

Under PM Modi, border areas no longer nation's edge: LG Sinha

» National security flows from soldiers, residents at borders » Developed India demands strong rural heartland

Yogesh

Rajouri, Apr 17: Asserting that under PM Modi's leadership border areas are no longer the country's edge but its first village and foremost opportunity, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said that a nation is defined by its remotest village.

Addressing a public gathering during his visit to vibrant village Sariah in Rajouri, where he inaugurated the Common Service Centre and initiated several development projects, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "Under the visionary leadership of PM Modi India is advancing with renewed resolve. Border areas are no longer the nation's edge but its first village and foremost opportunity. New commitment thrives and connection with mainstream has taken root."

The Lieutenant Governor said



that through the Border Area Development Programme under Vibrant Villages Programme, we are ensuring infrastructure and welfare schemes reach every border village.

"No map fully captures the true essence of our border villages, which reveal only lines.

Within those lines, I see a vibrant society and steadfast families advancing the nation's progress," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that national security flows from soldiers at the borders and border village residents who dwell there. | More on P6



Pony rides continue through misty pine forests in Pahalgam despite rainfall and cold conditions

Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)



LG flags off Shobha Yatra

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday flagged off a grand Shobha Yatra from Chanakya Chowk Parade, Jammu, to commemorate Bhagwan

Parshuram Ji Jayanti. The procession was organized by the Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, celebrating the life and teachings of Bhagwan | More on P6

J&K MPs, MLAs meet Defence Minister

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Apr 17: A delegation of Members of Parliament and MLAs from Jammu and Kashmir on Friday met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at Parliament House and raised key infrastructure and public concerns.

The delegation, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) included MPs Chowdry Mohammad Ramzan, Sajjad Ahmed Kichloo and Shammi Oberoi, along with MLAs Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurezi and Qaisar Jamsheed Lone.

The delegation sought upgradation of the Sumbal-Gurez road into a strategic National Highway, stating that the move would improve connectivity and ensure better maintenance of the vital route.

They also demanded opening of the Drass-Gurez road for traffic to ease travel hardships faced by residents of the remote region, especially during harsh weather conditions.

The lawmakers pressed for early execution of major infrastructure projects, including the Lolab-Bandipora tunnel, Kishtwar-Padder-Zanskar road and Badoab-Sonamarg road, stating that | More on P6

Census- 2027

J&K Govt directs public to provide accurate answers to questions

Every citizen under legal obligation to provide information

Census records cannot be used as evidence

Every citizen under legal obligation to provide information

Census records cannot be used as evidence

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Apr 17: Ahead of the commencement of the census exercise in Jammu & Kashmir, the administration has issued a directive, urging the public to extend full cooperation by furnishing accurate information during the headcount exercise.

The Planning, Development & Monitoring Department has issued a formal notification, urging the public to extend cooperation during Census 2027.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Rule 8(ii) of the Census Rules, read with Circular No. 15 dated 12.03.2026 issued by the Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir hereby directs the public to cooperate in furnishing accurate and unambiguous information in respect of all questions that may be put to them for the smooth conduct of the Census 2027," reads the notification, a copy of which has been accessed by news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The notification has been issued almost one-and-a-half month before commencement of first phase of census in J&K. The Houselisting Operations (HLO), considered first phase of census- would be carried out from June 01 to June 30 in the UT.

The notification states that Census is the primary source of information at the lowest administrative unit on housing conditions, | More on P6

CM Omar unveils Sher-i-Kashmir Cricket Club jersey

Releases wildlife publication

KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 17: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday unveiled the jersey of Sher-i-Kashmir Cricket Club (SCC) at a function held here. The event was attended by Minister for Youth Services & Sports Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani and members of the club.

Appreciating the club's contribution to promoting cricket, the Chief Minister said that the government is committed to extending all possible support to encourage sports activities and nurture young talent across Jammu and Kashmir.

On the occasion, SCC



President Aman Cheema highlighted the club's achievements, noting that it has participated in and won several tournaments. He added that the club is playing a positive role in engaging youth and steering them away from negative influences such as drug abuse by channelizing their energy into sports.

Earlier, the Chief Minister also launched a wildlife magazine titled 'Checklist of Mammals of Jammu and Kashmir, India'. A delegation of wildlife ecologists led by Muzaffar Kichloo briefed him on their ongoing and upcoming projects.

The Chief Minister commended their efforts and emphasized | More on P6

CM Omar Abdullah assures time-bound redressal of public issues

KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 17: Several legislators, delegations and individuals on Friday called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, raising several issues concerning them for redressal.

Former minister and legislator Abdul Majid Wani, and former legislator Chaman Lal from Ramban, highlighted key concerns pertaining to



their respective areas. A delegation from the Indian Institute of Architects,

J&K Chapter, led by its Chairman Vikas Dubey, apprised the | More on P6

Haji flights to begin today

4,704 pilgrims to depart till May 5

Devotees to get SIM-enabled smartwatches

Haji House facilities ready

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Apr 17: Haji flights from Kashmir with Srinagar embarkation are set to begin from Saturday, with 4,704 pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir scheduled to depart in 28 flights till May 5.

Executive Officer of the Haji Committee, Dr Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that all arrangements have been finalized for the smooth departure of pilgrims for tomorrow.

As already reported by KNO, 3,990 pilgrims will depart through Srinagar embarkation, including 323 from Ladakh, while others will travel through Delhi and Mumbai.

Each pilgrim will be provided a SIM-enabled smartwatch for tracking and coordination during the pilgrimage.

Earlier, officials had said stricter health screening guidelines were implemented this year, while self-cooking facilities have been discontinued and food arrangements will be provided instead.

Due to ongoing repair work at Srinagar airport, flights are operating with reduced passenger capacity, requiring refuelling halts in Delhi before proceeding to Madinah.

Accommodation facilities have also been arranged at Haji House for pilgrims arriving from far-off districts, including Jammu and Ladakh, | More on P6

Enforcement alone won't tackle drug menace; families, society must play central role: Experts

Say patients who receive emotional, psychological backing from families show far better recovery outcomes

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Apr 17: As authorities intensify their crackdown on drug peddlers across Jammu and Kashmir, medical experts and addiction specialists have underlined that enforcement alone will not be enough to tackle the growing menace of substance abuse. They said families and society must play a central role in prevention and recovery.

Doctors, speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the tightening of action against drug networks is likely to disrupt supply chains, which could

push many dependent individuals into withdrawal and, consequently, towards seeking treatment.

"It is highly appreciable that the authorities have tightened the screws on peddlers. This is likely to reduce supply and increase treatment-seeking among patients who go into withdrawal," said Dr Nizam-ud-Din, Associate Professor at the Advanced Centre for Mental Health and Addiction Medicine, SKIMS MCH Bemina.

However, he said the success of such measures depends largely on how families and communities respond. "Family and society are the first point



FAMILY SUPPORT IS NOT OPTIONAL—IT IS ESSENTIAL. Patients who receive emotional, psychological and moral backing from their families show far better recovery outcomes."

of contact and can play a vital role. The need of the hour is an empathetic approach—understanding these individuals as patients rather than offenders and encouraging them to seek treatment at Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATF) in their respective districts," he said.

Dr Nizam-ud-Din added that enhanced family and social support not only helps in harm reduction but also prevents patients from shifting to

other harmful substances or pharmaceutical drugs in the absence of narcotics.

Echoing similar views, Dr Aadil Ahmad, a medical officer at an ATF in south Kashmir's Shopian, described family involvement as a cornerstone of recovery. "Family support is not optional—it is essential. Patients who receive emotional, psychological and moral backing from their families show far better recovery

outcomes," he said.

He said that addiction often isolates individuals, and reassurance from loved ones can significantly influence their willingness to quit.

"The reassurance that they are not alone, that their families believe in them, often becomes the strongest motivation to overcome addiction," Dr Aadil said. He urged parents to stay vigilant, maintain open communication with their children, and educate them about the dangers of substance abuse.

Experts called on society at large to shed stigma and adopt a compassionate outlook towards those | More on P6

SASCI reforms to drive capital growth, fiscal efficiency: CS Atal Dulloo

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, APRIL 17: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo convened a high-level meeting of the Finance Department, attended by the Administrative Secretaries, to review the progress of departmental work plans and the status of reforms under the Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI).

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary, as per an official statement, assessed expenditure trends and underscored the importance of timely and efficient utilization of allocated resources. He emphasized the need to prioritize capital expenditure (Capex) from the very beginning of the financial year, cautioning against the tendency of last-minute spending rushes that often compromise efficiency and outcomes.

Highlighting the importance of proactive planning, the Chief Secretary directed departments to ensure prompt uploading of works on the BEAMS portal to facilitate timely tendering and execution. He further stressed the need for equitable distribution of projects across districts, aligned with on-ground requirements to ensure balanced development across all regions.

Reiterating the strategic importance of SASCI reforms, the Chief Secretary urged Administrative Secretaries to accord them top priority, noting their potential to bring substantial economic benefits to the Union Territory through incentive-based funding amounting to hundreds of crores. He called for their strict implementation in both letter and spirit to ensure tangible outcomes.

Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, emphasized accountability and adherence to timelines, urging all departments to finalize and upload their action plans on the BEAMS portal by April



21, 2026. He noted that while 100 percent budget allocation has been made, further financial releases including the second installment of Capex funds will be contingent upon fulfillment of key reform conditions and demonstrable progress.

The meeting also highlighted key reforms mandated under SASCI guidelines, including the adoption of end-to-end digital tendering and contract management systems under Component II. Departments such as Power Development Department (PDD), Jal Shakti, Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD), and Youth Services & Sports (YSS) were directed to onboard the PWD-OMAS platform at the earliest to enhance transparency, monitoring, and accountability.

Progress in critical sectoral reforms was also reviewed, including mining sector reforms, operationalization of the Right of Way (RoW) Rules 2024, rollout of AgriStack in the Agriculture Department, and livestock sector reforms. It was emphasized that significant advancements in these areas are crucial for unlocking subsequent funding tranches.

To streamline financial management, all departments were directed to establish separate Single Nodal Agency (SNA) accounts for efficient release and monitoring of SASCI funds.

A detailed presentation outlined the proposed financial outlay under SASCI for the financial year 2026-27,

totaling 4023.5 Cr. This includes 1406 Cr under Part I and Part II untied components, along with a substantial 2617.5 Cr available under incentive-based components linked to capital expenditure performance and reform milestones across sectors such as public finance IT infrastructure, mining, AgriStack, livestock, financial management efficiency, and compressed biogas initiatives.

The meeting also reviewed allocations under the Public Health Infrastructure component, with 330 Cr earmarked to improve key health indicators, including reduction in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), attainment of NQAS certification, and reduction in TB mortality.

Reviewing past financial performance, it was noted that 946 Cr had been expended during the April-September period of the previous financial year. The Chief Secretary emphasized that expenditure must reach at least 1040 Cr in the current year to qualify for incentive-based funding under Part III of the scheme, which focuses on capital expenditure growth.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to fiscal discipline and reform-driven growth, the Chief Secretary called upon all departments to maintain momentum, ensure transparency, and deliver measurable outcomes aligned with the objectives of the SASCI framework.

Kashmir Thunder



IS AVAILABLE AT ALL LEADING STALLS

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: **Mehmooda Begam S/o: Fayaz Ahmad Dar R/o: Behrampora**

Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore

(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of **Birth** event of the applicant's Son namely Moazim Fayaz Nazir D/o: Fayaz Ahmad Mir as 22-11-2012 at M.C.H Sopore

Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large is informed that in case any one has any objection for issuance of direction with respect to the registration of aforementioned **Birth** event he /she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within 7 days from the date of the publication of this proclamation. If the date fixed is declared holiday, the matter will be taken on the next working day.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: **Sartaj Ahmad Lone S/o: Ab Rehman Dar R/o: Khenusa**

Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore

(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of **Birth** event of the applicant's Son namely Imad Sartaj S/o: Sartaj Ahmad Dar as 07-03-2023 at M.C.H Sopore

Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large is informed that in case any one has any objection for issuance of direction with respect to the registration of aforementioned **Birth** event he /she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within 7 days from the date of the publication of this proclamation. If the date fixed is declared holiday, the matter will be taken on the next working day.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: **Nazir Ahmad Lone S/o: Ab Rehman Lone R/o: Adipora**

Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore

(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of **Birth** event of the applicant's Daughter namely Harijam Nazir D/o: Nazir Ahmad Lone as 09-03-2023 at M.C.H Sopore

Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large is informed that in case any one has any objection for issuance of direction with respect to the registration of aforementioned **Birth** event he /she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within 7 days from the date of the publication of this proclamation. If the date fixed is declared holiday, the matter will be taken on the next working day.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

Div Com Kashmir reviews progress of 60 MLD Noorbagh STP, other key projects

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, APRIL 17: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Friday conducted a comprehensive review of the progress on the 60 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Noorbagh, along with other major ongoing projects being executed by the Urban Environmental Engineering Department (UEED) in Kashmir.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo; Chief Engineer, KPDCI; Superintending Engineer, UEED; Executive Engineer, R&B; representatives from NBCC; and other concerned officials. At the outset, the Superintending Engineer, UEED, delivered a detailed presentation covering key aspects of the projects, including electricity supply, leakage issues, pending household connections, relocation of shops along the 90-foot road, and demolition of unsafe structures at Alamgiribazar.

He also shared details on the preparation of a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for newly developed habitations in Zone-III of Greater Srinagar, incorporating advanced systems such as tertiary treatment and SCADA for the 60 MLD STP. The meeting also

reviewed progress on other proposed STPs, including a 30 MLD facility aimed at mitigating pollution in Dal Lake, a 14 MLD STP at Alluchibagh, and a 6 MLD STP to address pollution in Doodganga.

During the review, the Divisional Commissioner directed that all issues related to electricity supply and leakages at the Noorbagh STP be resolved by May 31 to ensure the facility becomes fully operational. He further emphasized expediting the connection of all pending households to the STP network.

Regarding the relocation of shops, officials informed that funds have already been released by UEED and the process is expected to be completed by August this year.

It was also noted that UEED is in the process of preparing a fresh in-house DPR for newly developed habitations in Zone-III of Greater Srinagar, incorporating tertiary treatment, SCADA, and Online Continuous Effluent Monitoring Systems (OCEMS).

With respect to the proposed 30 MLD STP, the chair was informed that all pending issues have been resolved, and both survey and design work have been completed, while site development is currently under progress.

GOVERNMENT OF UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION BARAMULLA

Email: amitabhman.721013@jk.gov.in

Corrigendum No. 01 for this office E NIT No: 02 of 2026-27 Dated: 15-04-2026

Due to typographical error please read instruction to bidders clause III of this office eNIT No. 02 of 2026-27 dated 15-04-2026 as below instead of experience certificate uploaded in SBD.

"Experience certificate: contractors shall have to fulfill the criteria of satisfactory execution of Electrical repair-maintenance works (as given in the bid document) as under
> Electrical repair & maintenance works costing not less than 120% of estimated cos in last 70 years out of which Repair works of Motors not less than 60% of estimated cost

(Or)
> Electrical repair & maintenance works costing not less than 100% of estimated cos in last 70 years out of which Repair works of Motors shall not be less than 70% of estimated cost

(Or)
> Works of rewinding of motors, Auto Transformers voltage stabilizers costing not less than 80% of estimated cost in last 07 years

Electrical repair and maintenance works shall include all kinds of motor repairs voltage stabilizer repairs, distribution panel repairs starter repairs and electric works etc

The experience certificate (satisfactory performance certificate of works exec shall have been issued by the rank equivalent or above Executive engineer E of any Govt Department or equivalent rank n case of PSUs/ Semi-government/ reputed private enterprise

All other terms/conditions and stipulation as contained in the eNIT shall remain unaltered/unmodified

No. MIDB/CC-02/264-72
DATED: 17/04/2026

Sd/
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Baramulla

DIPK-505/26
DATED: 17-04-2026

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI IRRIGATION DIVISION KULGAM

OFFICE: NEAR DISTRICT HOSPITAL KULGAM PIN: 192231

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

E-NIT No. 01/IDK/2026-27

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, UT of J&K, e-tenders (in single cover system) are invited on item rate basis from Regd. Transporters for hiring of One No. vehicle of following description for the remaining period of financial year 2026-27 for office use by the Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division Kulgam.

S. No	Description	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (in Rupees)	Quantity
1.	Hiring of Vehicle for the financial year 2026-27 of the Type Bolero/Scorpio/Innova Crysta/Innova Hyercross/ Toyota Rumion/Maruti Ertiga for use in Irrigation Division Kulgam inclusive of all maintenance costs of vehicle/Road taxes etc excluding the Cost of fuel.	300/-	25000/- (pledged to Executive Engineer ID Kulgam in the form of CDR/FDR) to be uploaded while bid submission.	01 No.

Accord of Authorization: I. Chief Engineer & FC Kmr No CE/IFCK/PS/2762-63; dated 16-3-2026
II. SE Hydraulic Circle Anantnag's No. SE/Hyd/Cors/11150; dated 16-03-2026
Position of Funds: Budgetary Provision under appropriate head for the financial year 2026-27.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	11-04-2026
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 11-04-2026 04:00 P.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	11-04-2026 04:00 P.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	30-04-2026 up to 04:00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	02-05-2026 at 11.00 AM in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division Kulgam.

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates mentioned. Note I:- The Bidders are advised to read the E-NIT carefully before uploading scanned copies of all necessary documents as mentioned. Any short fall shall lead to rejection of tender.

Note II: As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Secretariat Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dtd.07-06-2018 which reads as under:-

- Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who is declared 1st Lowest (L-1) after opening of Financial bids.
- The cost of tenders should be collected by introducing Treasury Challan (Receipt)
- The EMD and TR of the bidders who had participated earlier in the previous eNIT No: 32/IDK/2025-26; Dated 18.03.2026 shall be treated as valid for this eNIT as well.
- Every Bidder is expected to have the Knowledge of roads and acquaint himself with the road conditions, approaches within the jurisdiction of Irrigation Division Kulgam and shall be deemed to have examined the tender document, detailed specifications, data etc before quoting his rates. No claim whatsoever should be entertained later on the plea of what so ever, which was or was not foreseen by the bidder.
- Bidders should quote their rates legibly in the prescribed column/space against item of rate list. The rate so quoted should be for the complete item in the unit, inclusive of all taxes, duties, and levies, rebates etc as applicable.
- The bidder shall be personally responsible for the watch and ward of the vehicle. The damages caused if any during the contract period have to be set right by the Owner of the Vehicle himself.
- The department will not be responsible for any damages/destruction caused to the vehicle or driver by floods, torrents, fire/civil commotion, terrorist act, lightning, earth quake, cloud burst or any other natural calamity. The contractor on his own expenses will arrange for the safety provision outlined in the relevant sections of the relevant Act to comply with the statutory regulations, ISI recommendations and codes.
- Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Kulgam reserves the right to postpone the tender submission/opening date/reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- No tools and tackles for the vehicle would be made available by the department. The Successful Bidder shall make his own arrangement for all these facilities.
- For any dispute, the decision of the next higher authority of the department shall be final and binding.
- The intending bidder has to upload all the necessary documents of the vehicle such as Registration certificate of Vehicle, Valid pollution under Control certificate, Valid Insurance certificate of Vehicle, Valid Fitness Certificate of Vehicle and Valid Permit Certificate of Vehicle while submission of bid.
- The successful bidder should exclusively provide dedicated Vehicle and driver and change in vehicle and/or driver should be made only in very exceptional circumstances with prior consent/permission of Executive Engineer.
- The driver should be having valid driving license & clean driving record with minimum 3 years' Cumulative experience in any Government Works department. The experience certificate should be issued by the DDO concerned or next higher authority whose scanned copy is to be uploaded while submission of bid.
- There should not be any criminal case/proceedings against the owner of vehicle, intending bidder(agency), driver and vehicle, to be evidenced by an affidavit duly attested by the 1st class Judicial magistrate. The same shall be obtained from the successful bidder only to whom the contract is awarded.
- After the allotment of contract, if any criminal proceeding is found or brought to the notice of the department against the owner of vehicle, intending bidder(agency), driver and/or vehicle, the contract shall be cancelled ab-initio and penalty shall be imposed by the competent authority. Further the Driver must not smoke or drink or use any kind of intoxicating substance or drugs while on duty. In case of misbehaviour of the driver or failure to meet any of the terms and conditions, the driver and the service provider shall be bound to provide a different driver immediately fulfilling the prescribed criteria.
- Pre delivery inspection of the vehicle if deemed necessary will be carried out by the office.
- If the vehicle is found uncomfortable, unstable or below standard, the Tender Inviting Authority shall have the absolute right to reject the vehicle. The vehicle should be capable of safe operation in hilly terrain, rough roads and flood affected areas.
- The vehicle shall be deemed to be at the disposal of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Kulgam during the period to be hired for and the rate quoted should be for full period of contract inclusive of the driver.
- The contract will commence from the date of Award of Contract or the date as mentioned in the Award of contract.
- LPG Cylinder should not be used as fuel for running the vehicle in any case.
- The liability/salary of the driver and all expenses relating to maintenance, insurances, parking, municipal fee, toll charges, change of lubricants, penalties, challans or third-party claims etc would solely and
- Vehicle should be clean and odourless.
- In case of breakdown of vehicle, a substitute vehicle shall be provided by the contractor/agency immediately.
- Breach of contract by the agency/contractor shall be dealt under rules including levying of penalties/dues for short fall of contract period.

No:- KID/194-98 Date:- 11-04-2026

DIPK-481/26
DATED: 17-04-2026

Er. Faisal Farooq
Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Kulgam

IGP Kashmir reviews security arrangements for upcoming events



KNO
Srinagar, Apr 17: Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, V.K. Birdi-IPS, chaired a security review meeting at PCR Kashmir to evaluate and finalize security arrangements for the forthcoming events in the Kashmir Valley.

The meeting was attended by IG CRPF Srinagar Sector, IG CRPF KOS, Additional Commissioner SB Srinagar; DIsG of CRPF (North Srinagar &

KOS); DIG Traffic Kashmir; DIG CKR; DIG SKR; DIG BSF Ops Ftr; DIG SSB Srinagar; DIG ITBP; all District SSSP of Kashmir Zone; Assistant Director SIB Srinagar; Colonel GS 15 Corps; SSSP of PCR Kashmir, Traffic Rural Kashmir, Railways Kashmir, Security Kashmir, SDRF 1st Bn Srinagar, CID CI Kashmir, APCR, Traffic City Srinagar and other senior officers.

The meeting primarily focused on review of security arrangements in anticipation of the forthcoming

events. Deliberations emphasized the need to further strengthen the existing security framework, and optimize deployment of personnel at critical and sensitive locations.

IGP Kashmir directed officers to intensify surveillance on anti-national elements and to enhance area domination in their respective jurisdictions. He stressed the necessity of strengthening security arrangements around vulnerable installations including prominent

tourist destinations, to ensure a safe and secure environment for visitors. He further emphasized strict surveillance along inter-district boundaries to prevent any suspicious movement.

Special directions were issued regarding effective traffic management in Srinagar city, with instructions to implement a comprehensive traffic plan aimed at easing congestion, ensuring smooth vehicular movement, and minimizing inconvenience to the public. IGP Kashmir also reviewed preparedness related to Hajj arrangements, directing officers to ensure adequate security, facilitation, and coordination at all designated points to guarantee the safe and orderly movement of pilgrims.

V.K. Birdi instructed district heads to maintain strict vigilance over social media platforms to curb the spread of misinformation that could adversely impact public safety and order. IGP Kashmir also called for intensified cordon and search operations, particularly in sensitive areas across the Valley and along National Highways. The meeting concluded with a firm resolve to maintain the highest standards of preparedness, coordination, and responsiveness to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of all forthcoming events—(KNO)

SRCM delegation calls on LG Sinha



KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Apr 17: A delegation of Shri Ram Chandra Mission (SRCM) led by its Working Committee Member R C Gupta called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Friday.

People worried over delimitation, handling of legislative decisions: Dr Farooq

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Apr 17: National Conference (NC) president Dr Farooq Abdullah on Friday said people were worried over the ongoing delimitation exercise and the manner in which recent legislative decisions were being handled, alleging that the process had created uncertainty among the public.

Talking to reporters here, Dr Abdullah said the Centre first withdrew the bill after realising it lacked the required numbers and later decided to restore the earlier version.

"They withdrew the bill first. Why did they do that? Because people had concerns, and they knew a two-thirds majority would not be achieved. Then, overnight, they reconsidered and decided to bring back the old bill passed in 2023," he said.

He said such decisions had only added to public anxiety and mistrust.

"A two-thirds majority is required, which they do not have. What they will do



now, only God knows. People are worried, and this approach isn't right. I hope they come to their senses and listen to the people," he said.

Referring to the delimitation exercise in Jammu and Kashmir, the NC president said the process had already generated serious apprehensions among the people. "You have seen how delimitation was done here. Now people are even more worried than before. What is their purpose? That is the question," he said.

On international developments regarding possible talks between the United States and Iran, the former

chief minister said any agreement that ensured peace would be beneficial for the world.

"There is nothing new. We have heard President Trump's statement that if both sides reach an agreement, he himself may come to sign it. May it happen and bring peace, because the whole world is affected by this issue," he said.

Commenting on politics in West Bengal, Dr Farooq expressed confidence that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee would win the upcoming Assembly elections. "Mamata Banerjee will emerge victorious," he said—(KNO)

Police arrest 24 in illegal mining case

NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIEE

Budgam, Apr 17: Authorities in central Kashmir's Budgam district have intensified their crackdown on illegal mining, registering 23 FIRs and arresting 24 individuals during the first quarter of 2026, officials said.

According to data obtained, a total of 45 vehicles involved in illegal extraction and transportation of minerals were seized across various parts of the district. These include 17 tippers, 20 tractors, five JCBs, two L&T machines, and one sand dredger.

The enforcement drive was carried out in multiple areas, including Beerwah, Khag, Hardpanzoo, Chadoora, Kanigund, Doodganga, and Waterhail.

Officials said that apart from police action, the Department of Geology and Mining has also imposed fines amounting to lakhs of rupees on violators.

Police have urged the public to cooperate and report instances of illegal mining, stating that community participation is vital in tackling the issue effectively.

Satish Sharma emphasizes robust enforcement mechanism in LMD

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Apr 17: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services & Sports and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma on Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Legal Metrology Department (LMD) to assess its functioning and strengthen enforcement mechanisms aimed at protecting the consumer interests.

The meeting was attended by Controller Legal Metrology and other senior officers of the department. They briefed the Minister on the current status



of enforcement drives, manpower deployment, inspection mechanisms, and key challenges being faced in ensuring compliance across markets.

Emphasizing the critical role of the Legal Metrology Department in safeguarding the consumer rights, the Minister directed the officials to intensify

regular market inspections and ensure strict adherence to the prescribed standards. He stressed that enforcement must be visible, consistent and effective to deter violations and build consumer confidence.

Sharma laid special emphasis on inspection of petrol pumps,

directing the departments to undertake frequent and surprise checks to prevent any malpractice in measurement and delivery. He said that even minor discrepancies in fuel dispensing directly impact the consumers and must be dealt with firmly.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.com

Thousands join anti-drug rally in Handwara amid rain



WARIS FAYAZ

Handwara, Apr 17: Braving persistent rains, thousands of people on Friday participated in a massive anti-drug rally in Handwara town of north Kashmir, calling for urgent action against substance abuse.

The rally, organised under the "Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan", witnessed participation from students, local associations and officials from civil and police departments.

Carrying banners and placards reading "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" and "Choose Health, Not Drugs", participants marched through the town, raising slogans against drugs. Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse said the campaign has been underway for the past several days and appreciated the large turnout despite inclement weather. Addressing

the gathering, the DC thanked participants for their commitment and stressed the need for sustained and joint efforts to eradicate the drug menace.

MLA Sajad Gani Lone said the fight against drugs requires collective action from all sections of society. He said drug abuse is not limited to individuals but is destroying entire families.

"Families, religious leaders and community members must take responsibility and actively work to curb the growing menace," Lone said. He called upon preachers to raise awareness during prayers. The rally was attended by senior officials, including the Commissioner Secretary, besides officers from the police and civil administration. The event formed part of a 100-day special campaign launched under the "Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan" aimed at curbing drug abuse across the region—(KNO)

Ashmuji-Bhaan link road in shambles

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Kulgam, Apr 17: The deteriorating condition of the Ashmuji-Bhaan road in south Kashmir's Kulgam district has become a major cause of concern for residents, who allege that official apathy has turned their daily commute into a struggle.

The road, riddled with potholes and thick layers of dust, is causing immense inconvenience to commuters, traders, and students alike. Locals said the stretch, once macadamized nearly a decade ago, has

now deteriorated to such an extent that it is barely motorable in several parts.

Mohd Shafi, a shopkeeper from Ashmuji, said the poor condition of the road has directly affected his livelihood. "I started this shop many years ago, and things were running smoothly earlier. But now, the dust from the road constantly enters my shop, damaging goods and making it difficult to even sit inside," he said. "Customers avoid stopping here because of the dust and inconvenience, which has reduced my income

significantly."

Residents from both Ashmuji and Bhaan villages echoed similar concerns, stating that the road has become a persistent source of trouble for the entire community. "The road was macadamised around 10 years ago, but since then, no proper maintenance has been carried out. Today, it is completely damaged and full of potholes, making travel extremely difficult," said Sahil Ahmad, another resident.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.com

Sopore Police nab 40 in drug crackdown this year so far

WARIS FAYAZ

Sopore, Apr 17: Police in Sopore have intensified anti-drug crackdown, registering 34 FIRs and arresting 40 persons in connection with multiple cases under the NDPS Act till April 17 this year, officials said.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sopore, Iftkhar Talib said that a significant quantity of contraband has been seized during the ongoing drive aimed at dismantling the drug network in the area. He said action has also been taken against vehicles and drivers involved in drug-related activities. "Around 20 vehicles have been deregistered during the operation, while registrations have been cancelled. Besides, 15 driving licences have also been cancelled," the SSP said, adding that stricter measures will follow in future. Talib said

the police are focusing on breaking the supply chain by targeting drug peddlers and their networks. "We are working to dismantle the entire supply chain, not just arrest individuals involved in peddling," he said.

He added that enforcement alone cannot curb the menace and called for collective action from society. "Drug abuse is a social crime. If we look at it only as a policing issue, it will be difficult to tackle. Public awareness and community participation are crucial," he said.

SSP Talib said police have also launched awareness campaigns in schools and localities, while religious leaders are being engaged to spread anti-drug messaging. He urged people to play an active role in the fight against drugs and support efforts to curb the growing menace—(KNO)

Indian Knowledge Systems National Conference concludes at SKUAST-Jammu

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Apr 17: The three day National Conference on "Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems with Modern Science for Viksit Bharat", organized by Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu (SKUAST-Jammu), concluded on Friday with a valedictory function held at Baba Jitto Auditorium, Main Campus, Chatha.

The valedictory function was attended by Professor B. R. Kamboj, Vice Chancellor, Chaudhary Charan

Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CSHAU), Hisar, as the chief guest and Babila Rakwal, Commissioner Secretary, Science and Technology as the guest of honour.

Professor B. N. Tripathi, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu lauded the successful organization of the conference. He remarked that the participation of diverse disciplines and multiple generations has been one of the major achievements of the conference. He expressed satisfaction over the enthusiastic involvement of a large number of students. He emphasized

that with the Government of India's strong focus on Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), SKUAST-Jammu is committed to actively contribute and take meaningful initiatives in this direction.

Addressing the gathering, Professor B. R. Kamboj highlighted the need for scientific validation, documentation and wider dissemination of traditional knowledge for national development. He underscored that India's traditional knowledge systems hold immense potential in ensuring sustainability and resilience and their

integration with modern science is vital for realizing the goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Commissioner Secretary, in her address, appreciated the initiative taken by SKUAST-Jammu and said that India is a land of profound wisdom from Ayurveda to Astronomy rooted in centuries of knowledge and innovation. The need of the hour is not only to preserve this rich legacy but to integrate it with the modern science, paving the way for a truly Viksit Bharat.

The conference, held from April 15 to 17, 2026, brought

together eminent scientists, academicians and policymakers from across the country. It featured technical sessions, panel discussions and research presentations on themes such as sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, biodiversity conservation and traditional farming practices.

During the valedictory session, awards and certificates were distributed among the outstanding participants and presenters in recognition of their contributions.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.com

EDITORIAL

Don't Let Kashmir's Rice Fields Disappear

The fast conversion of paddy fields into apple orchards across Kashmir is a serious threat to the Valley's ability to feed itself. Experts warn that if this continues, Kashmir could become 100 percent dependent on other states for rice. A region once known for growing its own rice is now at a dangerous point. The numbers are worrying. Paddy farming land

in Jammu and Kashmir has fallen from 1,62,309 hectares in 2012-13 to 1,34,067 hectares in 2021-22—a drop of 17 percent. In Pulwama, once the rice bowl of Kashmir, nearly 70 percent of paddy land has been converted. The Valley already faces a food shortage of 40-50 percent, importing most of its rice from Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh. The reason for this shift is simple.

Apple farming gives farmers more money than paddy. Farmers want better earnings, and that is understandable. But the government must also think about long-term food security. If Kashmir stops growing rice completely, any disruption in supply, due to natural disasters, road closures, or political trouble, could lead to severe shortages. The Valley's geographical isolation makes it

particularly vulnerable. Without adequate local production, even a week-long highway closure could create a crisis. The solution requires a balanced, multi-pronged strategy. What needs to be done? First, the government must protect prime paddy land from being converted freely. Second, farmers should be given better prices and support to continue growing rice. Third,

high-yield rice varieties and better irrigation can make paddy farming more profitable. Fourth, a strategic buffer stock of locally grown rice must be created. The Valley needs both apples for income and rice for food security. But without urgent action, rice fields will disappear. The time to act is now. Tomorrow's empty plates will not forgive today's neglect.

The Hormuz Crisis And The Fate Of The Global South

If the shock from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz has revealed economic vulnerabilities, it has also illuminated stark differences in how countries absorb energy-price turbulence. Those that have invested in more resilient clean energy sources are faring better and offering lessons for everyone else.

Laura Carvalho

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has triggered what the International Monetary Fund calls a "global yet asymmetric" rupture, disrupting the flow of roughly one-quarter of oil, one-fifth of liquefied natural gas, and one-third of fertilizer supplies. Energy and fertilizer prices have risen, supply chains have rerouted, and financial conditions have tightened unevenly around the world.

Import-dependent economies in Asia, Africa, and parts of Europe have been hit hardest, with many facing higher bond spreads and credit downgrades. As central banks weigh their responses to surging fuel and food prices, the rise in global interest rates is squeezing what little fiscal and policy space developing countries still have.

But if the "Hormuz shock" has laid bare economic vulnerabilities, it has also illuminated something else: the stark differences in how countries absorb turbulence. One of the most salient fault lines in the world nowadays is not simply between oil-exporting and oil-importing countries, but between countries whose energy systems leave them exposed and those who began building energy resilience long before the crisis arrived.

Spain's renewables revolution offers the starkest illustration of what is possible. Its rapid wind and solar growth has cut the share of hours in which gas sets the domestic electricity price from 75% in 2019 to just 19% in 2025—the sharpest reduction among Europe's major gas-reliant power markets. While wholesale electricity prices in Germany and Italy have been well above €150 (\$177) per megawatt-hour during the Hormuz shock, Spain's average wholesale price for 2026 is projected to be €60-70/MWh.



Brazil's extensive biofuels infrastructure has provided a similar buffer, though by a different route. Tens of millions of Brazilian drivers can choose between 100% sugarcane-based ethanol or gasoline blended with 30% biofuel, supported by one of the world's largest fleets of flexible-fuel vehicles. Because domestic gasoline includes a substantial biofuel share, fuel refined by the state-run energy major Petrobras has remained dramatically cheaper than imported gasoline equivalents, cushioning consumers from global oil volatility. Brazilian gasoline prices rose just 5% in March, compared with roughly 30% in the United States, and Mexico's president has publicly expressed interest in Brazil's ethanol technologies, including agave-based production.

China, too, has proven more resilient than many would have guessed. After a decade of

investment, renewables account for nearly 40% of its electricity generation, up from 26% a decade ago, and it has amassed strategic petroleum reserves of more than 1.2 billion barrels. As a result, Goldman Sachs has revised China's GDP growth forecast down by only half as much as that of the US, identifying renewable-energy dominance as one of the "shields" protecting its economy.

No wonder energy analysts are describing the Iran war as "Asia's Ukraine moment." Just as the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 compelled Europe to reduce its reliance on natural gas, the Hormuz shock is pushing Asian countries to cut their oil dependencies. Moreover, cleaner alternatives are now significantly cheaper and more readily available than they were in 2022.

The lesson is clear: vulnerability is a function of structural and policy choices, not just

of trade balances. Every country must ask how much of its energy system it controls, how diversified its supplies are, and whether it has built sufficient insulation between global commodity markets and ordinary people. For fossil-fuel-dependent economies that neglected the energy transition, there is an additional warning: if this crisis accelerates other countries' shift to renewables, stranded assets and shrinking export markets may compound the pain of future shocks.

As many governments wait for multilateral institutions to respond, realities on the ground are changing fast. At the same time, oil and gas producers have a rare window of opportunity. As the University of Massachusetts Amherst economists Isabella M. Weber and Gregor Semieniuk have argued, fossil-fuel price shocks are redistribution episodes: costs are imposed on the entire population while profits flow only to shareholders. That is why windfall profit taxes, such as the one recently championed by five EU finance ministers, are so urgently needed.

The additional revenues could serve two urgent priorities. The first is consumer protection. Higher energy prices are a regressive tax on the poor. Without active intervention, this crisis will deepen inequality within oil-exporting countries, just as it does elsewhere. Short-term subsidies, targeted energy vouchers, and price-stabilization mechanisms are legitimate uses of windfall receipts, precisely because the shock is temporary and the revenues will not last.

The second priority is structural investment. State-owned enterprises like Petrobras have already begun investing in biofuels and low-carbon technologies, and the Hormuz crisis could provide them with additional resources for this purpose.

Likewise, sovereign wealth funds offer a

proven mechanism for institutionalizing the link between windfall revenues and long-term energy-transition goals. The Malaysian sovereign wealth fund, for example, has committed RM1.5 billion (\$378 million) to decarbonize industrial parks and is building green investment platforms targeting renewable energy, storage, and e-mobility. Indonesia's new Danantara sovereign wealth fund has struck agreements to develop renewable energy and green hydrogen facilities, directly linking resource wealth to clean-technology value chains.

Even Senegal, a relatively small producer, has established the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund through its sovereign vehicle FONSIS. It is mobilizing equity investments in renewables across the West African Economic and Monetary Union, as well as positioning itself to channel future gas revenues into green industrialization.

This is how countries shift from exposure to autonomy: by transforming yesterday's rents into tomorrow's capital base. Seizing this moment means converting temporary windfalls into durable assets and treating green industrial strategy as necessary for national resilience. The countries that act now will be glad they did when the next crisis arrives.

Laura Carvalho is Director of Economic and Climate Prosperity at the Open Society Foundations and Associate Professor of Economics at the University of São Paulo. Her research focuses on the intersection between macroeconomics and development economics, particularly the relationship between economic growth and income inequality. She wrote a weekly column for *Folha de São Paulo*, Brazil's largest newspaper, and is the author of *Valsa Brasileira: do boom ao caos econômico* (Todavia, 2018).

Source: Project Syndicate

Why Are We So Dependent On Social Media?

To understand social media's grip, start with the demanding task of being yourself

Joseph E. Davis

Two recent jury verdicts have cast a harsh light on social media. A New Mexico jury found Meta, owner of Instagram and Facebook, negligent for misleading users about the safety of its platforms. A day later, a jury in Los Angeles found Meta and YouTube liable for "addictive" design features, such as infinite scroll and algorithmic recommendations, that ensnared a young user, causing her significant mental health harms.

Covering the L.A. trial, a New York Times reporter anticipated the verdict. Criticism of social media has been growing for a decade, he noted, and although 3 billion people use Facebook and Instagram, that doesn't mean they "approve of social media or even like it." But, sounding like someone talking about addiction, he added, "they just can't imagine being without it."

Why not? Why does social media have such a grip on so many? Besides Silicon Valley skullduggery, a place to look is in what people say they need it for. In an earlier post, I considered our diminishing social connection. The use of social media, I argued, was both an indicator of the decline in community participation and growing loneliness and a response to it. Here, I want to take up another social need that long predated social media. We might call this task "self-formation," the now-familiar process/business/ordeal (take your pick) of producing and sustaining a personal identity.

Telling Our Story Since at least the 1960s, the disciplinary society has been disappearing. That is, the stable institutions that had constrained individuals and set clear expectations for them, whether through families, established communities, or tightly regulated traditions, have eroded and lost much of their hold. Important life choices, such as those



pertaining to careers, marriages, and family roles, were, in the words of psychologist Barry Schwartz, once "made by default." But now, he adds, after the changes of recent decades, very little is. Questions of who we will be, what we will do, and where we will go have become matters of genuine (if, in practice, always constrained) choice. Our self—as we all know firsthand—is now a kind of project, which, by our own lights and resources, we must actively work on and develop.

The task of self-formation is demanding. We must find our own meaning and purpose, decide what work we'll pursue, negotiate our relationships, create our opportunities, establish our status, and so on. This work, the work of becoming ourselves, requires a lot of careful social interpretation. We must become adept at monitoring ourselves, at gathering information on how we are doing, and

at telling a coherent story about ourselves in terms of the ideas and practices we identify with and incorporate. Since the future is shifting and unpredictable, we must also be prepared for continuous change and self-narrative revision.

While we do the work of self-formation on ourselves, our project is reliant on institutions, available social spaces, and other people. Much of what we need—knowledge, feedback, and recognition—we cannot produce for ourselves. This is where, for many, the use of social media has come to serve a critical function.

Social Media Functions Based on surveys, interviews, and other research, we can divide the uses to which people employ social media for self-formation into at least three categories:

As a space for learning about and exploring identity options. Social media provides

access to information and communication far beyond the confines of locality, giving us a window into the lives of many more people than we would ever meet. We can see how others are living and working out personal identities, learn about alternative values, and experience (via the medium) phenomena that we might never encounter in our daily lives. Social media opens new frontiers: new ways to imagine and facilitate self-formation with options and models beyond those available offline.

As a means to interact with others who share common identities, abilities/disabilities, or interests. Social media makes available non-local, like-minded communities of people who can be a source of advice and feedback, offer emotional support and help in coping with any number of life issues and circumstances, and serve as an audience for self-expression and identity experimentation. Significantly, as some media scholars stress, these groups offer a way for people to distance themselves from their ordinary relations. Communities can validate personal experience that feels odd or inexplicable, or is criticized by others, as genuine, normal, or expectable. And they can acknowledge and recognize new identities as worthy of social approval and respect, even when others in one's locale don't.

As a platform to display and confirm self-formation success. Social media creates a public forum for narrating and broadcasting one's activity and creative character. Posting to sites such as Facebook generates an emergent and curated autobiography that can be referred to, commented on, "liked," and shared. Social media "can give us," one student I interviewed said, "the power to affirm ourselves even more and to highlight our abilities." And, she added, on a screen, it is "much easier to describe yourself just as you like." These platform features can be

especially advantageous for social advancement. In competitive contexts, social or professional, people need to confidently stand out from others. Highlighting one's abilities and distinctiveness gives these qualities visibility, without which they may not be seen or credited.

Of course, social media can and does have many negative consequences for self-formation. Recent commentary has focused heavily on the negatives, especially for youth. But by considering how people use social media as an infrastructure for their self-making, we can also see how they might become highly dependent on them: If they are not "addicted," in the sense being argued in the tort cases—as helplessly under the influence of the engineering of the platforms—they are nonetheless deeply resistant to letting go, or in the case of youth, letting parents interfere. Perhaps many "just can't imagine being without it," because their very sense of self hangs in the balance.

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Joseph E. Davis is Research Professor of Sociology and Director of the Picturing the Human Colloquy of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia.

Source: Psychology Today

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MISSION KARMAYOGI

J&K shines, JKIMPARD gets special Award for Excellence

KT News Desk

JAMMU, APR 17: Jammu & Kashmir has secured the third rank nationally under Mission Karmayogi during S DHANA Saptah, marking a major milestone in institutionalising continuous learning and competency-driven governance among the civil servants.

The recognition, as per an official statement, reflects the Union Territory's structured implementation of reforms under the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB). With a focus on role-based capacity building, competency mapping and optimal use of the iGOT Karmayogi digital platform, J&K has shown measurable progress in strengthening its administrative capacity.

According to the official data, 2,01,962 officials from the UT have been onboarded on the platform, collectively achieving 4,13,722 course completions. Of these, 2,74,511 completions were in AI-focused courses. Further, 54,003 employees have completed more than one hour of learning while 37,309 officials have surpassed four hours, indicating deep engagement with the initiative.

The award was presented



during the S DHANA Saptah Facilitation Ceremony held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh presided over the function and felicitated the top-performing States, Union Territories and institutions.

Commissioner/Secretary, Administration Department, M. Raju, received the award on behalf of the government of Jammu & Kashmir.

In a notable achievement, the Jammu and Kashmir Institute of Management, Public Administration and Rural Development (JKIMPARD) was conferred a Special Award for becoming the first institution in the country to successfully complete the Capacity Building

Plans (CBPs) across all the departments. This sets a national benchmark in operationalizing Mission Karmayogi objectives at the State/UT level.

During S DHANA Saptah, the UT administration ensured active participation through a structured and closely monitored approach. The nodal officers were designated to oversee the engagement and ensure completion of the prescribed learning hours on the iGOT platform, strictly in line with the NPCSCB guidelines. The J&K Chief Secretary efficiently monitored the progress through regular reviews to ensure effective implementation of the ambitious programme.

Dr. Jitendra Singh has consistently emphasized the

strengthening capacity building and promoting good governance practices. This commitment was reinforced at the recent Regional Conference in Jammu on Holistic Development of Districts, which focused on integrated planning, enhanced capacity and improved governance outcomes at the grassroots level.

The recognition underscores the government's commitment towards building a competent, accountable and citizen-centric civil service, aligned with the vision of Mission Karmayogi Bharat. The Jammu & Kashmir government has reiterated its resolve to further strengthen the capacity-building mechanisms and sustain reform momentum for improved public service delivery.

SANJY-2026: Draw of lots for tent, shop allotment held in Anantnag



KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, APRIL 17: To ensure fair and transparent allotment of tents and shops for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026 at various identified locations on Pahalgam Axis, a draw of lots was conducted Friday at Dak Bungalow, Khanabal.

The exercise, as per an official statement, was jointly carried out by a designated committee comprising ADC, CEO PDA, SDM Pahalgam, AD Tourism Pahalgam and DIO NIC through a randomisation software, ensuring its fairness and transparency.

Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, (Yatra Officer Pahalgam Axis), Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat oversaw the entire process in presence of ACR, applicants, service providers and their representatives.

The applicants had earlier submitted their applications for installing shops

and pitching tents at various identified locations enroute the Holy Cave. The allocation of quotas to different applicant categories was made strictly in accordance with the guidelines laid down by Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) and Divisional Commissioner Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that the initiative is part of the pre-Yatra logistical planning aimed at facilitating smooth arrangements for the annual pilgrimage, which witnesses a large influx of devotees every year via the Pahalgam route. He asked for cooperation from all the stakeholders for successful conduct of SANJY-2026.

The applicants and service providers present on the occasion expressed satisfaction over the transparent and smooth conduct of the process and appreciated the authorities for providing a fair and equal opportunity to them.

Education Minister mourns demise of Sr Lecturer Tariq Ahmad Matta



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, APRIL 17: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo has expressed deep grief and sorrow on the sad demise of Senior Lecturer of HSS Bomai, Tariq Ahmad Matta.

In her condolence message, the Education Minister, as per an official statement, said that the Late Tariq Ahmad was a dedicated educator, whose demise is a great loss to academic fraternity. "I am deeply saddened by the untimely demise of Tariq Ahmad Matta, Senior Lecturer in Zoology at HSS Bomai. A dedicated educator, inspiring mentor, and passionate sportsman, his loss is a great blow to the academic fraternity", she said.

The Minister also extended her deep condolences to the bereaved family as well as his colleagues and students.

"My heartfelt condolences to his family, colleagues, and students. May Allah grant him Jannat-ul-Firdous", she added.

NASHA MUKHT ABHIYAAN

Budgam witnesses continued momentum



KT News Desk

BUDGAM, APRIL 17: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, a series of awareness and outreach activities were conducted across various locations in Budgam district to reinforce the message of a drug-free society.

Outreach workers and counsellors, as per an official statement, continued their activities in the identified hotspot area of Nasrullapora, engaging with the community and spreading awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse. The initiative focused on counseling, community interaction, and encouraging individuals to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

An awareness programme on drug abuse was also organized at SDH Chadoora, where staff and patients actively participated. The programme emphasized the ill effects of substance abuse and highlighted the

importance of collective efforts in curbing the menace.

In another significant activity, a plantation drive was conducted at Arizal under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan at Hardapanzoo, involving Government Middle School Hardapanzoo. The drive was organized by Sukhnag Forest Range of Pir Panjal Forest Division Budgam, promoting environmental responsibility alongside the message of a drug-free society.

Meanwhile, a pledge on drug abuse was administered at HSS Wagar, where students and staff participated with enthusiasm, reaffirming their commitment towards building a drug-free and healthy society.

The district administration reiterated its commitment to intensify the campaign through sustained awareness drives, community participation, and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders to achieve the goal of a drug-free Budgam.

District Admin Shopian strengthens grassroots vigilance

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, APRIL 17: Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta convened a meeting Friday at Shopian, to review and strengthen the implementation of the Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyaan, with a particular focus on enhancing grassroots level vigilance and awareness.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, emphasized the critical role of Lambardars and Chowkidars as the "eyes and ears" of the administration in rural areas.

They were directed to actively monitor and report drug related activities and contribute to the prevention of substance abuse at the village level.

Key directions issued during the meeting included identification of potential drug hotspots, thereby generating awareness and other enforcement measures.

Participants were instructed to assist law enforcement agencies by generating local awareness on the substance and drug abuse.

Lambardars and Chowkidars were also directed to ensure strict surveillance around educational



institutions to prevent the sale of tobacco products within restricted zones.

Emphasis was laid on active participation in Gram Sabhas to pass anti drug resolutions and mobilize community support.

Further, Lambardars and Chowkidars were encouraged to lead awareness initiatives, including organizing anti drug pledges, displaying helpline numbers, and disseminating information in prominent locations.

Collaboration with local leaders, teachers, and religious figures was highlighted as essential for spreading awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

The DC also stressed the importance of promoting healthy alternatives for youth

through sports and skill development activities.

Early identification of drug users and facilitating their access to de-addiction, rehabilitation and counseling services were underscored as key measures.

Ensuring confidentiality of victims was highlighted to maintain trust within the community.

The meeting was attended by SSP Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmad Choudhary, Additional Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Shopian, Shakoor Ahmad Dar, Sub Divisional Magistrate Zainapora, Bilal Ahmad, DIO, DSWO, all Tehsildars, Lambardars and Chowkidars across the district.

DC Pulwama reviews functioning of Kisan Khidmat Ghars

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, APRIL 17: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom reviewed the functioning of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) and held an interaction with Krishi Udyamis at Circuit House Pulwama.

During the review meeting, the Chief Agriculture Officer Pulwama gave a detailed presentation on the establishment and operational status of Kisan Khidmat Ghars in the district.

The presentation discussed the progress achieved and the role of KKGs in ensuring door-step delivery of agricultural inputs and extension services to farmers.

The DC, as per an official statement, took a comprehensive review of input supply mechanisms, service delivery systems and the overall performance of Krishi Udyamis in the district. He emphasised the

need for strengthening last-mile delivery to ensure that farmers receive timely and quality services.

Stressing the importance of Kisan Khidmat Ghars, the DC directed that these centres be made fully functional as single-window facilitation hubs for farmers. He called for maintaining transparency, accountability and efficiency in all service delivery processes.

Dr. Qayoom further stressed the need for regular capacity-building programmes for Krishi Udyamis to enhance their effectiveness and outreach.

Earlier, Krishi Udyamis shared their field experiences and provided valuable feedback aimed at further strengthening service delivery mechanisms.

The meeting was attended by senior officers of Agriculture and allied sectors and Krishi Udyamis from across the district.

GMC Srinagar conducts UT-level Psychiatry virtual medical board meet

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, APRIL 17: Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), GMC Srinagar, Friday successfully conducted the first UT-level Virtual Medical Board Meet in Psychiatry.

The academic meet, as per an official statement, witnessed an overwhelming participation of around 200 delegates, including senior faculty members, consultants, postgraduate scholars and trainees from all medical colleges across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, including GMC Jammu SKIMS Medical college GMC Anantnag, GMC Baramulla, GMC Handwara, GMC Doda, GMC Kathu, GMC Rajouri and also Psychiatrists from Telemans team. The session was inaugurated by Principal GMC Srinagar who emphasized the need for strengthening academic integration and clinical uniformity across all medical institutions of the UT.

The Scientific Session mainly revolved around newer role for mECT particularly in Neuro Cognitive Disorders. An atypical clinical case with diagnostic and management implications was presented by Dr. Chandini Wani senior resident and moderated by Dr. Yuman Kawoos, Assistant Professor Psychiatry

and Dr Faisal, Assistant Professor Anaesthesia provided insights about anaesthetic implications of the procedure. The meet served as an important platform for discussion on key psychiatric and mental health priorities, standardization of clinical practices, interdepartmental referrals, and structured academic activities aimed at improving mental healthcare delivery.

The role of IMHANS, GMC Srinagar, was particularly significant in facilitating the academic coordination, expert interaction, and structured conduct of the virtual board meet, reaffirming its position as a leading mental health and academic hub in the UT.

The participants actively engaged in discussions related to evolving challenges in mental health care, strengthening institutional collaboration, and enhancing coordinated psychiatric services across Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative was widely appreciated by attendees as a step forward towards unified mental health planning and improved academic networking.

The Department of Psychiatry at GMC Srinagar reiterated their commitment to continue such UT-level academic and clinical engagements in the future, with the goal of enhancing both patient care and academic excellence in the field of Psychiatry across the region.

Youth lead as sports, awareness campaign gains momentum in Baramulla

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, APRIL 17: District Youth Services and Sports Baramulla continues to energize the district with a powerful blend of sports excellence and social awareness under the ongoing Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions and the Nasha Mukht J&K 100 Days Campaign.

In an inspiring display of commitment towards a drug-free society, multiple zones across Baramulla actively participated in both sporting events and awareness initiatives, engaging hundreds of students in meaningful and transformative activities.

Zone Chandanwari successfully conducted Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions under the banner of Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, featuring Chess and Carrom for Under-14 boys, with an



enthusiastic participation of 30 students, showcasing both skill and discipline.

Meanwhile, Zone Wagoora, on the 3rd day of its ongoing competitions, organized Under-14 boys events at HSS Kreeri, where 54 students participated with great zeal and competitive spirit, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for sports at the grassroots level.

Extending the campaign beyond playgrounds, Zone Dangiwach organized a

massive rally under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, witnessing participation from around 250 students, spreading a strong message against drug abuse across the locality.

Similarly, Zone Rohama conducted a series of impactful awareness activities including rallies, speeches, poster-making competitions, and interactive sessions. Both students and teachers participated actively, reinforcing the message of a healthy and drug-free lifestyle.

Sports, awareness activities in Ganderbal

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, APRIL 17: Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) Ganderbal continued its district-wide activities under the ongoing Nasha Mukht Abhiyan J&K, with active participation from students across all four zones.

A series of activities, including poster making, painting, slogan writing, awareness campaigns, and sports events such as carrom and chess, were organized in government and private schools. Students participated in large numbers, reflecting strong involvement in both awareness and sports initiatives.

The programme, as per an official statement, aimed to educate youth about the harmful effects of drug abuse while encouraging a healthy and disciplined lifestyle.

Sports activities served as a positive platform for channeling energy, improving fitness, and promoting constructive habits among students.

Through creative expressions, participants shared anti-drug messages and highlighted the importance of responsible choices and staying away from substance abuse. Slogans such as "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" and "Choose Sports, No Drugs" were widely promoted.

District Youth Services and Sports Officer Ganderbal stated that regular engagement in sports and awareness activities plays an important role in building discipline and resilience among youth. He added that such initiatives are essential in guiding students towards positive choices and contributing to a drug-free society.

Home Minister Amit Shah tears into Congress, allies

Says their mindset neither in interest of women, nor country

PTI
New Delhi, Apr 17: Slamming the Congress and its allies for the defeat of a Constitution amendment bill in Lok Sabha, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said their mindset is neither in the interest of women, nor the country.

The bill which failed the LS test sought to implement a 33 per cent women's quota in legislative bodies before the 2029 Parliamentary polls.

"Rejecting the bill that would grant 33 per cent reservation to women, celebrating it, and raising victory cries over it was truly reprehensible and beyond imagination," Shah said in a message on X after the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill failed to secure a two-thirds majority in the Lower House on Friday night.

"How can anyone celebrate victory after deceiving half the country's population — 70 crore million women — and losing their trust?" he said.

Shah termed the Opposition's rejoicing at the bill's defeat "an insult to every woman" who has been waiting for her rights for decades.

"This celebration by the opposition is an insult to every woman who has been waiting for her rights for decades. How many



times will the Congress and its allies betray women?" he said.

Shah said a very strange scene unfolded in the Lok Sabha today as the Congress, TMC, DMK, and the Samajwadi Party did not allow the passage of the essential Constitution amendment bill, the Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam.

"Now, the women of the country will not get 33 per cent reservation in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, which was their right. The Congress and its allies have done this, not for the first time but repeatedly. Their mindset is neither in the interest of women nor the country," Shah said in the message in Hindi.

The Union home minister also warned the Congress and other parties which opposed the bill that this insult to "Nari Shakti"

will travel far and wide.

"The opposition will have to face the wrath of women, not only in the 2029 Lok Sabha elections but at every level, in every election, and at every place," Shah said.

When put to a vote in the Lower House, 298 members voted in support of the bill, while 230 voted against it.

Out of the 528 members who voted, the bill required 352 votes to secure a two-thirds majority for the passage of the bill.

According to the bill, Lok Sabha seats were to be increased to a maximum of 850 from the current 543 to "operationalise" the women's reservation law before the 2029 parliamentary polls, following a delimitation exercise based on the 2011 Census.

Allahabad HC orders FIR against Rahul Gandhi in dual citizenship case

PTI

Lucknow, Apr 17: The Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court on Friday ordered an FIR be filed against Congress MP Rahul Gandhi in connection with an alleged dual citizenship controversy.

The bench permitted the state government to hand over the probe to any central probe agency after registration of an FIR.

The order was passed by a bench of Justice Subhash Vidyarthi on a petition filed by S Vignesh Shishir, who had challenged a January 28 order of a special MP/MLA court rejecting his plea for an FIR against Gandhi, the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha.

The special court had earlier held that it was not competent to adjudicate on issues related to citizenship.

The petitioner, a BJP worker from Karnataka, had sought registration of an FIR and a detailed probe into the matter, levelling allegations against Gandhi under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Official Secrets Act, the Foreigners Act and the Passport Act.

The complaint was initially filed before the special MP/MLA

court in Rae Bareilly. However, on the petitioner's request, the high court transferred the case to Lucknow on December 17, 2025.

The MP/MLA court in Lucknow subsequently dismissed the plea on January 28, 2026, prompting the petitioner to approach the high court, which has now ordered registration of an FIR.

In its order, the bench said that from a bare perusal of the allegations, prima facie cognizable offences were made out against Gandhi and hence the allegations required to be investigated.

The bench said that the special court should have looked into whether the allegations prima facie made out any cognizable offences or not, but it failed to consider it.

Earlier, Deputy Solicitor General of India SB Pandey produced the central government's records in the court relating to the citizenship controversy surrounding Gandhi.

Government counsel VK Singh also consented on behalf of the UP government that the allegations prima facie made out cognizable offences.

After having a detailed hearing, the bench found that the

material on records showed that Gandhi had committed "cognizable offences" in having dual citizenship, and these allegations required to be probed. The petitioner has alleged that Rahul is a UK Citizen and incorporated a company named M/S Backops Ltd in August 2003.

It was further submitted that Gandhi categorically admitted and voluntarily declared his nationality as British, having a Director Identification ID and London and Hampshire addresses.

In his petition, Shishir claimed that Rahul submitted the company's annual returns in October 2005 and October 2006, listing his nationality as British.

Thereafter, the company was dissolved through a dissolution application in February 2009.

According to the petitioner, the material placed before the court includes records suggesting that Rahul Gandhi may have been listed as a voter in the United Kingdom and participated in electoral processes there.

During the course of the hearing, the high court earlier directed the Ministry of Home Affairs to place all relevant records, including classified documents, before the court.

Rana reaffirms commitment to responsive governance

Reviews public grievances in Mendhar

KT News Desk

Mendhar, Apr 17: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana on Friday held an extensive public outreach session in Mendhar to assess and address the grievances and demands of the local residents there.

The Minister interacted with multiple delegations and took stock of the public issues and concerns, assuring prompt action on the same.

During the interaction, the Minister patiently listened to the grievances and



developmental demands raised by the delegations and individuals. He assured that all genuine issues would be addressed in a time-bound manner through coordinated efforts among the concerned departments.

A delegation from the Transporters' Union, while meeting the Minister, conveyed their appreciation for the recently introduced

traffic management plan devised by the Sub-Divisional Administration. They said that the initiative is expected to significantly ease traffic congestion in the area and improve mobility for commuters as well as traders.

Another delegation raised the issue of better road connectivity and other infrastructural requirements.

Reiterating his commitment to transparent and people-centric governance, the Minister underscored the importance of sustained public engagement and proactive outreach. He stated that such interactions are vital for identifying grassroots issues and ensuring their prompt resolution, ultimately contributing to the accelerated and inclusive development.

Bengaluru: Man held for illegal sale of IPL match tickets



PTI

Bengaluru, Apr 17: A 49-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly illegally selling IPL match tickets at inflated prices outside the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here, police said on Friday. The Central Crime Branch (CCB) made the arrest following a tip-off during the April 15 match between RCB and LSG that tickets were being sold illegally at higher rates, they said.

Police identified the accused as Chandrashekar P, a Bengaluru resident who was working with a catering service at the stadium.

During questioning, it was found that he was reselling match tickets in black.

According to police, investigations showed that for the April 15 match, 100 tickets were bought using the names of two companies and then sold at higher prices.

In a similar case during the March 28 RCB vs CSK match, 81 tickets worth Rs 6.6 lakh were purchased under one company's name and resold at inflated rates. Police said that during the 2026 IPL season, the accused bought 181 tickets worth Rs 17.52 lakh through a portal and sold them illegally.

The accused has been taken into custody, and further investigation is underway to identify others involved in the racket, they added.

West Asia: India supplied 22,000 MT of high-speed diesel to Bangladesh in March, says MEA

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 17: Amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, India has supplied 22,000 metric tonnes of high-speed diesel to Bangladesh in March and has received a request from Seychelles and the Maldives to meet their energy requirements, the MEA said on Friday.

At his weekly briefing, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal in his response to a query related to requests received from India's neighbouring countries for fuel amid the West Asia situation, also said that India is "finalising a government-to-government agreement" for the supply of oil and gas, which will play an important role in reinforcing energy security of Mauritius.

The conflict in West Asia has now stretched to nearly 50 days, with global ramifications.

"So, we have received requests from our neighbouring countries for supply of fuel, and these are being looked into, keeping in mind our own requirements, availability and refining capacity," Jaiswal told reporters.

He further said India has "supplied 22,000 metric tonnes of high-speed diesel to Bangladesh in March 2026, and further supplies have continued this month as well".

"You would recall that last month we had supplied 38 metric tonnes of petroleum



products to Sri Lanka as well," he added.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Mauritius last week, the MEA spokesperson said, adding, "We are finalising a government-to-government agreement for supply of oil and gas, which will play an important role in reinforcing the energy security of Mauritius".

As far as Nepal is concerned, there is an existing arrangement between Indian Oil Corporation and Nepal Oil Corporation to supply petroleum products to Nepal as per its requirements. The supplies are continuing without any interruption, he said.

Energy supplies to Bhutan also continue according to the existing arrangement.

"As I had mentioned earlier, we have received a

request from Seychelles and the Maldives to meet their energy requirements. We continue to be in touch with them in this regard, and are considering the request keeping in mind our own domestic requirements and availability of fuel.

"I would also like to add that our neighbouring country governments have expressed appreciation for the uninterrupted supply, fuel supply to them during the West Asian conflict," Jaiswal said.

Global oil and gas prices surged after Iran restricted the transit of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow lane between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman that handles roughly 20 per cent of global oil and LNG trade.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Under PM Modi,

"A road reaching a border village builds not just passage but unshakable confidence in our defense. Electricity lighting a border village home offers not mere illumination but fresh hope. Employment for a border village youth transforms not only one life but the trajectory of an entire community.

My vision is clear that border village development is integral to national security, and every border village must rank among our nation's most prosperous," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor said that since assuming responsibility for Jammu Kashmir in August 2020, he had prioritized border villages' aspirations.

"In border villages where women rise each dawn dreaming of brighter futures for their children amid challenges, where farmers toiling in their soil through hardships, and where communities stand as sentinels without uniforms, we have ignited a new dawn of progress," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also called upon officers to achieve 100% saturation of HADP, Mission Youth, Mudra Yojana, and all welfare schemes, leaving no eligible citizen behind.

"Our commitment has transformed lives, and I affirm with confidence that change is tangible in Jammu Kashmir's border villages where roads now weave networks, healthcare is thriving, digital connectivity is transforming the education sector and residents now feel integrated to India's rapid growth," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said true development means equal opportunity, dignity, and instilled confidence and the Vibrant Villages Programme embodies this, advancing employment, education, infrastructure, and digital

empowerment holistically.

"It is our moral duty to secure every citizen's brighter future. Sariah's border village residents have guarded our borders alongside soldiers; we owe them comprehensive progress, leaving none behind.

Border village residents have endured much for this nation; now, they must stand at prosperity's core. A developed India demands a strong rural heartland, incomplete without its first villages. I call upon Sariah's residents to unite in realizing the Vibrant Village resolve. All officials will ensure 100% saturation of every central scheme and welfare program," the Lieutenant Governor said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor visited the exhibition on Gyan Bharatam and inspected the stalls installed by various departments and stakeholders. He launched the Vibrant Village Anthem and handed over sanction letters and appointment letters to various beneficiaries under Mission Yuva, HADP, PM Mudra, PMAY-G and other different schemes. The Lieutenant Governor also distributed TV Sets with DTH, and felicitated TB Cured Warrior, Nasha Mukta Abhiyaan volunteers, and citizens from diverse backgrounds for their valuable contribution to society.

The projects inaugurated by the Lieutenant Governor included Water Conservation Works under JSB 2.0 and development of playgrounds in vibrant villages Sariah, Pukharni, Bhawani, Chapardhara and Namban. He also paid tributes to Brigadier Mohammad Usman.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu; Shri Amitava Chatterjee, MD & CEO, J&K Bank; Abhishek Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri; senior officials of army, police and civil administration, political leaders, prominent citizens and people in large number were present. (KNO)

LG flags off

Parshuram, the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Earlier, the Lieutenant Governor paid obeisance to Bhagwan Parshuram and prayed for peace, progress, and prosperity for one and all. Ved Prakash Sharma, President Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, and members of organising committee including Parshotam Chander Sharma, Chander Mohan Sharma, Soujanya Sharma, Surinder Sharma, B D Sharma, Er Rajesh and Raman Sharma; heads of religious organizations, prominent citizens and people from different walks of life attended the flag off ceremony.

Yudhvir Sethi and Devyani Rana, Members of Legislative Assembly; senior officials and prominent citizens were also present. (KNO)

CM Omar unveils

the importance of scientific research and conservation in preserving the region's rich biodiversity. (KNO)

Haji flights to

ahead of their departures. (KNO)

CM Omar Abdullah

Chief Minister of issues arising from recent amendments to the Unified Building Bye-Laws. Meanwhile, a delegation led by President, Jammu University Teachers Association (JUTA), Prof. Ravinder Singh, presented matters concerning the teaching fraternity.

Moreover, several individuals met the Chief Minister to seek resolution of their grievances.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to all the delegations and individuals, assuring that all genuine issues would be addressed on priority.

J&K Govt directs

household amenities, assets, demography, literacy, religion, economic activity, migration, and fertility.

"Census data are extensively used for planning, policy formulation, effective public administration, and delimitation/reservation of constituencies of Parliament, Assembly, Panchayats, and other local bodies," it states.

The Department has also invoked different provisions of the Census Act, 1948

The law makes it legally binding for every person to answer census questions truthfully "to the best of his knowledge and belief."

It, however, exempts citizens from disclosing the names of female household members if prohibited by custom.

The law also requires dwellers to give census officers reasonable access to premises and allow the affixing of house numbers or marks.

It has also invoked provisions that lay down penalties for misconduct during census operations. These specify fines and imprisonment for refusing duties, obstructing officers, giving false information, or neglecting responsibilities.

The law further states that individual census records are confidential and cannot be used as evidence in civil or criminal proceedings, except for prosecution under the Census Act itself. (KNO)

J&K MPs, MLAs

these are critical for regional development, connectivity and tourism.

They also raised concerns over the location of the Army camp at Zachaldara in Handwara. They said the camp, set up during the early 1990s, is now surrounded by a dense civilian population, including schools, mosques and health facilities. (KNO)

Enforcement alone

battling addiction. Addiction should be viewed through the lens of empathy, not judgment, they said, adding that only then will affected individuals feel safe enough to seek help without fear of social exclusion.

Doctors stressed the urgent need to establish Indoor Patient Department (IPD) facilities in every district. They pointed out that severe cases often require medically supervised detoxification and continuous monitoring, which is not currently available everywhere.

They further called for strengthening infrastructure, manpower, and outreach, saying that with proper facilities, ATF centres can significantly scale up their impact.

In addition to treatment, experts called for preventive strategies, particularly through education. They called for large-scale awareness campaigns in schools and colleges, where teachers and preachers can play a proactive role in identifying early warning signs of substance abuse and guiding students toward counselling.

According to a report by the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, Jammu and Kashmir has an estimated 14 lakh drug users, including over 5 lakh opioid users. Disturbingly, around 95,000 children in the 10-17 age group are reported to be affected.

Without collective action involving families, communities, healthcare providers, and authorities, the fight against drug addiction cannot be won, doctors said. (KNO)

Had a very good conversation with friend Modi: Trump



PTI

Washington, Apr 17: US President Donald Trump on Friday said he had a "very good conversation" with his "friend" Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He was referring to the talks the two leaders had on Tuesday.

"I had a very good talk with him, and he's a friend of mine from India, and he's doing great. We had a very good conversation," Trump told reporters here as he headed to Las Vegas to address a roundtable on tax cuts.

Trump had called Modi on Tuesday to discuss the bilateral relationship and share perspectives on the situation in West Asia, where the US and Israel have launched a war on Iran.

The US and Iran declared a

two-week ceasefire on April 7. They engaged in peace talks with Washington, insisting that Tehran give up its pursuit of nuclear weapons and uranium enrichment.

The war with Iran has sent gas prices soaring as Tehran blocked the sea lanes in the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow gateway for a fifth of global oil supplies.

During the Trump-Modi phone call on Tuesday, the two leaders stressed the importance of keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and secure.

According to the US Ambassador to India Sergei Gor, the 40-minute conversation ended with Trump telling Modi, "we all love you".

Tuesday's phone call was the second between the two leaders since the US-Israel war with Iran began on February 28.

CJI warns new advocates-on-record against outsourcing legal work to AI

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 17: Underlining the ethical obligations of the legal profession, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Friday warned the newly qualified batch of advocates-on-record (AoRs) against outsourcing legal work to artificial intelligence (AI) or other external parties.

According to the rules framed by the Supreme Court under Article 145 of the Constitution, only advocates designated as advocate-on-record can plead for a party in the top court.

The top court conducts the examination for lawyers before designating them as AoRs.

Addressing the AoRs during their induction ceremony, the CJI said they are not only members of the bar but also formal "officers of the court" that the judiciary relies heavily on their diligence and that the trust placed in them is the foundation upon which they must build their reputations.

Urging that all legal drafting be performed personally by the AoRs, the CJI warned against outsourcing legal work to AI or other external third parties.

"Do not treat filing as a routine exercise. Read every brief carefully," the CJI said, noting that every petition bearing an AoR's name is a



direct reflection of their professional judgment and integrity.

He underlined that the role of an AoR is a "significant milestone" that carries the weight of being the primary point of responsibility between litigants and the Supreme Court.

To ensure the highest standards of legal practice, CJI Kant highlighted several critical mandates: Advocates must ensure that pleadings are properly drafted, facts are meticulously verified and legal grounds remain sound.

He also cautioned the AoRs

against filing matters based solely on instructions from other counsels without performing their own due diligence.

The CJI said key pillars for their practice included a conduct marked by honesty, thorough preparation and deep respect for the judicial institution, besides maintaining punctuality and clarity in their submissions to effectively assist the court.

He said that while seniority is a product of time, professional credibility must be established from the very first day.

Modi, Kharge congratulate Harivansh on being elected as Rajya Sabha Dy Chairman

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday congratulated Harivansh on being elected as Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman for the third time.

Harivansh, a nominated member of the House, was elected unopposed.

Congress President and Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge also congratulated Harivansh.

Speaking in the Upper House, Prime Minister Modi said that being elected for the third time in a row as the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha is, in itself, a profound expression of the trust that the House has in Harivansh.

Modi said the House has benefited greatly from Harivansh's experience in the past, and the efforts he has made to take every-one along.

"This is a tribute to his experience and an intuitive work style," the prime minister said.

Modi also said that Harivansh, who has been a journalist earlier, has held high standards of journalism. He further said that Harivansh has spent his MP LAD (local area development) funds for research projects at various universities.

The prime minister also lauded the contribution of Harivansh in instilling confidence among the younger generation in achieving the goal of a developed India.

Kharge expressed hope that the Deputy Chairman will take care of the opposition and give them adequate time in the House.

The Congress leader further said he was pained by the fact that the post of Deputy Speaker in the Lok Sabha has been vacant since 2019, which is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution.

Earlier, the Samajwadi Party and TMC staged a walkout when the motion to elect Harivansh was being adopted.

Indian Army eyes tech-driven future at key biannual conference

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 17: Top commanders of the Army carried out a comprehensive review of India's security challenges along the borders with China and Pakistan and explored ways to further bolster its combat prowess based on the lessons drawn from Operation Sindoor.

In line with its vision of evolving into a 'Future Ready Force', the Army designated the year 2026 as the year of 'Networking and Data Centricity', the defence ministry said, a day after the commanders wrapped up their four-day deliberations in New Delhi. The biannual Army commanders conference also focussed on operational capability requirements of the force including employment of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) and Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS).

The commanders also underlined the urgent need to accelerate capabilities for indigenous production of military hardware and strengthening self-reliance in defence to ensure long-term strategic resilience in view of disruptions in supply chains because of geopolitical upheavals.

The conference, chaired by Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi, was addressed by senior functionaries in the government including the Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan, Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi and Defence Secretary RK Singh. "Aligned



with the vision of evolving into a 'Future Ready Force', the Indian Army has designated the year 2026 as the year of 'Networking and Data Centricity', the ministry said.

It said the conference discussed a wide array of issues pertaining to modernisation, technology infusion in combat operations, doctrinal and training requirements besides networking and data centricity to enhance operational readiness.

The commanders also deliberated on addressing emerging security challenges.

"Based on the lessons learnt from Operation Sindoor, and in keeping with the current operational dynamics globally, senior army leadership also focussed on operational capability requirements including employment of Unmanned Aerial Systems and Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems," the defence ministry said.

It said the speakers highlighted the evolving geopolitical landscape and emerging global, regional and internal security dynamics.

"With specific reference to lessons emerging from global conflicts, the speakers alluded to the need for hard power for guaranteed protection of India's strategic and security interests while emphasising on inter-ministerial coordination, enhanced synergy between civil and military institutions and a whole of nation approach for a coordinated national response to complex security challenges," it said.

"It emerged during the discussions that there is an urgent need to accelerate indigenous production capabilities, for strengthening self-reliance in defence and ensuring long-term strategic resilience in view of current supply chain crisis," it said.

PM Modi and myself don't have 'wife issue': Rahul Gandhi



PTI

New Delhi, Apr 17: In a friendly banter, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Friday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he didn't have "the wife issue", as the Congress MP emphasised that everyone has learnt from women in their lives.

Participating in a debate in the Lok Sabha on the three bills introduced for amendments to the women's quota law and setting up a delimitation commission, Gandhi said women are a driving force in the national imagination and national perspective.

"All of us in this room have been influenced, taught, and have learnt a lot from women in our lives - from mothers, sisters, wives," Gandhi said. "Of course, the prime minister and myself don't have the wife issue, so we don't get that input, but we have our mothers and sisters," he said while referring to Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju's light-hearted remark that he got a scolding at home as he did not pen a poem for his wife like Union minister Arjun Ram Meghwal did.

Gandhi also lauded his sister and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi's speech in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. "Yesterday, I was watching my sister achieve in five minutes what I have not been able to do in 20 years of my political career - make Amit Shah Ji smile," Gandhi said to peals of laughter.

West Asia crisis

Agri industry experts urge govt to focus on food security in diplomatic talks

PTI

Kolkata, Apr 17: Agri industry experts on Friday urged the government to prioritise food security in diplomatic engagements amid disruptions arising from the West Asia crisis, warning of rising risks across the supply chain due to higher logistics and input costs.

At a roundtable organised by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCC&I), they highlighted the growing impact of geopolitical tensions on India's food ecosystem.

"Logistics disruptions, rising energy costs and fertiliser prices are causing shipment delays, sharp freight increases and working capital stress for businesses," Chief Executive of Rice Villa, Suraj Agarwal, said. He noted that disruptions in key maritime routes, including the Red Sea corridor, have extended shipping timelines and inflated transportation

costs, affecting imports of essential commodities as well as export competitiveness of products such as rice and processed food.

Agarwal said the "biggest stress is not just cost escalation but unpredictability" across the value chain, from procurement to distribution, amid volatile freight rates and policy uncertainty.

Calling for policy support, he suggested government intervention in freight stabilisation, development of alternative trade routes, diversification of sourcing for key inputs such as fertilisers, and ensuring stable export policies.

"India's food security today is not only about monsoon, but also about maritime routes and geopolitics," he stated.

Former Union Agriculture Secretary Siraj Hussain said that a prolonged West Asia conflict could impact rabi crop production and push food inflation, particularly if fuel prices rise

after the elections in some states, increasing transportation costs.

Suresh Motwani of Solidaridad highlighted vulnerabilities, including fertiliser dependency, logistics bottlenecks and packaging costs, while Prof Ajitava Ray Chaudhuri pointed to sustained inflationary pressures due to higher input and transport costs.

The industry representatives proposed a five-point action plan, including strengthening logistics resilience, boosting domestic production, ensuring policy stability, enhancing working capital support for agri businesses, and setting up real-time monitoring mechanisms for global supply disruptions.

The experts noted that while India has strong agricultural fundamentals, ensuring food security amid global disruptions will require greater policy agility and supply chain resilience.

Opp chose politics over progress: Maha CM over defeat of women's quota bill

PTI

Mumbai, Apr 17: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday accused the opposition of "hypocrisy" over the defeat of the women's reservation bill, stating that it failed to support women's empowerment when given a "historic opportunity".

In a post on X, Fadnavis said that the entire country witnessed the opposition's stand. For these parties, women's empowerment exists "only in speeches and slogans", he added.

"They chose politics over progress. Their resistance to the Nari Shakti Vandan Bill has exposed exactly whose interests they truly serve," he said.

Women across the country were taking note of the opposition's stand and "will not forget this", Fadnavis further said.

His government was committed to women's empowerment, the chief minister asserted, adding that it did not indulge only in rhetoric.

The BJP would take to the streets from Saturday to ensure "every right, every justice, every honour" for women, Fadnavis said. A Constitution Amendment Bill to implement 33 per cent reservation for women in legislatures in 2029 and increase the number of Lok Sabha seats to 816 was



defeated on Friday. While 298 members voted in support of the bill in Lok Sabha, 230 MPs voted against it.

NCP (SP) spokesperson Clyde Crasto, meanwhile, said the BJP-led government faced a defeat in Parliament because it tried to misuse its powers and mislead the country in the name of women's empowerment.

The BJP's "misogynist mindset" was shown its rightful place and it was a lesson for the saffron party that it can not fool the people of India because they still have honest and truthful people representing them in parliament, Crasto said.

'Children exclusively breastfed show distinct DNA changes'

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 17: An analysis of blood samples has found that children who were exclusively breastfed for at least the first three months carry epigenetic markers -- chemical changes in the DNA -- compared to those not breastfed. Epigenetics lies at the interface of genes and environment, an interaction between which produces an observable behaviour.

Researchers, led by those at the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) in Spain and the UK's universities of Exeter and Bristol, analysed the epigenetic process of DNA methylation -- which can be detected in blood samples -- in 3,421 children. The team found that DNA methylation



marks on genes associated with immunity and developmental processes were higher on average among children who were exclusively breastfed for at least three

months, compared to those who were not breastfed.

However, the study, published in the journal Clinical Epigenetics, did not look at whether these

epigenetic marks influenced the children's immunity or development as a result.

DNA methylation acts as an 'off switch' and silences a gene from expressing itself. The process has been studied to be important for embryonic development and genomic stability, among other purposes.

"Our findings show that babies who are exclusively breastfed carry epigenetic changes associated with that experience. The genes that are affected by these markers are involved in developmental and immunity processes, but we can't say from our study whether this affects those highly complex processes directly," study co-lead Doretta Caramaschi, of the University of Exeter, said.

Iran says Strait of Hormuz 'completely open' for all commercial vessels



Trump welcomes move

PTI

Tehran/Washington, Apr 17: In a major breakthrough, Iran on Friday said that the Strait of Hormuz is "completely open" for all commercial vessels, a move welcomed by US President Donald Trump.

Trump, however, said the naval blockade against Iran will remain in "full force" until Tehran reaches an agreement with the US to end the war. The announcement of the reopening of the vital waterway by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi comes a day after President Trump announced a 10-day ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel.

"In line with the ceasefire in Lebanon, the passage for all commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz is declared completely open for the remaining period of the ceasefire," Araghchi said in a post on X.

Araghchi, however, said the ships must sail "on the coordinated route as already announced" by the Ports and Maritime Organisation of Iran.

Minutes later, President Trump shared the announcement in a post on Truth Social.

"Iran has just announced that the Strait of Iran is fully open and ready for full passage. Thank you!" Trump said, referring to the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran effectively blocked the Strait of Hormuz following its conflict with the US and Israel, crippling global energy supplies.

Trump said the Strait of Hormuz "is completely open and ready for business and full passage, but the naval blockade will remain in full force and effect as it pertains to Iran, only, until such time as our transaction with Iran is 100% complete. This process should go very quickly in that most of the points are already negotiated." He also said Iran, with help from

the US, is working to remove all sea mines from the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump said the deal with Iran is not tied, in any way, to Lebanon. "But we will make Lebanon great again!" he added.

The development comes a day after Pakistan's Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir held talks with top Iranian leadership in Tehran as part of Islamabad's efforts to resolve the conflict between the US and Iran.

Munir, who led a high-level political-security delegation to Iran, met Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and top Revolutionary Guards commanders on Thursday.

Ghalibaf, who had led the Iranian delegation to Pakistan for talks with the US over the weekend, has urged the US to commit to any peace agreement in Lebanon.

Munir, the first foreign military leader to visit Tehran since a two-week ceasefire was agreed between Iran and the US last week, also visited the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters of the Revolutionary Guards, where he met with its Commander Major General Ali Abdollahi, according to Iran's official IRNA news agency. During the meeting, he discussed with the commander of the IRGC the steps taken under the framework for ending the war and their recent talks in Tehran. The two sides discussed the situation in the region and the prospects for peace and stability, Iranian official media reported.

Munir stressed that ongoing efforts to end the war should continue.

Sources in Islamabad said that Munir held detailed discussions to bring Iran and the US to the negotiating table for the second round of talks in Islamabad.

"As a confidence-building measure ahead of more talks, Iran agreed to open the Strait of Hormuz," a

Pakistani source said.

The US media reported that Iran was ready to address US concerns regarding nuclear material and, in return, get access to USD 20 billion stuck up due to restrictions imposed by the US.

It was also being reported in the US that the second round of talks may be held as early as Sunday. However, officials said that it is likely that the talks would be held next week.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has started preparing to host the second round of high-stakes talks between the US and Iran during the next week.

The US and Iran held rare direct talks in Pakistan over the weekend aimed at ending their conflict, but the talks ended early Sunday without any agreement.

Official sources in Pakistan on Friday said a feverish diplomatic activity followed to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table. It was met with success as both continue to observe the temporary two-week ceasefire, allowing Pakistan to relaunch its mediatory push.

After working behind the scenes, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif embarked on a tri-nation tour on Wednesday, while Field Marshal Munir travelled to Tehran.

Shehbaz, after discussion with the Saudi and Qatari leaders, on Thursday night reached Türkiye, where he met Senior Advisor to the US President for Arab and African Affairs Massad Boulos on Friday.

During the meeting in Antalya, PM Shehbaz and Boulos discussed "current regional developments, including Pakistan's peace efforts that led to the ceasefire as well as the historic Islamabad Talks," the prime minister's office said.

He reiterated "deep appreciation for President Trump's bold and decisive leadership that had led to the ceasefire between Pakistan and India last year, when both countries were on the brink of war."

Oil tumbles 10%, Dow soars more than 1,000 points



AP

New York, Apr 17: Oil prices fell by 10%, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average soared 1,020 points after Iran said the Strait of Hormuz is fully open, which would allow oil tankers to exit the Persian Gulf again and carry crude to customers worldwide.

The S&P 500 jumped 1.3% in morning trading Friday as US stocks race toward the finish of a third straight week of big gains.

The Nasdaq composite climbed 1.5%. Stocks have rallied 12% since late March on hopes that the United States and Iran can avoid a worst-case scenario for the global economy.

Macron, Starmer welcome, say it must be permanent



AP

Paris, Apr 17: The leaders of France and the UK on Friday welcomed the announced reopening of the Strait of Hormuz but say it must become permanent. President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Keir Starmer say they will keep planning an international mission to restore maritime security, with a meeting of military planners in London next week.

Speaking after a gathering of some 50 countries, Macron said, "We all demand the full, immediate and unconditional reopening of the Strait of Hormuz by all parties." Starmer said the announcement by Iran and the US that the waterway is open must become "both lasting and a workable proposal."

UN peacekeepers in Lebanon say airstrikes have halted since ceasefire



AP

Beirut, Apr 17: UN peacekeepers in Lebanon on Friday said IDF airstrikes have halted since ceasefire.

Tilak Pokharel, a spokesperson for the US peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon known as UNIFIL, said peacekeepers have not observed any airstrikes since midnight, when a 10-day truce between Israel and Hezbollah took effect.

He said, however, that they had

observed "artillery shelling in several areas in south Lebanon" up until 6 am and "continue to observe IDF airspace violation in their area of operations," referring to the Israeli military.

He added that they have observed Israeli forces moving back and forth, but "no withdrawal."

"They are remaining in positions, including in Bint Jbeil," Pokharel said, referring to a village about 5 km from the border where heavy fighting had taken place before the ceasefire.

New Zealand beats Bangladesh by 26 runs in first ODI



AP

Mirpur, Apr 17: New Zealand's fast bowlers overcame scorching heat to produce a clinical performance, guiding the side to a 26-run victory against Bangladesh in the opening game of the three-match ODI series Friday.

The pace trio of Blair Tickner, Nathan Smith and Will O'Rourke shared eight wickets to play a crucial role in bowling out Bangladesh for 221 in 48.3 overs.

Electing to bat first, New Zealand posted a challenging

247-8 on a slow wicket, riding a patient 68 from opener Henry Nicholls and a brisk 59 from Dean Foxfort.

After the early departure of Nick Kelly, Nicholls added 73 runs with Will Young (30) to steady the innings, defying a superb spell by pacer Shoriful Islam.

Shoriful, who was playing his first ODI since December 2024 after replacing the injured Mustafizur Rahman, claimed 2-27 in 10 overs.

New Zealand's three-pronged pace attack then unsettled the Bangladesh batters.

Batsmen expected to get 230 in every innings, it takes pressure off bowlers: Hazlewood

PTI

Bengaluru, Apr 17: Royal Challengers Bengaluru pacer Josh Hazlewood said teams' search for big totals in the IPL could work in favour of bowlers as even a little quiet passage can upset the batters' rhythm and focus.

The 200-mark has been breached 21 times in 24 matches in the IPL so far, often batters putting bowling attacks to the sword.

"I think it's definitely nice for the crowds to watch balls flying into the stands. From a bowler's point of view, it almost takes the pressure off a little bit because the batsmen are expected to get off to good starts," Hazlewood told reporters ahead of RCB's home match against Delhi Capitals on Saturday.

"They're expected to score big runs, they're expected to get 230 runs probably every T20 innings they play."

The Australian quick said if the bowlers can stifle the batters even for a short passage, it can add pressure on them, eventually leading to a wicket or two.

"So, if you can get a batter two off six balls, the pressure that they're under in that situation is huge. You can just see a player almost melt out there in the middle, they just cannot find the gap, cannot find the boundary.



"I feel like that's the biggest pressure in the game now. So I think it almost releases the pressure (on bowlers) a little bit," he said.

But Hazlewood conceded that operating in the Power Play has grown into a bigger challenge because of the newfound aggression of batters.

"The power play I feel is probably the hardest time to bowl now. I feel like that's a really difficult part and it's probably just getting the balance right between trying to get the batter out and trying to restrict him," he said.

"It is as opposed to maybe five years ago when you could really just settle in and try and get him out for the majority of the six overs. So, the game's always changing. It's a nice challenge to have I think."

One way to meet that challenge is to work on the

bowling, and possibly add some new deliveries to flummox the batters.

On his part, Hazlewood has been working on ways to deceive the batters.

"I probably don't have a great slow ball, so it's just about trying to confuse the batter as best I can, whether that's showing it (ball) and bowling it or showing it and not bowling it. So, it's a little bit of a cat and mouse out there."

"Some batters are probably watching closer than others and some are just reacting to what's coming down. So, I guess that's another part of it, trying to read the batter and trying to stay one step ahead."

"So yeah, it's good fun, battles out there and occasionally you come up against guys from your own country, so yeah, it's good fun," he detailed.

Movies SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, 18 APRIL

LEE CRONINS THE MUMMY (A)
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
12:00 PM, 07:20 PM

DHURANDHAR THE REVENGE (A)
HINDI - 02:55 PM, 05:00 PM

BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+)
HINDI ATMOS - 12:00 PM, 03:15 PM, 06:30 PM
HINDI - 10:30 AM, 01:45 PM

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