotees.

The Divisional Commissioner directed for effective implementation and enforcement of RFID registration, with counters to be established for on-the-spot registration at Gauri Shankar Mandir Sarkoot and Gulabgarh. He emphasized that no entry shall be permitted without the registration.

He issued instructions for the strict implementation of sanitation measures, including the



deployment of sanitation workers and proper management of plastic waste to make the Yatra 100% plastic-free. Further, directions were issued to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity to Machail and adjoining areas. The Divisional Commissioner also directed for adequate water supply and provision of accommodation facilities in educational institutions (schools and colleges) in the event of adverse weather conditions and emergencies along the Yatra route from Gulabgarh to Machail.

It was informed that helicopter services shall also be initiated after obtaining permission. "There shall be no movement of pilgrims, nor any establishment at the cloudburst-affected site at Chishoti," the Divisional Commissioner directed.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned executing agencies to assess the feasibility and undertake necessary measures to increase the height of the bridge at Chishoti.

Underscoring the cultural and religious significance of the Shri Machail Mata Yatra, the

Divisional Commissioner said the shrine has emerged as major attraction for promoting spiritual tourism in the region. He assured full support from the administration for the successful conduct of the Yatra and emphasized the importance of providing a secure and comfortable environment for the pilgrims.

The Divisional Commissioner announced that the Gulabgarh to Machail road would soon be handed over to the BRO to build a Bailey Bridge at Chishoti within one fortnight.

Earlier at the Shrine, the Divisional Commissioner also interacted with the devotees and the locals and listened to their demands and issues. He assured that the issues would be addressed soon.

The Shri Machail Mata Yatra holds profound religious importance and attracts lakhs of devotees from across the country every year. The Divisional Commissioner appealed to all pilgrims to adhere to the guidelines and safety instructions that are issued by the administration.

CMO reviews functioning, ongoing works at PHC Assar

KT NEWS DESK

ASSAR, APRIL 14: To review the functioning of health facilities, Chief Medical Officer Dr Tanveer Ahmed Rather conducted a surprise inspection of PHC Assar.

The visit, as per an official statement, was aimed at checking staff attendance and assessing the overall functioning of the health facility. During the inspection, the CMO visited all sections of the PHC and thoroughly reviewed staff attendance and service delivery.

Dr. Rather also interacted

with the staff on duty and impressed upon them to work with greater dedication and commitment in order to ensure quality healthcare services to the public.

Later, the CMO reviewed the ongoing construction work of the BPHU Laboratory at PHC Assar, where Dr Syed Mohd Ismail, BMO Assar, briefed him about the progress and status of the work being executed.

The CMO emphasized timely completion of the project and stressed the importance of strengthening laboratory services to enhance healthcare delivery in the area.

KU Law students engage in seminar on women's reservation



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar Apr 14: The University of Kashmir's (KU) School of Law organised a one-day seminar on 'Implementation of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023' at the Main Campus.

The seminar, as per a KU statement, aimed to examine the constitutional and practical dimensions of the 106th Constitutional Amendment, which provides for one-third reservation for women in legislative bodies. The students, which included mostly girls from KU's school of law, engaged themselves in a thought-provoking academic exchange.

Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said, in her message, "Such academic platforms encourage critical thinking among students and help them engage meaningfully with contemporary constitutional developments and issues of social importance."

Dean and Head, School of Law, KU, Prof. Shahnaz, in her welcome address, highlighted the importance of inclusive participation and

gender justice in democratic institutions.

The event featured enthusiastic participation from students, who delivered insightful speeches on women's political representation, challenges in implementation, and the broader idea of meaningful empowerment beyond numerical representation.

They were evaluated by a panel including Prof. Tabasum Firdous, faculty at CCAS KU, Prof. Iffat Yasmin, Head, Economics Department KU, Prof. Towseef Rizvi, Head, Psychology Department KU.

The winners of the speech competition included Sanjeeda Amin (Winner), Sayana Warsi (1st Runner-up), and Kainat Amin and Noha Balkhi (2nd Runner-ups). Certificates were also distributed among the participants.

session was moderated by Dr. Anna Bashir, faculty at Law Department KU. It concluded with remarks by Dr. Hina Basharat, and a vote of thanks by Dr. Syed Asima Refayi, faculty at Law Department KU respectively.

MLA Mankotia inaugurates Annual Baisakhi Mela in Binisang

KT NEWS DESK

CHENANI, APRIL 14: The annual Baisakhi Mela at Binisang was inaugurated by Member Legislative Assembly Balwant Singh Mankotia amid enthusiasm and festive spirit on Tuesday. On the occasion, the MLA paid obeisance at the local temple and prayed for peace, prosperity and well-being of the people. He appreciated the efforts of the Mela Committee and extended his best wishes for the successful organization of the event.

The mela, as per an official statement, witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of locals and visitors from nearby areas. A variety of colorful cultural programmes were presented by local artists, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the region. Special arrangements were made for visitors, including swings for children, food stalls, langar seva and a wide range of shopping stalls offering various items. The mela created a lively and joyful atmosphere, with people of all age groups enjoying the celebrations.

Gurezi, Lone felicitate Chowdry Ramzan on assuming office as NC Addl General Secretary

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, 14 Apr: The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference leaders and MLAs Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurezi and Hilal Akbar Lone led separate delegations of local unit functionaries from Gurezi and Sumbal-Sonawari to the party headquarters, Nawa-e-Subha, where they called on Rajya Sabha MP and Additional General Secretary Chowdry Muhammad Ramzan to felicitate him on assuming his

new organisational responsibility.

The delegations, as per a party statement, lauded Ramzan's elevation, describing it as a reflection of his seasoned political acumen, grassroots connection, and longstanding contribution to the party's organisational fabric. Party leaders underscored that his appointment comes at a crucial political juncture, where experience, ideological steadiness, and organisational discipline

remain key to strengthening the party's outreach and cadre cohesion.

Speaking on the occasion, leaders from Gurezi and Sumbal-Sonawari expressed confidence that under Ramzan's expanded role, the party's political messaging and grassroots mobilisation will gain further momentum, particularly in strengthening booth-level structures and reinforcing the party's connection with border and frontier

regions.

MP Chowdry Ramzan while receiving the delegations expressed gratitude for the gesture and reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening the party at every level. He said the party's real strength lies in its cadre base and the trust of the people, adding that organisational responsibilities are not positions of privilege but instruments of service and political responsibility.

CM Omar inaugurates Jashn-e-Amad-e-Bahar in Anantnag

KT NEWS DESK

Bijbehara, Apr 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday inaugurated Jashn-e-Amad-e-Bahar, the Spring Festival on the occasion of Baisakhi, at Jablipora in Anantnag.

Addressing a large gathering on the occasion, the Chief Minister described spring as a symbol of renewal and hope, stating that the festival represents not just a seasonal transition but also a new phase of development and governance in Jammu & Kashmir.

"We always celebrate the arrival of spring because spring is a new beginning for us. These spring celebrations are not only to celebrate the beginning of this year's spring, but also to remind people that after the arrival of our government, there was not only an effort, but a path was made. There is a new spring, a new beginning," he said.

Highlighting recent policy initiatives, the Chief Minister referred to key decisions taken during the recent budget session, including provision of free six LPG cylinders to the poorest households and free electricity under the Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana. He also emphasized the landmark decision to allow establishment of private universities in Jammu & Kashmir, aimed at expanding access to quality higher education within Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our children are struggling. In other states, to get admission in private universities, their expenses also increase and they have to face difficulties from time to



time. We have now opened the doors for those private universities to come to J&K. Now we will go to different states and invite these universities to come here, to come to J&K, to come to Kashmir, to establish their campuses in remote areas. And our children, who had to leave J&K to get education, will now get education in those private universities here in J&K," he added.

Reaffirming his government's commitment to strengthening rural livelihoods, the Chief Minister said focused efforts are being made to boost farmers' incomes and build a sustainable, self-reliant agriculture sector in Jammu & Kashmir. The Chief Minister highlighted a series of transformative and forward-looking initiatives undertaken by his government

in the agriculture and allied sectors, describing them as pivotal to reshaping the rural economy of Jammu and Kashmir.

He underscored that these interventions are not only aimed at enhancing productivity and farmers' income but also at promoting sustainability, diversification, and value addition.

He further noted that several ambitious programmes are in the pipeline, including the expansion of high-density plantations, strengthening of cold storage and marketing infrastructure, and greater integration of technology in farming practices. "Our vision is to build a resilient and self-reliant agricultural economy that empowers farmers and contributes significantly to the overall economic growth of J&K,"

he asserted.

Referring to the immense potential of South Kashmir, the Chief Minister remarked that the region is richly endowed with fertile land and a favourable climate, making it ideal for both agriculture and tourism. He said that South Kashmir offers a unique blend of natural beauty and agricultural diversity, which can be effectively leveraged to promote agro-tourism. From the mesmerizing lavender or purple bloom to the vibrant mustard fields and lush green paddy landscapes during summer, the region presents a visual and experiential delight for visitors. He emphasized that such initiatives can create new livelihood opportunities for local communities while simultaneously showcasing the

region's rich agrarian heritage to the world.

The Chief Minister said that the government is committed to transforming the region into a vibrant hub of the White Revolution through the promotion of modern and sustainable dairy farming. He emphasized that focused efforts are being made to strengthen dairy infrastructure, enhance milk production and improve the livelihood of farmers associated with the sector. Highlighting the immense potential of the region, he noted that initiatives such as the establishment of milk processing units, provision of high-yielding cattle, veterinary support, and better market linkages are being actively pursued.

"Our aim is to create a robust dairy ecosystem that not only ensures nutritional security but also generates employment and steady income for rural households," he added. Minister for Health & Medical Education, Higher Education & Social Welfare, Sakeena Masood Itoo; Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayat Raj, Cooperatives and Election, Javid Ahmad Dar; Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani; and MLA Srigufwara-Bijbehara, Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri, along with several other legislators, senior officers and officials, were present on the occasion.

The event, organized under the aegis of the Agriculture Production Department, J&K, aimed at promoting Agro-tourism and showcasing the region's rich horticultural potential.

Haj flights from Sgr to commence Apr-18



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Apr 14: The Jammu and Kashmir Haj Committee on Tuesday announced that Haj flights for 2026 from the Srinagar Embarkation Point will commence from April 18, issuing a detailed reporting schedule for the first batch of pilgrims.

According to an official notification, the first three flights scheduled for April 18 include QP-7521, QP-7520, and QP-7519. Pilgrims have been advised to report at Haj House, Bemina, Srinagar, strictly within their allotted time slots.

As per the schedule, the pilgrims of flight QP-7521 are required to report between 6:00 AM and 6:30 AM, followed by those of flight QP-7520 between 8:15 AM and 8:45 AM, while pilgrims of flight QP-7519 must report between 9:00 AM and 9:30 AM.

The Haj Committee has urged all concerned pilgrims to strictly adhere to the reporting timings to ensure smooth processing and departure. Pilgrims have been asked to carry their original passport along with a

copy of the visa, as well as their health and vaccination card.

They have been advised to carry only standard baggage and ensure that no prohibited items are included in their check-in luggage, in accordance with airline regulations.

"The flight schedule for the remaining pilgrims shall be notified separately," the notification reads.

It is important to mention that Haj flights from Srinagar are scheduled to operate from April 18 to May 20, with a total of 4,704 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir set to undertake the pilgrimage this year.

Executive Officer of the Haj Committee, Dr Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi, on Monday told KNO that 3,990 pilgrims will depart via Srinagar embarkation, including 323 from Ladakh, while around 1,000 pilgrims will travel through Delhi and 50 through Mumbai.

Srinagar flights will operate for around 10-15 days, subject to operational adjustments. The luggage allowance has been reduced from 40 kg to 25 kg, and a total of 4,704 pilgrims will depart this year—(KNO)

Seerbagh-Sempora bridge to be opened soon: Dy CM



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Apr 14: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary on Tuesday informed that the Seerbagh-Sempora bridge is nearing completion and will be opened to the public at the earliest.

The Deputy Chief Minister apprised this during his visit to the project site conducted to assess the pace and quality of ongoing works. He was accompanied by MLA Chadoora, Ali Mohammad Dar; Chief Engineer, PWD Central Kashmir, Narinder Kumar; Superintending Engineer, Iram Lone and other concerned officers.

During the inspection, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasized strict adherence to quality standards and timely completion of the project. He expressed satisfaction over the pace of work and observed that the bridge is in its final stage of construction.

Highlighting the significance of the project, he said that the

bridge will greatly enhance the connectivity and accessibility for the residents of Sempora, Seerbagh, Summerbugh and adjoining areas of Chadoora, Pampore and Srinagar, benefiting a large section of the public.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected the PWD (R&B) Guest House at Hyderpora, Srinagar and reviewed the proposed site for construction of an Engineering Office-cum-Conference Hall.

The officers present on the occasion briefed him on the design and scope of the proposed facility.

He directed the concerned to ensure proper planning and expeditious execution of the project while maintaining quality benchmarks. He also reviewed the condition of the guest house and discussed necessary measures to improve its infrastructure and utility.

Chief Engineer PWD Central Kashmir, Executive Engineers and other officials were present during the inspection.

Police arrest 8 in Sopore student protest, vandalism

WARIS FAYAZ

Sopore, Apr 14: Police have arrested eight persons for their alleged involvement in vandalism during student protests at Sopore in North Kashmir, while 25 more have been identified, officials said on Tuesday.

A police official said that the arrests follow incidents of damage to public and private property during protests that erupted after harassment allegations surfaced against a lecturer in the town a day earlier.

He said the arrested persons were involved in ransacking school property and damaging vehicles. "Eight miscreants have been arrested so far, while 25 more have been identified."

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Police to intensify anti-drug crackdown in 'Mission Mode': IGP Kashmir

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Apr 14: Stating that police will further scale up its anti-drug operations in a "mission mode", Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir V.K. Birdi on Tuesday warned of swift and strict action against drug peddlers, smugglers and traffickers across the Valley.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a function, IGP Birdi said the police force has been consistently working against the drug menace, but the coming days will witness a more aggressive and targeted crackdown.

"J&K Police has always been in mission mode against drugs. In the coming days, our action will be swifter to ensure strict legal action against peddlers, smugglers and all those involved in trafficking," he said.

He asserted that law enforcement agencies are committed to dismantling drug networks and ensuring a safer society through intensified operations and



stronger enforcement.

Highlighting the role of youth, the IGP said young people are the backbone of the nation and must stay disciplined and away from substance abuse.

"Youth should keep themselves away from drugs so that they can contribute positively to society and the country," he added.

Responding to a query regarding the recent Sopore incident, IGP Birdi said police have arrested eight persons, and an investigation is underway. He clarified that those involved were outsiders and no one from the school was linked to the case. "The

investigation is in progress, and the culprits will not be spared," he said.

Earlier, the IGP visited a Gurudwara on the occasion of Baisakhi, where he extended greetings to the Sikh community and prayed for peace, prosperity and harmony in the region.

He said the festival signifies sacrifice, justice and protection of the oppressed, while also promoting values of ethics and goodwill.

"It is a holy occasion and the creation day of Khalsa Panth. We paid obeisance and conveyed greetings to the Sikh community on behalf of J&K Police," he said—(KNO)

Women's dignity, empowerment key for Omar-led Govt: Shameema

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Apr 14: The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference Women's Wing President Shameema Firdous Tuesday said that women's welfare remains the cornerstone of the welfare-oriented and development-driven agenda of the Omar Abdullah-led government.

She said the present elected government led by CM Omar Abdullah is firmly committed to empowering women through inclusive policies, targeted interventions, and sustained socio-economic initiatives aimed at ensuring dignity, security, and equal opportunities for women across Jammu and Kashmir.

The event was attended by Provincial Women's Wing President Er. Sabyia Qadri, District President Ganderbal Sheikh Gayas Ud Din, YNC Provincial President Kashmir Mir Mushtaq and Provincial Secretary Women's Wing Ayesha Ji.

In her address, Firdous said the Omar Abdullah-led government has re-centred women's emancipation and empowerment as a core governance priority after what she described as a "decade of governance deficit since 2014."

She highlighted a series of targeted welfare measures, including free public transport for women, enhancement



of marriage assistance under welfare schemes from 50,000 to 75,000, and strengthened social security support for widows, elderly women, and differently-abled women. She said these initiatives are aimed at providing meaningful relief to vulnerable sections and strengthening women's socio-economic status.

Firdous further said that the government has placed women at the centre of its governance architecture, advancing reforms in mobility, social protection, and financial assistance with a clear focus on dignity, empowerment, and equitable participation in Jammu and Kashmir's development trajectory.

Highlighting outreach efforts, Er. Sabyia Qadri said, "Our engagement is continuous and purpose-driven. Through door-to-door consultations and public meetings, we are listening to women and turning their voices into action."

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Blaze turns Nowhatta homes to ashes

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Apr 14: Grief and disbelief gripped families in downtown Srinagar after a midnight blaze reduced multiple homes to ashes in Chandpora-Saifuddin Pora area of Nowhatta, with survivors recounting chilling moments of panic, loss and helplessness.

Zahoor Ahmad, a fire victim said that the fire broke out while people were asleep. "Around 12:45 AM, smoke started filling the house. Neighbours shouted and woke us up. By the time we rushed out, flames had already spread across several houses. Everything I had hoped for my home, my belongings was gone within minutes," he said.

He said at least seven to eight houses were engulfed, leaving families with nothing. "Not just houses, even furniture and basic belongings were destroyed. We are trying to salvage whatever little is left," he added.

Another local resident, Ghulam Nabi, said the congested locality made



firefighting extremely difficult. "The lanes are too narrow. Fire service vehicles couldn't reach easily and laying pipes took

time. If they had reached earlier, maybe some houses could have been saved. In downtown, houses are packed together

and fire spreads in seconds," he said.

Echoing similar distress, Shabir Ahmad, a neighbour, highlighted the scale of human loss behind the incident. "These are poor labourer families. They have nothing left now. One blind man here lost everything, even the Rs 50,000 he had saved for his daughter's medicine. People don't even have clothes and are wearing what neighbours gave them," he said.

He added that the fire spread rapidly as residents were unaware initially. "Everyone was asleep. By the time smoke was noticed, flames had already taken over multiple houses. The damage is beyond imagination," he said.

Another resident, Parveena Begum, appealed for immediate government intervention. "Entire households are gone, from utensils, cash, medicines, everything. These families cannot recover on their own. The government must step in and provide relief so they can rebuild their lives," she said.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

EDITORIAL

Defeat Cyber Fraudsters With Awareness

The Crime Branch has made it clear that "digital arrest" is a complete myth. This is an important warning for our digital age, where cyber fraudsters have learned to weaponise fear itself. In just three months, the police have recovered over 22 lakh rupees from these criminals. But recovering money is not the same as preventing the crime. The real problem is that too many people remain unaware of the tricks fraudsters use to empty bank accounts through psychological manipulation. Let us be very clear.

The term "digital arrest" has no existence in any law. No police officer, no agency, and no court can place anyone under "digital arrest." Yet fraudsters have successfully used this made-up concept to terrorise innocent victims, especially elderly persons living alone, into transferring their life savings. The tactic is simple. A person receives a call from someone pretending to be a police officer. The caller accuses the victim of a serious crime and threatens immediate arrest. Then comes the "solution" – transfer money to a specified

account for "verification" or to avoid "digital custody". The victim, paralysed by fear, complies. The Crime Branch has also warned that Artificial Intelligence has made these frauds more sophisticated. Voice cloning can now mimic a loved one's voice. Deepfakes can create convincing impersonations. The technology does the convincing for the fraudster. Anyone with an internet-enabled device is a potential target. Children have their social media accounts hacked. Job seekers are lured by fake opportunities. Business

people are tempted by fake investments. Even OTPs are extracted through elaborate KYC scams. The solution is not more technology but more awareness. The 1930 helpline works only if victims know to call it immediately. The National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal is a lifeline only if citizens know it exists. This is why media engagement is so critical. A message that reaches lakhs through newspapers and television can save countless families from ruin. Every citizen must remember a few basic rules. Never share

your OTP. Never click on unknown links. Always verify urgent financial requests by calling back. And remember that no legitimate authority will ever demand money over the phone or threaten "digital arrest." Cybercrime is the epidemic of the digital age. Its cure is not a vaccine but vigilance. The government has built the helplines and recovery systems. Now, citizens must build awareness. Share this message. Warn the elderly in your family. The fraudster's greatest weapon is ignorance. Disarm them.

National Agriculture Market (e-NAM): 'Digital Transformation Of Agricultural Trade In India'

Press Information Bureau

Agriculture has long constituted a foundational pillar of India's socio-economic structure, sustaining nearly half of the country's workforce and shaping its developmental trajectory. Agricultural marketing in India has historically evolved through a network of regulated mandis established under the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) framework, facilitating the structured, organized exchange of agricultural commodities across regions.

Prior to 2016, agricultural trade remained largely confined within these mandi systems across States and Union Territories, with each market governed by its own regulatory structure. APMC, as a decentralized model, facilitated robust local trading but also revealed limitations in inter-state market integration and broader market access. With the expansion and diversification of agricultural production, the need for a more integrated market structure that enhances market access, improves efficiency, and ensures transparent price discovery has become increasingly evident. In this context, the Government launched the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) in April 2016 as a pan-India electronic trading platform to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. By digitally integrating existing mandis, e-NAM enables seamless online trading, transparent price discovery, and broader market access for farmers, traders, and buyers nationwide.

One Nation, One Market: The Digital Engine of e-NAM

The e-NAM digital ecosystem comprises a multi-layered architecture encompassing a web portal, mobile application, dedicated helpline, human support infrastructure, and AI-enabled quality assessment systems. eNAM facilitates farmers' access to a broader and more diverse pool of buyers, thereby strengthening opportunities for improved price realization. It encourages the adoption of formal digital payment systems, contributing to greater financial inclusion and transactional efficiency within the agricultural marketing ecosystem.

The e-NAM Web Portal: End-to-End Digital Agricultural Marketing

The e-NAM portal (enam.gov.in) facilitates end-to-end digital agricultural marketing by seamlessly linking mandis to a unified national market platform for the electronic trading of agricultural commodities. Its expanding network reflects increasing market integration, with the number of connected mandis rising from 1,389 in 2024 to 1,656 as of March 2026, spanning 23 States and 4 Union Territories.

Since its launch (2016), e-NAM has facilitated significant growth in agricultural trade. Cumulatively, from 2016 to March 2026, the platform has enabled the trading of 13.25 crore metric tonnes of commodities, generating a total trade value of 4.84 lakh crore, reflecting its expanding scale and growing participation. Furthermore, the Government provides financial assistance of up to 75 lakh per mandi to support infrastructure development, strengthening the integration of mandis with the digital ecosystem, and improving overall market efficiency. This growth is also evident in its increasing stakeholder base. As of March, 2026, the platform has registered over 1.80 crore farmers, 2.73 lakh traders, and 4,724 Farmer-Producer Organizations (FPOs), indicating its widening outreach.

The portal supports the entire agricultural trade lifecycle, encompassing digital gate entry, lot creation with unique identifiers, quality assaying, competitive online bidding, real-time bid tracking, price discovery, and direct electronic payments to farmers' bank accounts.

Additionally, it incorporates a live dashboard that offers real-time insights into commodity-wise trade volumes, mandi-level price trends, stakeholder registrations, and inter-state trade flows, thereby enhancing transparency and enabling informed decision-making.

e-NAM Portal-Key Digital Features
Single-window service: Commodity arrivals, quality assaying, bidding, payment,



all on one platform

Unique Lot ID tracking: Each lot tracked from gate entry to final sale via mobile

Live price dashboard: Real-time commodity prices, mandi arrivals, trade volumes, publicly accessible

12-language interface: Hindi, English, Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu, Bengali, Tamil, Odia and others

Secondary sale module: Enables resale of already-purchased lots within the platform

Inter-state trade facility: State Unified License enables traders to bid across State boundaries

From Clicks to Crops: e-NAM on the Move

The e-NAM mobile app, launched in October 2016, complements the web portal by providing a simplified, mobile-friendly interface for accessing trading and market-related services. It extends the platform's reach to smartphone users, enabling farmers, traders, and other stakeholders to access market information and participate in trading activities in a timely and location-independent manner. As of December 2025, the application offers free price information for 247 notified commodities, enabling informed, timely decision-making.

A key advancement in the platform's evolution was the introduction of the Platform of Platforms (PoP) on 14 July 2022. This technology-driven framework integrates a wide range of services through a unified digital interface accessible via the e-NAM mobile application. Through PoP, users can access services across the agricultural value chain, including logistics, warehousing,

quality assurance, grading and packaging, agri-inputs, financial and insurance services, and advisory support such as weather updates and crop forecasting.

Furthermore, the platform enables integration with e-commerce platforms and private agri-market players, thereby broadening market access and strengthening end-to-end trading and allied services

Voices to Solutions: Empowering Users in the e-NAM Ecosystem

The e-NAM provides a dedicated support and grievance redressal mechanism for farmers, traders, and other stakeholders. Users can access assistance through a toll-free helpline (1800 270 0224), which serves as the primary support channel nationwide, as well as through official email IDs such as nam@sfac.in and enam.helpdesk@gmail.com.

The platform offers an online grievance redressal system that allows users to submit queries and complaints directly through the portal. This integrated support framework ensures the timely resolution of issues and continuous technical assistance, particularly for farmers and first-time users navigating the digital marketplace.

The e-payment system under e-NAM constitutes a critical component of its digital architecture, enabling seamless financial transactions within agricultural markets. By integrating trading and payment settlement into a unified electronic workflow, the platform transforms traditional mandi operations and enhances transactional efficiency. Under this system, sale proceeds are directly

transferred to farmers' registered bank accounts upon completion of the trade, thereby reducing dependence on intermediaries and streamlining settlement. Payments are processed electronically, ensuring timely, secure, and transparent transactions.

The platform integrates multiple digital payment modes, including NEFT, RTGS, internet banking, and UPI, enabling it to adapt across states. Furthermore, the e-payment system promotes financial inclusion by formalizing transactions and generating verifiable financial records. These records can facilitate farmers' access to institutional credit and other financial services.

Strengthening Post-Harvest Infrastructure through e-NAM and e-NAM Integration

The growing emphasis on strengthening post-harvest management has highlighted the need to integrate scientific storage systems with efficient market access mechanisms. In this context, the Electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (e-NWR) system has been integrated with e-NAM to enable a more seamless and efficient agricultural marketing framework. The Electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (e-NWR) system constitutes a significant institutional reform in post-harvest agricultural management by enabling the digital documentation, transfer, and monetization of stored produce. Introduced under the Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2007, it functions as a secure electronic instrument that certifies ownership of commodities stored in warehouses accredited by the

Key Takeaways

- 1,656 mandis integrated across 23 States and 4 Union Territories by March 2026.
- Over 1.80 crore farmers, 2.73 lakh traders, and 4,724 Farmer-Producer Organizations were registered on the eNAM platform by March, 2026.
- Cumulative trade of 13.25 crore metric tonnes, with a total value of 4.84 lakh crore, recorded between 2016 and March, 2026.
- Trade value increased from 3.19 lakh crore in 2024 to 4.84 lakh crore in 2026, indicating growing scale and deeper market engagement.
- By March, 2026, 204.76 lakh metric tonnes of agricultural produce had been traded in recent periods, reflecting sustained operational momentum.
- 247 commodities are covered under mobile-based price information services through the e-NAM app.

Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA).

Building upon the traditional Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (NWR), the e-NWR system enhances transparency, traceability, and ease of transfer, thereby facilitating the trading of commodities without physical movement. This establishes a critical linkage between storage and market access. Therefore, e-NWR facilitates scientific storage and ownership certification, and e-NAM provides a nationwide digital platform for efficient and transparent trading of such stored produce.

Within this integrated framework, farmers, traders, and Farmer-Producer Organizations (FPOs) can store their produce in WDRA-accredited warehouses, obtain e-NWRs, and sell directly on the e-NAM platform. This reduces dependence on physical transportation to mandis, thereby lowering logistics costs and post-harvest losses, while also mitigating distress sales.

Furthermore, e-NWRs can be used as collateral to access institutional credit, enhancing liquidity and enabling stakeholders to optimize the timing of sales. When combined with e-NAM's price discovery and competitive bidding mechanisms, this integration strengthens market access and better price realization.

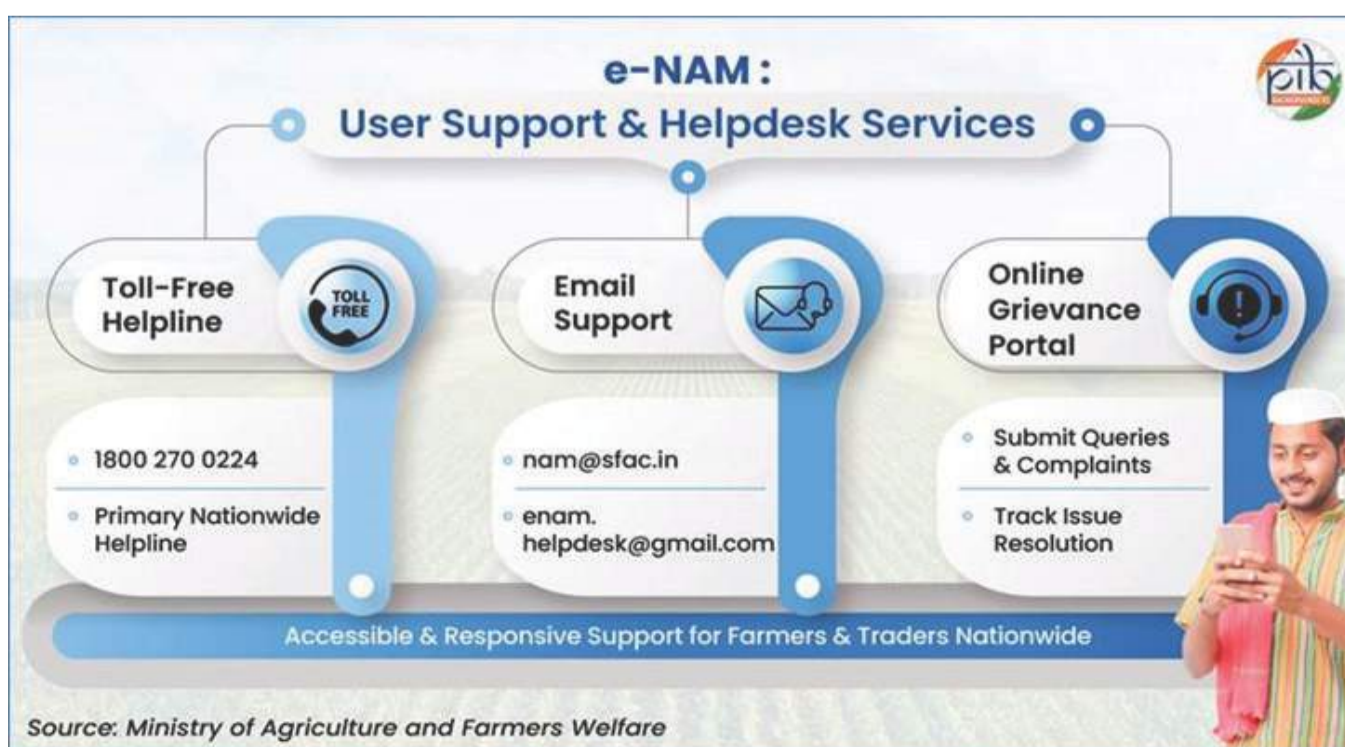
The system also promotes quality-based trading through standardized grading and assaying of stored produce. By aligning quality assurance with market access, the e-NWR-e-NAM integration enhances trust, encourages standardization, and contributes to more efficient and transparent agricultural markets.

Conclusion

The National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) marks a significant step in the ongoing transformation of agricultural marketing in India. By digitally integrating mandis nationwide and facilitating transparent, technology-driven trade, the platform has strengthened market linkages and expanded opportunities for farmers and other stakeholders.

Its integrated digital ecosystem, comprising the web portal, mobile application, Platform of Platforms (PoP), and associated support infrastructure, has improved price discovery, broadened market access, and encouraged the adoption of digital transactions. Complementary initiatives such as the Electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (e-NWR) have further strengthened the value chain by linking storage, finance, and market access.

With its expanding scale, increasing stakeholder participation, and rising trade volumes, e-NAM is contributing to the emergence of a more integrated, efficient, and transparent agricultural marketing system. As the platform continues to evolve, it is well-positioned to deepen market connectivity, enhance value realization for farmers, and advance the vision of a unified national market.



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

Mission Poshan 2.0 Strengthening India's Nutrition Ecosystem

Press Information Bureau

India's Mission for Nutrition Security Launched on March 8, 2018, POSHAN Abhiyaan (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) is a flagship, multi-ministerial mission to place nutrition at the centre of India's national development agenda. The mission marked a shift in India's approach from treating nutrition primarily as a welfare concern, to recognising it as a national priority linked to human capital development, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and long-term growth.

Over the past eight years, POSHAN Abhiyaan has transformed India's nutrition governance architecture - embedding convergence, digital monitoring and community mobilisation into the framework.

Anchored in the Ministry of Women & Child Development, the POSHAN Abhiyaan brings together more than 26 ministries and departments under a unified nutrition framework, recognising that malnutrition cannot be addressed by the health or food sector alone - it requires simultaneous action on sanitation, education, water, women's empowerment, and income.

Crucially, POSHAN Abhiyaan was designed around a lifecycle and preventive approach - rather than solely addressing acute malnutrition after it occurs. The mission places special emphasis on the first 1,000 days - from conception to two years of age - as this period is critical for physical growth, brain development and long-term health outcomes.

Policy Evolution: From POSHAN Abhiyaan to Mission Poshan 2.0

For several decades, nutrition interventions in India were implemented through multiple schemes, targeting different groups, across different ministries. While these addressed different aspects of nutrition, the approach remained largely sector specific. Over time, the need for convergence and coordinated implementation was recognised.

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), launched in 1975, provided the foundational platform for supplementary nutrition, health services and early childhood care through Anganwadi Centres.

Recognising that the health of a mother is a critical factor in ensuring the health and nutrition of her child, in 2017, the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) was implemented. This scheme introduced maternity benefits through direct cash transfers, thus providing financial support for pregnant and lactating mothers. In the same year, NITI Aayog's National Nutrition Strategy (2017) emphasised convergence, improved monitoring and community participation, and recommended a mission-mode approach.

Building on this, the POSHAN Abhiyaan was launched in 2018 as India's National Nutrition Mission to bring multiple ministries and schemes under a unified framework with time-bound targets, digital monitoring and a Jan Andolan approach.

The Union Budget 2021-22 further consolidated India's fragmented nutrition initiatives under Mission Poshan 2.0 (Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0), creating a unified and integrated framework. This restructuring subsumed the following schemes:

- Anganwadi Services
- Scheme for Adolescent Girls
- POSHAN Abhiyaan

The consolidation sharpened the focus on maternal nutrition, infant and young child feeding (IYCF) norms, and the treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)/ Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM). It also emphasised wellness through AYUSH-based practices to reduce wasting, stunting, anaemia and underweight prevalence.

The mission is re-structured and operates through the following primary verticals:

Nutrition Support for children, pregnant women & lactating mothers and adolescent girls

Early Childhood Care and Education (3-6 years) and early stimulation for (0-3 years)

Anganwadi Infrastructure including upgradation of centres into Saksham Anganwadi.

- (i) Nutrition Support

Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013. These norms have been revised in January 2023. The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity that provides for quality protein, healthy fats and micronutrients (Calcium, Zinc, Iron, Dietary Folate, Vitamin-B6 and Vitamin B-12). Extra Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Severely Acutely Malnourished (SAM) children as per National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).

Poshan Vatikas or Nutri-gardens are being set up at Anganwadi Centres, Government schools and Gram Panchayat lands. The initiative promotes diet diversity and the consumption of locally available nutritious food. These gardens provide easy and affordable access to fruits, vegetables, and medicinal plants.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have jointly released the Protocol for Management of Malnutrition in Children to manage malnourished children at the community level and reduce associated morbidity and mortality.

Under this protocol, Anganwadi Workers conduct growth monitoring and screening of children at Anganwadi Centres and during community outreach activities. Children identified with severe malnutrition are referred to health facilities and Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs) for medical assessment and treatment. Children without medical complications are managed at home using wholesome, locally available nutritious food, along with supportive medical care.

The protocol includes a screening process for children aged 6 months to 6 years who are identified as Severely Acute Malnourished (SAM) or Severely Underweight (SUW). After screening, children with medical complications are referred to Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs) or hospital facilities for further treatment and care.

(ii) Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Integration

The National ECCE Policy 2013, framed by Ministry of Women and Child Development, emphasises the "need to ensure Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for every child below six years across the country".

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 sets forth an ambitious new 5+3+3+4 framework beginning with a 5-year Foundational Stage (3 years of preschool / Anganwadi + Classes 1-2), thereby ECCE for children aged 3-6 has been integrated into the foundational stage of 5 years. It emphasises play-based, interactive learning to foster cognitive, social, physical, and socio-emotional development.

The policy seeks to ensure that every child enters primary school with essential school readiness skills. The NEP has been operationalised through the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage, which outlines Aims, Curricular Goals, Competencies and Learning Outcomes, Pedagogy, Assessments and more, for children from 3 to 8 years.

Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) launched the Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi (PBPB) initiative with the aim to improve the quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) through the Anganwadi system by equipping Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) with high-quality infrastructure, play equipment, and well-trained Anganwadi Workers (AWWs). This is in consonance with the recommendations for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) under the National ECCE Policy, 2013 and the National Education Policy 2020.

Capacity building of AWWs has been envisioned as the first step towards improving the quality of ECCE. Under PBPB initiative, 2-tier training module has been adopted wherein Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs), Supervisors and Additional Resource Persons etc. are trained as State Level Master Trainers (SLMTs) with the support of Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development (SPNIWCD) and SLMTs, in turn, impart training to AWWs.

As on 31st March 2026, 41,645 SLMTs and 10,58,317 AWWs have been trained in Round-1 in ECCE pedagogy and delivery of nutritional services. Round-2 of the training has been started in November, 2025 for reinforcing Anganwadi workers' understanding on ECCE and nutrition, innovations in Poshan, new features on Poshan Tracker, feeding practices, and micronutrient deficiencies etc.

In order to improve the quality of ECCE, MoWCD launched in March 2024, Navchetana - a National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation for children up to 3 years of age, and Aadharshila - National Curriculum for ECCE for children of 3 to 6 years age. Both the frameworks are available in 12 Indian languages viz Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, and Telugu.

Navchetana aims to help children from birth to three years develop holistically, based on the three principles of:

- Serve and return,
- Caregivers three acts: Love, Talk, Play, and Positive Guidance

Navchetana provides 140 age and developmentally appropriate stimulating activities, in the form of a 36-month stimulation activity calendar, to be conducted by caregivers at home and Anganwadi workers during home visits for the holistic development of the children. Focus has also been given for the screening, inclusion and referrals of

Divyang children.

Aadharshila is driven by the pressing need for a contextual curriculum for children three to six years, that specifically offers Anganwadi Workers a guide grounded in Indian and international ECCE research.

Based on the imperative driven by NEP 2020, it aims to improve the quality of early childhood education transacted at the Anganwadi Centre. NCF-FS defines 5+1 domains of development (physical, socioemotional, cognitive including numeracy, cultural/aesthetic, language and literacy, as well as positive learning habits) which Aadharshila translates into 130+ activities for Anganwadi children, arranged into 4 weeks of initiation, 36 weeks of active learning and 8 weeks of recap and reinforcement.

Each week covers 6 days of activities, with Saturdays retained for free play, ECCE day and parental engagement. Each day covers 3 blocks of activities, spanning 4 hours including lunch and snack.

Aadharshila addresses how children learn in the early years, with a focus on playful joy-based learning, in preparation for primary school. It enables the use of playful classroom activities like conversations, storytelling, DIY and indigenous toys, children's songs and rhymes, music and movement, arts and crafts, indoor and outdoor games, nature interaction and field trips. It provides for a combination of activities, including in-centre and at-home, indoor and outdoor, child-led and educator-led etc.

Poshan Tracker, IT based platform, is being used for delivery of ECCE at AWCs. Based on Aadharshila, daily learning prompts are delivered to AWWs through Poshan Tracker in the form of over 249 videos, 190 voice notes and 159 unique ECCE activity PDFs for children aged 3-6 years. Based on Navchetana, 14 videos comprising 140 activities of early childhood stimulation for children aged 0-3 years have been developed to support structured home visits by AWWs and caregiver engagement.

Further, a fixed monthly ECCE Day is observed by all Anganwadi Centres in all States. Guidelines for conducting the fixed monthly ECCE days under various themes has been issued, which contains an indicative list of community engagement activities that can be conducted during the 12 monthly ECCE days. One event must be conducted per month, while flexibility remains with the States on topics and themes.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development also allocates Rs. 3000 per Anganwadi Centre per year for Pre-School Education (PSE) kits. This amount is to ensure adequate Teaching-Learning Material at each Anganwadi Centre, supplemented by States' own spending.

To facilitate the smooth transition of children into formal schooling system in Primary School / Grade 1, as well as to recognise Early Childhood Care and Education which they receive in Anganwadi Centres, a concept of Vidyardambh - Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Certificate has also been introduced in August 2025. All States and UTs have been requested to ensure that this certificate is issued to all eligible children receiving their pre-school education at Anganwadi Centres. As of March 2026, over 22 lakhs Vidyardambh certificates have been issued by States and UTs to children.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) and the Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSE&L), Ministry of Education, have issued on 3rd September 2025, joint Guidelines for Co-locating Anganwadi Centres within Government Primary Schools. In places where physical co-location is not feasible, AWCs should be mapped with the nearest school. Over 2.9 lakh centres have already integrated into school premises to ensure a seamless educational transition, from early childhood care to formal schooling.

Further, Anganwadi Workers (AWW) undertake home visits to educate the parents/caregivers on nutrition, health of mother and child and early childhood stimulation activities for ensuring child's holistic development. During the home visit, AWW also observes whether a child is achieving its developmental milestones or not in order to ensure early detection of any developmental delays. In this context, an IT enabled Home Visit scheduler has been integrated with Poshan Tracker App in April 2026. The new Home Visit Scheduler has the following key features:

It supports 23 structured home visits, extending coverage to pregnant women and children up to three years (4 during pregnancy, 4 in the first month postpartum, 7 from 2 months to 1 year, 5 from 1-2 years, and 3 from 2-3 years).

Auto scheduling of Home Visits for pregnant women and children from birth to 3 years.

Auto selection of video pertaining to nutritional and health advice for pregnant women and early childhood stimulation activities appropriate for the age of the child to be shown to parents and caregivers.

Auto selection of counselling tips / advice

to be given to pregnant women and parents and caregivers of a child regarding pregnancy, nutrition, health indicators to be observed, and early childhood stimulation activities to be conducted.

(iii) Saksham Upgradation

The Saksham Anganwadi initiative is concerned with improving service quality through upgradation of existing Anganwadi Centres. Under this, 2 lakh Anganwadi centres were sanctioned for strengthening with modern amenities such as LED screens, water purifiers, smart learning aids, and Poshan Vatikas (nutri-gardens).

Technology and Governance Transformation

A foundational contribution of POSHAN Abhiyaan to India's public administration has been the digital transformation of nutrition governance - positioning the programme among the most technologically advanced social sector initiatives in the country.

The Poshan Tracker: A Digital Platform for Nutrition Governance

Launched on 1st March 2021, the Poshan Tracker serves as the primary governance tool for monitoring infrastructure and service delivery. The application has facilitated near real-time data collection for Anganwadi Services, including the opening of Anganwadi Centres, daily attendance of children, ECCE activities, and growth monitoring.

Currently, the system monitors a universe that consists of Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers, Children up to 6 years of age, and Adolescent Girls. As on March 2026, the mission tracks nearly 14,03,170 Anganwadi Centres and approximately 8,95,29,425 eligible beneficiaries.

For its innovative contribution to public administration, the Ministry of Women and Child Development received the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2024.

Advanced Identity Verification and Transparency

The Ministry has launched 'Poshan Tracker' digital application, has enabled the Ministry and States & UTs to review the implementation of the scheme on various parameters including health and nutrition status of the children and to make course corrections.

For last mile tracking of Service Delivery, Facial Recognition System (FRS) has been introduced in Poshan Tracker Application and to ensure that benefit is given only to the intended beneficiary registered in the application. Aadhaar based tracking has enabled proper identification of beneficiaries, prevention of leakages and eliminating ghost entries.

Operational Efficiency: This technological integration has ensured that there are no shortages or delays in the delivery of supplementary nutrition or other related services under the programme.

Accessible Grievance Redressal Cell and Support

Poshan Helpline (14408) operationalised in November 2022 has been made available for registering concerns. Through the help line, a beneficiary can raise a concern about the services offered. The helpline is available in 17 languages. The earlier helpline 14408 was withdrawn, and 1515 became the active number for POSHAN Abhiyaan and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) grievances/queries with effect from November 2025.

Community Engagement: Nutrition as a Jan Andolan

The defining character of POSHAN Abhiyaan is its positioning of nutrition improvement as a Jan Andolan - a genuine people's movement rather than a government-administered programme.

The mission recognises that lasting behavioural change around infant feeding practices, dietary diversity, antenatal care, hand hygiene, and institutional health-seeking can only be achieved through active community ownership and ground-level participation. Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada are among the largest nutrition centric community mobilisation campaigns, and are conducted annually in designated months, to reach out to the masses to promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity.

Poshan Pakhwada (April 2026)

Observed annually since 2018, Poshan Pakhwada is a two-week intensive outreach campaign conducted in April to strengthen community mobilisation and reinforce key nutrition behaviours under POSHAN Abhiyaan.

In 2026, the 8th edition of Poshan Pakhwada is being held from 9th to 23rd April. Scientific evidence indicates that more than 85% of brain development occurs by the age of six years, with the most rapid growth taking place during the first 1000 days - a crucial period for optimal brain growth, physical development and holistic well-being.

Recognising the critical importance of care and nutrition for children in the early stage of life, the 8th Poshan Pakhwada seeks

Key Takeaways

- POSHAN Abhiyaan is India's flagship National Nutrition Mission focused on improving nutrition outcomes through convergence, technology and community mobilisation.
- Use of digital tools like the Poshan Tracker Application now enables near real-time monitoring of over 14 lakh Anganwadi Centres and nearly 9 crore beneficiaries under the mission.
- Through its Jan Andolan approach, POSHAN Abhiyaan has mobilised communities nationwide, with initiatives like Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada generating over 150 crore activities.

to deepen the Jan Andolan by focusing on a scientifically critical and transformative theme "Maximizing Brain Development in the First Six Years of Life" and strengthen awareness among families and communities about practices that support healthy growth and brain development.

It aims to shift the narrative from "nutrition for health" to "nutrition and early childhood stimulation for optimal brain development" through the following Central Theme: Maximizing Brain Development in the First Six Years of Life.

The key focus areas under this year's theme includes:

- Mother and Child Nutrition
- Early Stimulation for Brain Development
- Play-based Education in Early Years
- Role of Parents & Community in Minimizing Screen Time

Garnering Community Support for Stronger Anganwadi

The 7th Poshan Pakhwada (8-22 April 2025) focused on four outcome-oriented themes: the first 1,000 days of life, promotion of the Poshan Tracker beneficiary module for self-registration, implementation of community-based management of malnutrition (CMAM) protocols, and healthy lifestyle promotion to address childhood obesity.

A wide range of activities were undertaken across the country, including home visits, growth monitoring drives, community awareness programmes, health camps, nukkad natak (street plays) and convergence events involving multiple ministries and departments.

Poshan Pakhwada continues to serve as an important platform for grassroots engagement, leveraging the Anganwadi network and community institutions to promote sustained behaviour change and strengthen last-mile delivery of nutrition services.

Rashtriya Poshan Maah

To promote nutrition awareness, Poshan Maah is celebrated every September as a nationwide Jan Andolan. The campaign is implemented across all States and Union Territories through Gram Panchayats, Urban Local Bodies, schools, health facilities and Anganwadi Centres in convergence with partner ministries.

The 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah was launched by the Prime Minister on 17th September 2025 from Dhar, Madhya Pradesh, along with the Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan. The initiative is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The 2025 Rashtriya Poshan Maah focused on promoting nutrition literacy and healthy lifestyles. Key themes included maternal nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and reduction in sugar and oil consumption to address obesity.

Conclusion

As POSHAN Abhiyaan completes eight years, the mission reflects the growing emphasis on convergence, technology-enabled governance and community participation in addressing nutrition challenges. The programme's evolution demonstrates the importance of coordinated action across sectors, strengthened service delivery platforms and sustained behavioural change efforts in improving nutrition outcomes.

The transition to Mission Poshan 2.0 underscores a continued focus on improving service quality, expanding early childhood care and strengthening last-mile delivery systems. By integrating nutrition with health, early childhood care, education and community engagement, the mission adopts a comprehensive approach to supporting vulnerable populations.

Nutrition is closely linked to the development of human capital in the country, as improved nutrition contributes to better health, learning outcomes and productivity. As India advances towards the vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047, continued investments in nutrition, early childhood development and service delivery systems will remain critical for building a healthy, productive and resilient population.

Legal aid teams inspect Pulwama jail for early release of eligible inmates

KT News Desk

Shopian, Apr 14: In a coordinated effort to strengthen access to justice and ensure timely relief to eligible inmates, the Legal Aid Defence Counsels (LADC) of Shopian and Pulwama conducted a joint inspection of the Special Jail, Pulwama.

The visit was undertaken with the primary objective of identifying cases suitable for early release in accordance with the categories outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the forthcoming Under Trial Review Committee meeting.

The joint inspection team included Chief LADC Shopian, Rafiq Ahmad Ganie, along with Assistant LADC Shopian, Aamir Ayoub.

Representing Pulwama were Chief LADC Mehrajuddin Wani, Assistant LADC

Ashiq Ahmad, and Junior Assistant DLSA Pulwama, Shakir Ahmad.

The team was facilitated by the Jail Superintendent, Dr. Aijaz Ahmad, who provided comprehensive insights into the inmate population and extended full cooperation during the inspection process.

During the visit, the LADC teams conducted a detailed and systematic review of individual inmate cases. The assessment focused on identifying prisoners eligible for consideration under various SOP categories, including undertrials who have completed half of the maximum prescribed sentence, first-time offenders involved in minor offences, elderly or infirm inmates, prisoners granted bail but unable to furnish surety, and other relevant categories specified under UTRC guidelines.

Modi, Trump discuss bilateral co-operation

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held discussions with US President Donald Trump on bilateral co-operation, including several big-ticket deals, US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor said.

Some big-ticket deals, including on energy, are expected between India and the US in the next few days and weeks, the ambassador said.

The issue of the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz in West Asia also came up during their 40-minute phone conversation, according to Gor.



It was the third phone call between the two leaders this year and the first after the recent peace talks between Iran and the US.

They spoke on February 2 to announce progress in

a trade deal, and on March 24 to discuss the situation in West Asia. The call ended with Trump telling PM, "I just want you to know we all love you", the US ambassador said.

First direct talks between Lebanon & Israel in decades take place in Washington

AP

Washington, Apr 14: Lebanon and Israel held their first direct diplomatic talks in decades on Tuesday in Washington following more than a month of war between Israel and the Hezbollah militant group, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio calling it a "historic opportunity" but making clear no breakthrough agreement was immediately expected.

Rubio said the Trump administration is "very happy" to be facilitating the discussions, while noting that "we understand we're working against decades of history and complexities" that will not be quickly resolved. Hezbollah opposes the direct talks and was not represented, and the group appeared to step up its fire on northern Israel as the talks began.

"But we can begin to move forward with a framework

where something can happen, something very positive, something very permanent, so that the people of Lebanon can have the kind of future they deserve, and so that the people of Israel can live without fear," Rubio said.

Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun expressed hope that the talks would lead to an "end of the suffering of the Lebanese people in general, and those in the south in particular." "Stability will not return to the south if Israel continues to occupy its lands," he added in a statement reported by AFP.

"The only solution lies in the Lebanese army re-deploying up to the internationally recognised border, and so being solely responsible for the security of the area and the safety of its residents, without the partnership of any other party."

Rubio and US Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz attended the opening of the

session at the State Department that is being led by US Ambassador to Lebanon Michel Issa, Israeli Ambassador to the US Yechiel Leiter and Lebanese Ambassador to the US Nada Hamadeh Moawad.

Hezbollah pushes back as Lebanese government hopes for end to war

The Lebanese government hopes the talks will pave the way to an end to the war. While Iran has set ending the wars in Lebanon and the region as a condition for talks with the United States, Lebanon insists on representing itself.

Iran-backed Hezbollah and other critics maintain that Lebanon's government lacks leverage and that it should instead back the position of Iran, Hezbollah's key ally and patron.

Wafiq Safa, a high-ranking member of the militant group's political council, told The Associated Press that it will not

abide by any agreements made in the talks.

Hezbollah enjoys wide influence in Beirut's southern suburbs, as well as large swaths of the country's southern and eastern provinces. Hezbollah-allied politicians hold two Cabinet minister positions, though the group's ties have soured with Lebanon's top political authorities, who have been critical of Hezbollah's decision to enter the war last month and who have since criminalized the group's military activities in the country.

On the day of the talks, incoming fire triggered nonstop drone and rocket alert sirens in Israeli communities near the Lebanese border. Hezbollah so far on Tuesday has claimed 24 attacks on northern Israel and on Israeli troops in southern Lebanon.

At least 2,124 people have been killed in Israeli strikes in Lebanon, the Health Ministry said, including hundreds of

women and children. More than 1 million people are displaced. The deadliest day of the war took place last week, when Israel launched 100 airstrikes across Lebanon in 10 minutes, including in the heart of the capital, killing over 350 people.

Some Israeli officials have invaded southern Lebanon, which some Israeli officials have said aims to create a "security zone" from the border to the Litani River, some 30 kilometers (20 miles) to the north.

Israel's defense minister says hundreds of thousands of people uprooted from southern Lebanon will not be allowed to return home until the area is demilitarized and Israel believes its northern communities are safe. Hezbollah, though weakened in its last war with Israel that ended in November 2024, still fires drones, rockets and artillery daily into northern Israel and on ground troops inside Lebanon.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Constitution fully

"We have decided that once the BJP government is formed, within 45 days, the 600 acres of land needed for fencing will be allocated to the Government of India and the work will be completed," he said. (KNO)

Serving needy

not merely feed the hungry, you upheld the dignity of millions. And today, let us take a pledge that this service will never stop. The kitchen of Apna Bhojanalaya will never grow cold and every hand in our society will give to the best of its capacity to those who need it most," he said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor called upon every section of society to join the war against drug abuse.

Jai Dev, Akhil Bharatiya Chatrawas Pramukh, Sewa Bharti; Parmest, Sangathan Mantri, Sewa Bharti; Prof. Rakesh Jha, President; Pradeep Kapoor, General Secretary; Sushil Kapoor, Bhojanalay Sanchalak; Trilok Singh Negi, Ajay Takoo and other officer bearers and volunteers of Sewa Bharti J&K were present.

Arvind Gupta, Member of Legislative Assembly from Jammu West; Amitava Chatterjee, Managing Director and CEO, J&K Bank Limited; Dr Ashutosh Gupta, Principal GMC Jammu; Dr Gautam Mengi, Dr Ritu Singh and other prominent citizens and senior officials also attended the ceremony. (KNO)

No pre-set limit

the number of directly elected seats cannot be less than the existing 90, since the total of 114 includes the 24 seats reserved for Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir Assembly.

Unlike the post-2019 delimitation, when the number of seats was already fixed in the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, no such restriction has been placed on the proposed Delimitation Commission.

Nominated quota

The proposed legislations provide that the number of women members nominated by the Lieutenant Governor shall be increased to three, but only after the readjustment of constituencies takes effect.

They also provide that the number of seats for Kashmiri migrants shall be increased to three from the existing two but this too will become applicable only after delimitation.

It means that post-delimitation LG would have powers to nominate seven members from existing five. Currently, LG is empowered to nominate five MLAs- two women, two migrants and one refugee from Pakistan Occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

This provision will become applicable only after the Delimitation Commission's report comes into effect.

No impact on current Assembly

According to the proposed amendments, the readjustment shall not affect representation in the Legislative Assembly until the dissolution of the existing Assembly. It further provides that until such readjustment takes effect, any election to the Legislative Assembly may be held on the basis of the territorial constituencies existing before such readjustment.

33% Women Reservation

The amendments also specify that Jammu & Kashmir will have 33 percent women's

reservation in its Assembly, but only after constituencies are redrawn through delimitation. The reservation for women will last for 15 years from the date the 106th Constitutional Amendment (2023) began, unless Parliament decides to extend it further. The reserved seats for women will not be fixed permanently; they will be rotated among different constituencies in J&K (and other States/UTs) over time.

Lok Sabha

The proposed laws provide that delimitation Commission will decide about Jammu & Kashmir's share in Lok Sabha among the Union Territories and fix their boundaries.

However, the number of seats to all Union Territories cannot be more than 35, the proposed bills state. Currently, Union Territories have 19 Lok Sabha seats. (KNO)

LG Sinha dedicates

it as a step towards turning the riverfront into a vibrant public and tourist space.

Under the Urban Challenge Fund, he said, two key initiatives of real estate monetisation of Phase-I and extension of the riverfront from Bikram Chowk Bridge to Har Ki Paudi are being taken up, which will help position the riverfront as a premier recreational hub and economic centre.

"Our vision is to create inclusive, accessible and enriching spaces for every citizen. The Tawi Riverfront embodies this ethos with a seamless blend of tradition and modernity, where development harmonises with nature," he said.

Calling Jammu an "ancient temple town" rooted in spirituality and culture, the Lieutenant Governor said cities along rivers preserve timeless civilisational values. "For millennia, this land has attracted saints, philosophers and artists, enriching its cultural and spiritual legacy," he said.

Referring to development efforts in recent years under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sinha said initiatives have been taken to further enhance Jammu's grandeur and cultural consciousness.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor joined citizens for the Tawi Aarti, administered an anti-drug pledge and felicitated winners of a traditional dangal. Several public representatives, senior officials, religious leaders and citizens from different walks of life attended the event. (KNO)

Won't tolerate

them is the weather, as it is beyond human control. While we can manage other factors, we cannot control when it rains, when the sun shines, when winds blow, or when hailstorms occur. However, we can try to reduce its impact," he said.

Abdullah said the government has taken steps in this direction and strengthened the weather-based crop insurance scheme. "However, I have a concern that our farmers are not fully utilising it," he said.

He said the scheme has so far seen very limited participation and urged farmers to take full advantage of it. "In the coming days, we will also implement a weather-based crop insurance scheme for horticulture. I hope our orchardists and landowners will benefit from it," he said.

The Chief Minister said he will take up the matter of establishing a Dry Port at Jablipora

Fruit Mandi with the Centre to facilitate direct export of local products to foreign countries.

"While visiting an exhibition here, a progressive woman farmer told me that although she exports her products to Dubai, Abu Dhabi and other countries, she first has to send them to Delhi for customs clearance. After packaging, the products are shipped abroad, which creates several difficulties and sometimes leads to damage," he said.

He said the farmer demanded a Dry Port near Jablipora Fruit Mandi in Anantnag. "I assure the people that we will take up this matter with the Centre on priority and seek approval for establishing a Dry Port in the area so that exports from here become easier," Omar said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah inaugurated a state-of-the-art Fruit & Vegetable Processing Centre at the International Fruit Market in Jablipora, Anantnag.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education Sakeena Masood Itoo, Minister for Agriculture Production and Rural Development Javid Ahmad Dar, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Srigufwara-Bijbehara Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri, Additional Chief Secretary to CM, Dheeraj Gupta besides other legislators, senior officers and officials.

The fruit market has been established at an estimated cost of 4.30 crore under the CAPEX budget, with the objective of strengthening post-harvest infrastructure and enhancing value addition for horticultural produce in the area. The project has been executed by the Jammu and Kashmir Horticultural Produce Marketing & Processing Corporation Ltd.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said the establishment of such modern infrastructure would go a long way in reducing post-harvest losses and ensuring better returns for farmers. He added that the government is focused on building a robust value chain in the horticulture sector, enabling local produce to compete in national and international markets.

Designed as a comprehensive facility, the centre is equipped with a range of modern components aimed at minimizing losses and improving product quality. It comprises a Fruit and Vegetable (F&V) canning and packaging unit, a dedicated pack house for sorting and grading, a mushroom processing unit, and a tomato puree manufacturing facility.

In addition, the centre includes a high-capacity fruit drying unit with a processing capability of 400-500 kg per hour, a 20 metric tonne freezing chamber, and advanced packaging and storage facilities. These components are expected to significantly enhance processing capacity, extend shelf life, and open new market avenues for local growers and agri-entrepreneurs.

The Chief Minister observed that the government is committed to transforming agriculture and allied sectors into sustainable engines of growth, with a special focus on value addition, innovation and market access. He emphasized that initiatives like this would not only strengthen the rural economy but also generate employment opportunities for youth.

self-help groups.

He took keen interest in the innovative practices, modern techniques and locally developed products on display. Appreciating their efforts, he encouraged them to adopt modern technologies and diversify into high-value crops and allied activities. He reiterated that the government would continue to provide necessary support, including training, financial assistance and market linkages, to ensure that grassroots innovations evolve into sustainable success stories across Jammu and Kashmir. (KNO)

CM thanks PM

has approved the construction of the unidirectional twin-tube Sudhmahadev-Dranga Tunnel (12.85 km, including 2-lane plus paved shoulder approaches) and the twin-tube Singhpora-Vailoo Tunnel (38.61 km, including 2-lane plus paved shoulder approaches) on NH-244 in Jammu & Kashmir, at an estimated total cost of 9,779.42 crore.

Recalling his earlier intervention, the Chief Minister said that in June last year, he had written to the Prime Minister and the Union Minister highlighting delays in the projects and seeking their urgent consideration. He had urged that the projects be taken up under the NH (O) scheme of the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways on priority to ensure their timely completion in line with the broader vision for the development of Jammu & Kashmir and the nation.

In his communication, the Chief Minister had also expressed concern that while other NH projects on NH-244 were progressing under NHIDCL, delays in these two critical tunnels were impeding the expected socio-economic benefits for the Chenab region and hindering its efforts to overcome economic backwardness.

J&K observes

Governor Manoj Sinha wrote on X that Baisakhi is a reminder of the contributions of farmers and the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. "This festival stands as a reminder of the sacrifices of our farmers," he said, urging people to follow the ideals of unity and selfless service.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also greeted the people on X, saying the festival symbolizes prosperity, hope and communal harmony.

"Such occasions strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and inclusiveness," he said. (KNO)

J&K, Ladakh fall

2673.1 MWs were from the renewable energy.

It also said that out of the total allocated energy, the regions were utilizing 95.13 MWs of nuclear and 1115.88 MWs of hydel energy.

The figures also reveal that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in the month of January-2026 were relying on nearly 66 percent of imported power.

From the state allocated share, both the regions were allocated with 1372.97 MWs and the central share was 2210.22 MWs. Furthermore, J&K in the month was importing 184.25 MWs from the private sector.

Pahalgam Terror Attack Anniversary

Indian Embassy plans exhibition on Capitol Hill to amplify Bharat's zero tolerance policy

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Apr 14: The Indian Embassy in the United States is set to organise an exhibition on Capitol Hill to highlight the human cost of terrorism, with a focus on the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 persons, mostly tourists dead.

The exhibition, themed "The Human Cost of Terrorism", according to the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) will coincide with the first anniversary of the Pahalgam terror attack.

According to sources, the event will be held at a public venue near Capitol Hill and will present visual and documented accounts of victims of terror attacks, along with details about groups accused by India of orchestrating cross-border terrorism.

The April 22 attack, one of the deadliest against civilians in India in recent years, was initially claimed by The Resistance Front (TRF), which is considered a proxy of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

Officials said the exhibition will underline India's position on terrorism and seek to draw international attention to what it describes as a sustained pattern of cross-border terrorism affecting not only India but other countries as well.

The display is expected to include references to past attacks, including those in Mumbai, Pulwama and Uri, as part of a broader narrative on the global impact of terrorism.

The Pahalgam attack had triggered a sharp escalation

in tensions between India and Pakistan. In the aftermath, India announced a series of diplomatic measures, including suspension of certain bilateral engagements and restrictions on trade and visas.

On May 7, India launched 'Operation Sindoor', targeting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan responded with strikes the following day, leading to skirmishes between the two sides.

Over the next few days, India carried out precision strikes on multiple sites, including facilities linked to banned outfits such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed. The hostilities ended on May 10 following a ceasefire understanding between the two countries.

Subsequently, Union Home Minister Amit Shah informed Parliament that three terrorists involved in the Pahalgam attack had been killed in operation in Srinagar woods. He identified them as Suleman alias Faizal, Afghani and Jibran, describing them as wanted LeT operatives.

Officials said the upcoming exhibition is part of India's continued diplomatic outreach to emphasise a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism and to build global consensus against it.

Similar exhibitions have earlier been organised by Indian missions, including at the United Nations headquarters in New York, to present the impact of terrorism through curated material and survivor accounts. (KNO)

The officials earlier in the month had informed that Jammu and Kashmir is importing electricity ranging from 2900 MWs to 3100 MWs during the peak hours.

It also said that during the other hours, the region is importing electricity ranging from 2400 MWs to 2800 MWs.

The official however had clarified that the power import includes all the sources including the power allocated from the centre and other Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). (KNO)

CM Abdullah calls

and Kashmir, has played a significant role in advancing financial inclusion.

Reflecting candidly on the region's economic landscape, the Chief Minister said that Jammu & Kashmir may be relatively small in terms of geographical size, market scale, and natural resources compared to other states, but it is rich in opportunities. He emphasized that sectors such as MSMEs, tourism, agriculture, and horticulture offer immense potential for growth and investment.

Highlighting the region's transformative trajectory, he said Jammu & Kashmir is witnessing sustained progress driven by infrastructure development, tourism expansion, agricultural advancement, and a growing entrepreneurial ecosystem. He reiterated that the banking sector plays a pivotal role in enabling credit access, promoting digital finance, and supporting enterprise growth.

Speaking on tourism, the Chief Minister described it as a sector close to the collective aspirations of both the government and private stakeholders. He pointed out the need to enhance customer experience at key destinations such as the Gulmarg Gondola, suggesting improvements in queue management, introduction of time-slot based ticketing, and plugging operational gaps. He noted that such areas present opportunities for collaboration between the government and financial institutions like Axis Bank, particularly in deploying technology-driven solutions.

At the same time, he underscored that while tourism is important, agriculture and horticulture remain the largest contributors to Jammu & Kashmir's GSDP. He called for innovative partnerships with the banking sector to deliver tailored financial solutions, strengthen value chains, and improve market access for farmers and horticulturists.

The Chief Minister also highlighted opportunities in urban governance, including municipal services such as collections and disbursements, where banking institutions can play a greater role through efficient and technology-driven systems. He acknowledged that banks operating in Jammu & Kashmir are familiar with the region's unique challenges and encouraged them to innovate within this context.

Calling for stronger collaboration, he urged the banking sector to expand its role in startup financing, MSMEs, and youth entrepreneurship, and to increase its footprint in underserved regions while supporting key sectors such as handicrafts and tourism through CSR initiatives.

Reaffirming the government's commitment, the Chief Minister stated that Jammu & Kashmir is ready to partner with financial institutions to build a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready economy.

Our govt committed to delivering true social justice to every poor: PM Modi

PTI

Dehradun, Apr 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that the Constitution is now fully applicable across the entire nation after the abrogation of Article 370 and asserted that the NDA government is committed to delivering true social justice to every poor.

Addressing a public meeting in Dehradun after the inauguration of the Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor, Modi said, "Today is also the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar. On behalf of the people of the nation, I pay my tributes to Babasaheb. The policies formulated and the decisions taken by our government over the past decade have served to restore the dignity of the Constitution."

Babasaheb's life was dedicated to ensuring a just system for the poor, deprived and the exploited, he added.

"After abrogation of Article 370, the Constitution is now fully applicable across the entire nation. Work is being done in a dozen districts according to the spirit of the Constitution where Maoism, Naxalism have ended," he said.

Modi said the Indian Constitution expects that a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) be implemented in the country, adding that by taking this spirit forward, Uttarakhand has shown the path to the nation.

"Today, our government is committed to that very same spirit for delivering true social justice to every poor and deprived individual," he said.

The prime minister asserted that a big medium for achieving social justice is the balanced development of the nation by providing amenities



to all and ensuring prosperity for everyone. It is for this reason that Babasaheb strongly advocated modern infrastructure and industrialisation, he added.

He said this decade would be that of Uttarakhand and this corridor will give a huge push to the state's growth.

"When tourism develops, all benefit. I am happy that Uttarakhand is emerging as a key destination for winter tourism and sports," Modi said.

He also said that the 12-km elevated corridor along the Delhi-Dehradun expressway has been built keeping the safety and security of elephants in mind.

Referring to the Haridwar Kumbh, Modi said, "Haridwar will host Kumbh next year and we must leave no stone unturned to make the experience a divine and clean one." Earlier in the day, the prime minister inaugurated the Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor, which will cut travel time between the two cities to nearly half.

The 213 km-long six-lane

access-controlled Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor has been built at a cost of over Rs 12,000 crore.

The corridor traverses through Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and will reduce travel time between Delhi and Dehradun from over six hours at present to around two-and-a-half hours, according to an official statement.

The Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor will play a pivotal role in strengthening regional economic growth by enhancing connectivity between major tourism and economic centres as well as opening new avenues for trade and development across the region.

"The project reflects the vision of the prime minister to develop next-generation infrastructure that combines high-speed connectivity with environmental sustainability and improved quality of life for citizens," the statement said.

Implementation of the project also involves the construction of 10 interchanges, three Railway Over Bridges (ROBs), four major bridges and 12 wildlife amenities to enable

seamless high-speed connectivity. The corridor is equipped with an Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) to provide a safer and more efficient travel experience for commuters.

Keeping in view the ecological sensitivity, rich biodiversity and wildlife in the region, the corridor has been designed with several features aimed at significantly reducing human-wildlife conflict.

To ensure the free movement of wild animals, the project incorporates several dedicated wildlife protection features. These include a 12-km-long wildlife elevated corridor, which is one of the longest in Asia. The corridor includes eight animal passes, two elephant underpasses of 200 metres each, and a 370-metre-long tunnel near Maa Daat Kali Temple.

Prime Minister Modi offered prayers at Maa Daat Kali Temple near Dehradun.

This comes ahead of the two-phase assembly elections in West Bengal where Goddess Kali is worshipped by a large number of people. The state faces polls on April 23 and April 29. Votes will be counted on May 4.

The PM also paid floral tributes to Dr BR Ambedkar on this occasion.

He inspected the wildlife corridor on the elevated section of the Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor in Saharanpur and also held a roadshow in the Uttar Pradesh town, waving at people who had lined up.

A large number of people gathered in Dehradun and waved at the prime minister as his motorcade passed through the streets of the Uttarakhand capital.

Hormonal imbalance, fertility issues now affecting women in 20s, say experts

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 14: A growing number of young women are experiencing hormonal imbalance and fertility-related issues much earlier than previously seen, with experts attributing the trend to a combination of biological shifts and modern lifestyle factors.

Doctors say there is a noticeable change in clinical patterns, with conditions once common in women in their late 30s now increasingly being diagnosed in those in their 20s.

"There is a clear and concerning shift in women's health today, where issues related to hormonal imbalance and fertility are appearing much earlier than we traditionally observed," Priti Arora Dhamija, senior consultant and lead IVF, gynaecology at the Sitaram Bhatia Institute of Science and Research, said.

She noted that one contributing factor is the earlier onset of puberty. "One of the key reasons is the earlier onset of puberty with many girls now attain menarche as early as 8-9 years, which can lead to a relatively earlier decline in ovarian reserve," she said.

Studies published in journals such as The Lancet Child and Adolescent Health have documented a steady decline in the age of puberty onset over the past few decades, linked to improved nutrition but also rising obesity and environmental exposures.

However, experts emphasised that biology alone does not explain the trend, with lifestyle factors playing a significant role.

"Today, young women



are growing up in a high-stress, high-performance environment, often marked by erratic sleep cycles, excessive screen time, poor dietary habits, and limited physical activity. These factors contribute to rising rates of obesity, PCOS, and metabolic disturbances in the early 20s," Dhamija said.

Chronic stress, she added, disrupts the hypothalamic pituitary ovarian axis, leading to hormonal imbalance and irregular ovulation.

"In addition, behavioural factors such as early sexual activity, multiple partners, and lack of medical supervision in contraceptive use are contributing to higher incidences of sexually transmitted infections and uterine health issues, which can further impact fertility. Environmental exposure to hormone-like substances through food and pollution is an emerging concern as well," she said.

Juhi Bharti, Additional Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at AIIMS, Delhi, said clinicians are increasingly observing diminished ovarian reserve in younger women.

"Clinically, we are now observing diminished

ovarian reserve in women in their late 20s, a trend that was previously more common in the late 30s. While not necessarily irreversible, this shift highlights the need for early awareness and timely intervention," she said.

Supporting this trend, data from the Indian Society of Assisted Reproduction (ISAR) and international fertility studies indicate a rise in cases of diminished ovarian reserve and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) among women under 30. PCOS alone is estimated to affect nearly one in five women of reproductive age in India, according to various epidemiological studies.

Experts stressed that fertility should be viewed as a reflection of overall health rather than just age.

"Poor sleep doesn't just cause fatigue, it disrupts hormonal signalling, may accelerate reproductive ageing, and impacts fertility potential. Aligning sleep with natural circadian rhythms is therefore a key, yet often overlooked, pillar of reproductive health," Dr Bharti said.

Echoing similar concerns, Bhawani Shekhar, Associate Consultant at the Centre

NSE's active investor base tanks 7 pc in FY26

IANS

Mumbai, April 14: Retail trading activity on the National Stock Exchange showed signs of cooling, with active client accounts on the NSE fell 7 per cent year-on-year (YoY) amid tighter regulations and volatile market conditions.

Data showed the number of active investors on the exchange dropped to 4.57 crore in March 2026, down from 4.92 crore a year earlier -- marking a drop of nearly 35 lakh accounts.

The decline continued through much of the financial year, with several months witnessing negative net additions, suggesting that new account openings failed to offset rising inactivity and investor churn.

The moderation in retail participation also impacted the market share of major discount brokers.

Zerodha saw its share fall to 15.08 per cent from 16.03 per cent a year ago, while Angel One slipped to 14.79 per cent from 15.4 per cent.

AI boom yet to lift global productivity: IMF

IANS

Washington, April 14: The rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) have yet to translate into measurable gains in global productivity, even as the technology holds the potential to significantly boost economic growth in the coming years, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said.

Speaking during a group interview with reporters from India, Japan, the UAE, the Netherlands and Chile, IMF Chief Economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said current macroeconomic data does not yet reflect the impact of AI adoption.

"Our assessment right now is that... we don't yet see productivity gains at a macro level coming from AI in the numbers we have," Gourinchas said.

He noted that while technological progress has been striking, its widespread deployment remains limited.

"We've been absolutely impressed by the progress... but we're not yet seeing the macroeconomic implication," he said. Despite the absence of visible



gains so far, the IMF sees AI as a significant upside risk for future growth.

"Our estimates... can go from 0.1 to 0.4" percentage points increase in productivity growth annually, he said, adding that some projections are even higher.

However, Gourinchas cautioned that the transition could bring disruptions, particularly in labour markets.

"There might be some signs that there is a little bit of a softening" in hiring, especially for entry-level positions, he said, pointing to early indications of AI's impact on employment.

While dismissing the likelihood of permanent mass unemployment, he said the nature of jobs is likely to change significantly. "We don't

anticipate that AI... will create a mass unemployment," he said, adding that "the jobs that will exist... will be very different."

He warned that the transition period could be uneven. "The old jobs are destroyed before the new jobs are created," he said, highlighting the risk of temporary labour market disruption.

Another major concern flagged by the IMF is the possibility of financial instability linked to excessive investment and inflated valuations in the AI sector.

"You could have a situation where the market got ahead of itself," Gourinchas said, noting that multiple firms are currently attracting large-scale funding in a highly competitive environment.

West Asia conflict threatens to push 2.5 million people in India into poverty: UNDP report

PTI

United Nations, Apr 14: The conflict and military escalation in West Asia threatens to push 2.5 million people in India into poverty and the country is projected to experience some loss in its human development progress, according to estimates and projections by the United Nations.

The United Nations Development Programme, in a report titled 'Military Escalation In The Middle East: Human Development Impacts Across Asia The Pacific' noted that the conflict is "widening human development pressures across Asia and the Pacific."

Through higher fuel, freight, and input costs, the shock is diminishing household purchasing power, raising food insecurity, straining public budgets, and weakening livelihoods."

The preliminary assessment, issued Tuesday, estimates that globally 8.8 million people are at risk of falling into poverty and the West Asia military escalation could cost Asia-Pacific up to USD 299 billion.

In India, poverty is expected to rise from around 400,000 to 2.5 million, the report said. It added that the number of people pushed



into poverty in the world as a result of the conflict rises from approximately 1.9 million to nearly 8.8 million across scenarios, with South Asia accounting for the largest share, ranging from about 1.7 million to over 8 million, reflecting both the subregion's population size

and its higher exposure to income and price shocks.

China is estimated to experience a moderate increase in the number of people at risk of falling into poverty, from around 115,000 to over 620,000, reflecting small

proportional changes applied to a very large population base.

Highlighting the estimated poverty impact of the military escalation (28-day conflict, most severe scenario with 8-month adjustment), the report said that India's poverty rate is estimated to rise to 24.2 per cent post-crisis from 23.9 per cent, pushing 2,464,698 people into poverty. An estimated 354,033,698 people are projected to live in poverty in the country post-crisis as compared to 351,569,000 pre-crisis.

The UNDP simulation estimates the impact of the conflict on the Human Development Index (HDI) for countries across the region. It indicates that Iran's HDI could decline by an amount equivalent to roughly one to one and a half years of human development progress.

"India is projected to experience a loss of approximately 0.03-0.12 years of HDI progress, followed by Nepal at around 0.02-0.09 years and Viet Nam at 0.02-0.07 years, while for China, the estimated effects on HDI remain limited in magnitude, ranging roughly 0.01-0.05 years," it said.

The report notes that among the region's larger importers, India meets over 90 per cent of its oil needs through imports, sourcing

more than 40 per cent of crude imports and 90 per cent of LPG imports from West Asia. Further, West Asian countries supply over 45 per cent of India's fertiliser imports, while

85 per cent of the country's domestic urea production depends on imported regasified liquefied natural gas.

The shock of the conflict is also influencing energy choices in several countries. With LNG prices rising, some economies, including India, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam, have increased their reliance on coal-fired power.

On trade and supply chain disruptions, UNDP country-level analysis indicated significant impacts in 25 out of 36 countries through freight surcharges, war-risk insurance premia, route diversions, and delayed delivery of intermediate and consumer goods.

India's assessment shows that West Asian markets account for 14 per cent of exports and 20.9 per cent of imports, with roughly USD 48 billion in non-oil exports, particularly in basmati rice, tea, gems and jewellery, and apparel. Bangladesh also reports significant disruption as Gulf carriers cancelled flights, shipments from Bangladesh and India were stranded, it said.

Rahul blames Mamata for unemployment in Bengal

Alleges syndicate control in state

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 14: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday launched a two-pronged attack in poll-bound West Bengal, accusing the BJP and the RSS of destroying the Constitution with their "hate-filled thinking", while claiming the ruling TMC has failed in fulfilling its promise of providing jobs to the state's youth.

Addressing poll rallies in Raiganj and Malda, Gandhi claimed that 84 lakh youths in Bengal have applied for the unemployment allowance promised by the Mamata Banerjee government.

"Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee promised jobs to five lakh people. But 84 lakh youths have applied for unemployment allowance," he said.

Targeting the BJP and RSS, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha accused the two outfits of destroying the Constitution



by their "hate-filled thinking" and being "involved in vote theft".

Gandhi termed the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls "unconstitutional" and alleged that wherever the BJP and RSS get a chance, they make insinuations against the Constitution.

He accused the BJP of pitting one community against the other in the name of religion and caste to win elections.

Citing fallout from Iran war, IMF cuts outlook for global growth, expects higher inflation

AP

Washington, Apr 14: The Iran war has stalled the world's economic momentum this year, likely pushing growth lower compared to 2025, the International Monetary Fund warned Tuesday.

The IMF downgraded its forecast for global growth to 3.1% in 2026 from the 3.3% it had forecast back in January. The expected growth would mark a deceleration from a 3.4% expansion in 2025.

US and Israeli strikes on Iran — and Tehran's closing of the Strait of Hormuz and retaliatory strikes on oil refineries and other energy infrastructure in neighboring countries — have driven oil and gas prices sharply higher around the world.

As a result, the IMF marked up its expectation for global inflation this year to 4.4% from 4.1% in 2025 and from the 3.8% it had forecast for this year in January.

Until the war, the world economy had shown surprising resilience in the face of President Donald Trump's protectionist policies, which built a wall of import taxes around the United States, the world's biggest economy and once a market practically wide open to imports. The damage was less than feared partly because Trump's tariffs last year ended up being



lower than what he'd originally announced. A tech boom, marked by massive investment in data centers and artificial intelligence, and rising productivity also combined to strengthen the world economy.

"War in the Middle East has halted this momentum," IMF chief economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas wrote in a blog post accompanying the fund's latest World Economic Outlook.

The IMF's forecast assumes that conflict in the Persian Gulf is short-lived and that energy prices rise "a moderate 19%" this year. Things could be much worse. In a "severe scenario" in which the energy shocks spill into next year and central banks are forced to raise interest rates to combat inflation, global growth could drop to 2% in 2026 and 2027. "Despite the recent news of

exporter that stands to benefit from higher prices. The IMF upgraded its forecast for the Russian economy, hard hit by sanctions following the invasion of Ukraine in 2022, to a still-modest 1.1%.

Meanwhile, the governor of the National Bank of Ukraine has tried to keep Russia's war in his country at the center of talks among global economic leaders. But in a Monday interview with reporters, Andriy Pyshnyy noted how higher oil prices due to the war in Iran are hurting his country.

He said through a translator that annual inflation in March hit 7.9% in Ukraine, well above the forecast of 7% in large part because of higher fuel costs. He estimated that fuel prices could push up annual inflation by 1.5 percentage points to 2.8 percentage points.

Pyshnyy noted that there could also be higher fertilizer and production costs in an economy that is seeking stable prices as part of the ongoing war with Russia, which attacks Ukraine by air on average every 3 to 4 minutes. "We are trying to walk on a razor blade," he said of a mission complicated by external factors. The IMF is a 191-nation lending organization that works to promote economic growth and financial stability and to reduce global poverty.

a temporary ceasefire, some damage is already done, and the downside risks remain elevated," Gourinchas wrote. The fund slightly downgraded its forecast for US growth this year to 2.3%. The 21 European countries that share the euro currency, hard hit by soaring natural gas prices, will collectively grow 1.1% this year, down from 1.4% in 2025, the IMF forecast.

Hardest hit are likely to be deeply indebted poorer countries that import energy and can't afford to buffer their economies with stepped-up government spending and tax relief. The IMF sharply lowered the outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, to 4.3% this year from the 4.6% it had expected in January.

One winner that's emerging from the conflict is Russia, an energy

China says policy to improve relations with India remains unchanged

PTI

Beijing, Apr 14: China on Tuesday said its policy to improve relations with India has not changed as it defended its move to publish new names for various regions in Arunachal Pradesh.

India on Sunday categorically rejected China's efforts to assign "fictitious names" to Indian territory, asserting that such attempts to create "baseless narratives" cannot alter "undeniable reality" and could derail efforts to normalise bilateral ties.

New Delhi's sharp reaction came against the backdrop of Beijing establishing a third new administrative county in Aksai Chin, a region India maintains as its sovereign territory.

"India categorically rejects any mischievous attempts by the Chinese side to assign fictitious names to places which form part of the territory of India," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

Reacting to Jaiswal's remarks, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here that the "Zangnan region is China's territory. China does not recognise the so-called 'Arunachal Pradesh' illegally set up by India." Zangnan is the Chinese name for Arunachal Pradesh. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of southern Tibet.

"It is fully within China's sovereign rights for the Chinese government to issue standard names for some of the places in Zangnan," he said.

"China-India relations are generally stable at the moment. China's commitment to improving and growing China-India relations has not changed," Guo said.

"We hope the two sides will work in the same direction and act more in ways conducive to bilateral relations," he added. On March 26, China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region announced the creation of Cenling county, a strategic region located near the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Afghanistan. It is also reportedly close to the western sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India. Cenling, located near the Karakoram mountain range, is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Muslim Uyghur region.

India last year lodged a protest with China over the creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating that parts of their jurisdiction fall within its Union territory of Ladakh.

Global shares gain, oil falls on hopes of renewed US-Iran talks



AP

Hong Kong, Apr 14: World shares were trading higher, tracking Wall Street gains, and oil fell on Tuesday as expectations rose over a possible second round of talks between the US and Iran on an end to the Iran war.

In early European trading, Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.1 per cent to 10,591.45. France's CAC 40 gained 0.6 per cent to 8,285.37, while Germany's DAX was up 1 per cent to 23,980.13.

Asian stocks ended higher Tuesday. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 was up 2.4 per cent to 57,877.39. South Korea's Kospi jumped 2.7 per cent to 5,967.75 after briefly topping 6,000 intraday.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose 0.8 per cent to 25,872.32, while the Shanghai Composite index climbed 1 per cent to 4,026.63.

China on Tuesday reported worse-than-expected export growth of 2.5 per cent in March for the first month since the Iran war began, although some analysts believe Chinese exports of goods related to AI and renewable energy will continue to support overall export momentum for the year.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.5 per cent, and Taiwan's Taixex rose 2.4 per cent.

Investors are still hopeful for a lasting de-escalation of the Iran war, which is in its seventh week, as the US and Iran are said to be weighing a second round of talks before a temporary ceasefire agreement expires next week.

The US military on Monday began a blockade of Iranian ports as Washington steps up its pressure on Tehran, following

ceasefire talks between the two sides over the weekend that ended without an agreement.

But US President Donald Trump also suggested on Monday that the United States is still willing to engage with Tehran. "I can tell you that we've been called by the other side," he said, without further elaborating on details.

Oil prices continued to pull back on Tuesday from earlier gains. Brent crude, the international standard, was down 0.4 per cent to USD 98.93 per barrel. It reached nearly USD 104 early Monday morning over Iran war worries on limited progress from the weekend ceasefire talks.

Benchmark US crude fell 2 per cent to USD 97.09 a barrel.

The global energy shock stemming from maritime traffic disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, where roughly a fifth of the world's oil is typically transported, has led to surging fuel prices and is threatening to push up inflation in many countries and impact economic growth.

Wall Street rose on Monday. The S&P 500 gained 1 per cent to 6,886.24. The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 0.6 per cent to 48,218.25, and the Nasdaq composite added 1.2 per cent to 23,183.74.

Shares of investment bank Goldman Sachs dropped 1.9 per cent despite its announcement of better-than-expected quarterly profits.

In other dealings, gold and silver prices rose on Tuesday. Gold's price was up 0.8 per cent to USD 4,806.20 per ounce, while silver prices gained 2.9 per cent to USD 77.82 per ounce.

SKY's future could be discussed post UK T20Is

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 14: Suryakumar Yadav may have led India to an impressive T20 World Cup title defence but given his patchy batting form, serious questions remain on whether he will be in the scheme of things for the country's Los Angeles Olympics campaign in 2028. And in this backdrop, India's tour of England and Ireland in June-July will be crucial for the skipper as more than his captaincy, his batting would be under scrutiny. The tour could decide whether he will be given another two years till the next phase of big events in 2028 which includes the Olympics and T20 World Cup in Australia. Suryakumar still remains the first choice for head coach Gautam Gambhir, who is expecting a contract extension till the 2028 T20 World Cup in Australia. However, it will be interesting to see whether the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee agrees with his view as the T20 skipper will be pushing 38 at the time of Olympics.

"Obviously Surya is now leading the team. But he also has to ensure that as a batter, he maintains a level of consistency in his performances. Obviously, he will lead in the UK but after that, discussions going forward till 2028 could be purely performance-based," a BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

AIFF refers complaints of alleged racial abuse against players in ISL to Disciplinary Committee

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 14: The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has referred the complaints of alleged racial abuse during the ongoing Indian Super League to its Disciplinary Committee after Kerala Blasters demanded action over an incident involving one of their players.

Kerala Blasters had complained to the AIFF after one of their players was "subjected to blatant racist chants" during their away ISL match against Bengaluru FC at the Kanteerava Stadium on April 11.

Kerala Blasters defender



Fallou Ndiaye, who hails from Senegal, was subjected to racial slurs allegedly by Bengaluru FC supporters, videos of which have been widely

circulated on social media. Kerala won that match 2-1. "The AIFF has received certain complaints regarding alleged racist conduct

against players during the ongoing Indian Super League 2025-26. We stand firmly with the players, and every individual who has the right to participate in and enjoy this beautiful game free from discrimination of any kind," the AIFF said in a statement on Tuesday.

"The AIFF maintains a zero tolerance policy towards racism. The complaints have been referred to the Disciplinary Committee, an independent judicial body, for examination as per the AIFF Disciplinary Code. The AIFF will refrain from any further comments while the proceedings are ongoing.

Stokes shuts down talk of a rift with McCullum after Ashes tensions



AP

London, Apr 14: England captain Ben Stokes says any suggestion he and coach Brendon McCullum are not aligned "is a massive overstatement."

Were there disagreements between them during their Ashes debacle in Australia? Yes.

Was it any different than normal? No.

Stokes and McCullum have been in lock step since 2022 and they crashed and burned when they lost to Australia 4-1 last winter. Both men supported the other after being humbled but the Ashes review threw up signs of tension.

Stokes wanted to play more conservatively while McCullum wanted to double down on all-out attack.

Since the Ashes, Stokes has kept a low profile. When he

and McCullum kept their jobs last month following the Ashes review, he posted on social media that he was happy to continue working with McCullum and the post-Ashes period had been the hardest period of his captaincy.

The captain has used an in-house interview with the England and Wales Cricket Board to address his relationship with McCullum.

"Saying we weren't aligned, I think, is a massive overstatement," Stokes said.

"When you're in a position of leadership along with someone else, if anyone thinks that you're always going to agree on everything then it's just impossible.

"To me, that isn't a healthy environment for sport, in particular. You need debate. You need discussions. Then you end

up getting to the place you both want to end up getting to.

"As similar as me and Brendon are, we're also dissimilar in other areas as well. We agree 95% of the time on things, but those 5% things that we might have different views on, we talk about it between each other and then we end up getting to the place where we want to get to."

Stokes hasn't played in the County Championship since breaking his cheekbone in a freak accident in preseason training with Durham. But he's set to return in May before New Zealand arrive in June for a test series. Pakistan follow this summer, and Australia come to England in 2027.

As was recommended in the Ashes review, England's leadership will tweak what it does with the team and Stokes has welcomed it.

"I'm very confident in mine and Brendon's ability to be able to work together, because we've done it for such a long period of time now, but work together in a slightly different way," he said.

"The main point of me and Brendon is our alignment towards winning things and making this team as good as they can be. That's always been the thing since we started. It might just look a little bit different now to how that operates — on the back of four years working together.

"Hopefully we'll still be together at the end of 2027, winning what we want to win."

INOX
SRINAGAR
WWW.INOXMOVIES.COM

MOVIES
Watch List
Wednesday, 15th April

DACOIT (U/A)
HINDI - 11:00 AM

VAAHA-II: BIOPIC OF BILLION BROS (U/A)
MALAYALAM WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
06:35 PM

THE REVANT
DHURANDHAR

DHURANDHAR THE REVENGE (A)
HINDI - 11:00 AM, 12:20 PM, 04:45 PM
HINDI ATMOS - 02:15 PM, 06:40 PM

PROJECT HAIL MARY

PROJECT HAIL MARY (U/A)
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
03:25 PM