

Narcotics smuggling no less than terrorism: LG Sinha

Drug abuse silent form of terror, not merely law & order problem | Drug traffickers will be treated at par with terrorists | Won't rest until networks spreading poison completely dismantled

Yogesh

Doda, Apr 30: Likening narcotics smuggling with terrorism Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said that drug peddlers will be given stringent punishment and the battle against the substance abuse will be taken to its logical end.

While addressing 'Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir' campaign here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Narcotics smuggling is no less than terrorism and those involved will be given stringent punishment."

"I firmly believe that drug abuse is a form of silent terrorism, not merely a matter of law and order. The smuggling of narcotics represents terrorism in disguise. It is a hidden threat that devastates our youth, weakens families, and undermines the very foundations of society," LG Sinha said, adding, "We have decided that drug traffickers in Jammu Kashmir will be treated under the law the same way terrorists



are. They are enemies of society, enemies of humanity and enemies of our youth. We are committed to wiping out this threat."

He also stated that every drug smuggler, every local peddler, every member of a drug syndicate working to destroy society will be identified and

put behind bars.

"I give you my word: we will not rest until the networks spreading this poison are completely dismantled," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said the people's movement against drug abuse reflects their determination and unity, and this menace can be

eliminated when communities rise together and speak with one voice.

Lieutenant Governor observed that path to success in this campaign is demanding, and the challenge is significant. He said of the 100-day effort, 80 days remain and each day is now vital.

He said, "Every moment must be used with purpose, and every citizen must take part in this Jan-Andolan. Together, we can make Jammu Kashmir a shining example for the nation: a society free from the burden of drug addiction."

The Lieutenant Governor also underscored the importance of Jan-Bhagidari and said that this fight cannot rest on government machinery alone and society must actively participate. "In the remaining 80 days, a whole-of-government effort must confront and dismantle the web of drug addiction. This requires a change in mindset. Sometimes people say this is not my problem. This attitude must change. Drug smugglers thrive on public indifference and | More on P6

India treats terrorists, sponsors equally: Rajnath Singh

Aiding terror to invite strong action too | Armed forces ready for any situation | Decision to halt Op Sindoor was voluntary

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Apr 30: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said India did not succumb to nuclear threats during Operation Sindoor and asserted that there would be no distinction between terrorists and those backing them.

Addressing a security summit here, Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said India ignored attempts at intimidation during the operation and acted in line with its national interest. "We were threatened, but we did not fall for any bluff. Necessary steps were taken keeping national security in mind," he said.

Singh asserted that the decision to stop the "Operation Sindoor" was voluntary and not due to any constraints in military capability. "The armed forces had demonstrated both precision and preparedness during the operation launched in response to the Pahalgam terror attack," he said, adding, "It was a conscious decision



taken on our terms. Our forces were ready for a long war and continue to remain prepared with enhanced capabilities."

The Minister described 'Operation Sindoor' as a shift in India's approach to terrorism, indicating that the country would no longer limit its response to diplomatic measures following attacks on its soil. He said the action sent a clear signal that terrorism would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Referring to Pakistan, Singh alleged that the neighbouring country continues to provide

support to terrorism and called it the "epicentre of international terrorism". He stressed the need to address not just the operational aspects of terrorism but also its ideological and political foundations.

He said India's approach to terrorism has evolved, underlining that those aiding or sponsoring terror would be treated on par with perpetrators. "There will be no difference between terrorists and their sponsors," he said.

The minister described terrorism as a multi-dimensional threat, requiring | More on P6

Vande Bharat connectivity between Jmu-Sgr big dev: CM Omar

Says 1,400 people can travel daily; demands dry (inland) port for UT to boost trade, business



Yogesh

Jammu, Apr 30: Terming launch of Vande Bharat train service between Jammu and Srinagar as a big development, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said that nearly 1,400 people can now travel daily between the two capital cities daily.

Speaking at the flag-off event, CM Omar, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "On this occasion, I thank Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and the Central Government. Today, we have connected Jammu with Kashmir through the railways."

He said the rail link has opened new avenues for transporting goods such as cement and automobiles, giving a major boost to trade and business.

"The speciality of this train is that it has not only enabled people like us to travel but has also facilitated the transport of goods such as cement. I was

surprised to see Maruti cars being transported to Srinagar and fruits from Kashmir by rail," he said.

CM Omar also appealed to the Railways Minister to set up an inland port in Jammu and Kashmir to ease customs clearance for exports from the Union Territory.

"I have a request for the Railways Minister, even though it does not pertain directly to his ministry. I request that an inland port be set up in J&K. There is an urgent need for a dry port here so that we do not require customs clearance in other cities for goods exported from here. Customs clearance should take place within J&K—it will benefit our trade and business," the CM added.

He said that while he would raise the issue with the Central Government, he also appealed to Union Ministers Vaishnaw and Jitendra Singh, along with the MPs present, to take up the matter with the | More on P6

Vande Bharat extended to Jammu, upgraded from 8 to 20 coaches

- Railway Minister
- Vaishnaw flags off train at Jammu Tawi
- Baramulla—Uri extension under consideration
- Surveys on for Rajouri—Poonch link
- Qazigund—Srinagar doubling to boost capacity
- CORAS commandos, 'one plus twenty' guard system in place
- 3,000 CCTV cameras, drones ensure security



Umair Gull Ganie

Jammu, Apr 30 (KNO): Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday flagged off the extended Srinagar—Katra Vande Bharat Express from Jammu Tawi Railway Station. The train, which earlier ran between

Srinagar and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, will now operate up to Jammu Tawi.

After the flag-off, the minister inspected key structures of the Udhampur—Srinagar—Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL), including the Anji and Chenab bridges. He was | More on P6

Cabinet clears 2% DA hike, consolidation of cooperative laws into single statute

STPs for Baramulla, Rajouri get nod

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Apr 30: The J&K cabinet on Tuesday approved a 2% increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) for government employees and pensioners, effective from January 1, 2026.

Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the cabinet, which met under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, gave its go-ahead for enhancing DA by two percent, raising it from 58 percent to 60

percent.

Sources disclosed that the cabinet has also approved a proposal to unify "The Jammu & Kashmir Cooperative Societies Act" and "The Jammu & Kashmir Self-Reliant Cooperatives Act" into a single law. With this decision, instead of two separate laws, there will now be a single consolidated law governing cooperatives in the Union Territory.

The cabinet has also cleared a proposal for the construction of a sewerage treatment plant in Baramulla | More on P6

Amit Shah lands in Leh for two-day visit

To attend Buddha relics expo

Raja Syed Rather

Leh, Apr 30: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday arrived in Leh on a two-day visit, during which he is scheduled to attend a series of official and ceremonial engagements, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the visit coincides with Buddha Purnima and the first-ever international exposition of the holy relics of Gautama Buddha, set to begin on May 1.

He said that during his stay, the Home Minister is expected



to attend the inaugural function of the exposition and review ongoing developmental initiatives in the Union Territory.

Senior officials from the administration and security agencies are also likely to brief him on key issues concerning UT Ladakh. (KNO)

Wandd Cxali Sheen Gali, Bie E Bahaar

Baramulla temple reopens after 36 years, sees revival of pre-1989 religious gathering

Pandits call return emotional, hope for permanent comeback; DC terms it 'sign of normalcy'

Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Apr 30: Kashmiri Pandits on Thursday returned to the historic Ganesh Temple at Kachua Muqaam in Baramulla in North Kashmir after nearly 36 years, reviving a pre-1989 tradition that once drew large gatherings from different communities.

Located around 15 kilometres



from Baramulla town, the temple used to host annual congregations on April 29 and

30. However, the practice had stopped in 1990. On Thursday morning, | More on P6

Northern Rly officials, fruit traders discuss roadmap to strengthen transportation from Kmr

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Apr 30: Senior officials of Northern Railway on Thursday held threadbare discussions with fruit growers and traders to strengthen the transportation of horticultural produce from Kashmir to markets across the country and modernize rail-based cargo logistics in the Valley.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the high-level

delegation of the railway officials travelled in an arranged inspection coach from Srinagar to Baramulla via Budgam, covering key stations including Pattan and Sopore. The visit was aimed at assessing infrastructure gaps and identifying ways to ensure seamless movement of fruits and vegetables.

The meeting was attended by Principal Chief Commercial Manager Parveen Pandey, ACM Jammu-Srinagar Jaswant Singh, and other senior

officials. The fruit growers' delegation was led by Bashir Ahmad Basheer, President of the New Kashmir Fruit Association (NKFA), along with key representatives of the trade.

A major focus of the interaction was the introduction of temperature-controlled (AC/refrigerated) cargo trains to transport highly perishable produce such as apples, cherries, pears, plums, and walnuts.

Stakeholders stressed that

such facilities are essential to maintain quality and reduce post-harvest losses, particularly during peak export seasons.

The proposal also includes improving inbound logistics to ensure timely supply of essential commodities like onions, potatoes, mangoes, and melons into the Valley.

To streamline bulk handling, Sopore Railway Station and Baramulla Railway Station have been identified for development of | More on P6

DC Anantnag visits Shampora, extends condolences to bereaved family

KT NEWS DESK

ANANTNAG, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, on Wednesday visited Shampora, Qazigund, and expressed heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family of Fatima Altaf, a Class 2nd student who tragically lost her life after being hit by a vehicle on April 27 at Qullibagh, Kurigam.

The young girl was on her way to school along with her sister, Tehmina Altaf, and others when the unfortunate incident occurred.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner consoled the grieving family and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul. He also enquired about the health of the deceased's sibling, who was critically injured during the incident.

As an immediate relief measure, Dr. Bilal, as per an official statement, sanctioned a cumulative financial assistance of Rs 3.6 lakh in favour of the affected families. An amount of Rs 2 lakh (Rs 1 lakh under Road Accident Assistance and Rs

1 lakh from the District Red Cross Fund) was sanctioned for the deceased. For the critically injured sibling, Rs 1 lakh (Rs 50,000 each under Road Accident Assistance and District Red Cross Fund) was sanctioned. Additionally, Rs 60,000 (Rs 50,000 under Road Accident Assistance and Rs 10,000 from the District Red Cross Fund) was sanctioned for another victim from another family who sustained minor injuries in the incident. The bank cheques for the sanctioned amount were handed over to the affected families on the occasion.

As a gesture of solidarity during this difficult time, the DC assured the families of all possible support from the administration for the proper treatment and recovery of the injured.

The DC was accompanied by ADC, Dr. Muzamil Maqbool, ARTO, Muazzam Ali, Tehsildar Qazigund, Shakeel Ahmad, Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Qazigund, Mohd Iqbal, and other officials

JK SOC to provide 24x7 cyber monitoring, threat response in J&K

■ CS Atal Dulloo inaugurates cyber hub



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, APRIL 30: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Thursday inaugurated the Jammu and Kashmir Security Operations Centre (JK SOC), marking a significant step towards strengthening the Union Territory's cybersecurity infrastructure.

Additional Chief Secretary (Financial Commissioner) Revenue, Shaleen Kabra; Principal Secretary, Home, Chandraker Bharti; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Ramesh

Kumar; Secretary, IT Department, Dr. Piyush Singla; Director General, National Informatics Centre, VTV Ramana; CEO, Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency, Mahima Madan; and SIO, NIC J&K, J. S. Modi were present on the occasion.

The JK SOC has been established to enhance the cyber security framework of the UT administration. It will provide round-the-clock monitoring, threat detection, and incident response capabilities to safeguard critical government

digital infrastructure and sensitive data from cyber threats.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary, as per an official statement, emphasized that with the rapid digitization of government services, ensuring robust cyber security has become imperative. He further observed that the SOC will serve as the nerve centre for securing the Union Territory's digital assets and ensuring the safe and seamless delivery of e-governance services to citizens here.

The centre is equipped with advanced tools for real-time threat intelligence, vulnerability assessment, and security analytics. It will also coordinate closely with national agencies, including CERT-In, for effective cyber incident management.

Senior Director, NIC, Anil Kumar Sharma delivered a detailed presentation on the functioning and capabilities of the JK SOC.

Senior officers from the IT Department, Divisional Administration Jammu, and technical experts were also present at the inauguration.

Nasha Mukht J&K Padyatra Div Com Kashmir directs for meticulous execution of plans



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, APRIL 30: In preparation for the upcoming Nasha Mukht J&K Padyatra scheduled for May 3, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review arrangements laying strong emphasis on precision, coordination, and seamless execution.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by senior officials, including the DIG Central Kashmir, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner SMC, Director Information & Public Relations, Director Health Services, SSP Traffic, and heads of various departments such as School Education, Higher Education,

Transport, Culture, Hospitality & Protocol, Tribal Affairs, and other key stakeholders.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner stressed the importance of meticulous planning and effective inter-departmental coordination to ensure the smooth conduct of the padyatra and associated events. He directed all concerned departments to formally invite stakeholders and special guests in advance.

On the occasion, the Div Com gave special emphasis to arrangements at the Football Stadium, the designated venue for the flag-off ceremony, besides arrangements enroute and at the culmination point.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Awareness Programme held at GDC Uri

KT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, APRIL 30: As part of the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, a mega awareness programme was organised Thursday at Degree College Uri to sensitise the public, especially youth, about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

The event, as per an official statement, witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, faculty members, officials, and members of the local community.

During the programme, participants were educated about the physical, psychological, and social consequences of substance abuse, and the importance of collective efforts in building a drug-free society.

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: Faraz Ahmad Ganie S/o: Mohd Sidiq Ganie R/o: Jamia Qadeem.

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 Azaam Farooq S/o: Farooq Ahmad Ganie as 11-12-2019 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: Syed Ifshan Tariq D/o: Tariq Ahmad Changah R/o: Bagi-Rehmat.

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 Self namely Syed Ifshan Tariq D/o: Tariq Ahmad Changah as 16-04-2008 at Home.

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: Ashiq Hussain Tantray S/o: Gh Hassan Tantray R/o: Gund Brath.

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 Hanan Ashiq Tantray S/o: Ashiq Hussain Tantray as 27-12-2020 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: Fahmida Begam w/o: Mohd Rafi Mir R/o: Bahrapora.

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 Aisha Rafi D/o: Mohd Rafi Mir as 26-02-2023 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: Dilrooz Begam w/o: Mohd Sidiq Lone R/o: Logripora.

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 Anas Bin Sadiq S/o: Mohd Sadiq Lone as 16-05-2017 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

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PW (R&B) DIVISION SHOPIAN

NOTICE INVITING TENDER CIVIL WORKS
SINGLE COVER SYSTEM (up to Rs.2.50 Corers)

NIT No: 06/741-50/RnB/SPN/e-Tendering/2026-27 Dated:- 29-04-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Item rate/Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Major Head of Account	Adv/Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Class of Contractor	Time of Completion	Cost of TIDoc (Rs.)	AAA No. Date	TS No. Date
1	Construction of Computer Room, Science Room and ACR at High School Bohrihallan Payeen	Samagra Shiksha	53.173	1,06,346/-	AAY	09 Months	1600/-	314-Chirag of 2025 Dated: 01-12-2025. (S. No:- 2160,2161,2162)	05/SE/PS of 2026-27 Dated: 18-04-2026
2	Construction of Computer Room, Library Room and ACR at High School Zampathri	Samagra Shiksha	60.646	1,21,292/-	AAY	09 Months	1600/-	314-Chirag of 2025 Dated: 01-12-2025. (S. No:- 2173,2175,2176)	07/SE/PS of 2026-27 Dated: 18-04-2026
3	Construction of Computer Room, Library Room and Science Room at High School Rawalpura	Samagra Shiksha	60.488	1,20,976/-	AAY	09 Months	1600/-	314-Chirag of 2025 Dated: 01-12-2025. (S. No:- 2210,2211,2212)	06/SE/PS of 2026-27 Dated: 18-04-2026
4	Construction of Science Room and Library Room at High School Sindo Shirmal	Samagra Shiksha	42.697	85,394/-	BEE/AAY	07 Months	1100/-	314-Chirag of 2025 Dated: 01-12-2025. (S. No:-2169,2170)	08/SE/PS of 2026-27 Dated: 18-04-2026

Position of funds:- Committed
Project Authority= Project Director, Smagra Shiksha J&K
1. 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 given below:-

Sl No	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	29-04-2026
2	Document downloading Start Date.	30-04-2026 From 10:00 A.M upto 2:00 P.M
3	Document Downloading End Date.	15-05-2026
4	Bid submission Start Date.	30-04-2026 From 10:00 A.M upto 2:00 P.M
5	Bid Submission End Date.	15-05-2026 upto 2:00 P.M
6	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	16-05-2026 at 10:00 A.M

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in shape of e-Challan/treasury challan /Demand Draft deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Shopian. (Name of Work/NIT Number to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt)
Note:- The Date of Treasury Challan must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date. Any deviation shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.

2.1 At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Shopian. The successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the Bid cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.

- The date and time of opening of Financial Bids of a responsive bidder shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-
a Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
b Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
c Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- 6(A). Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
6.1 Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.
6.2 To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.
6.3 The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
6.4 Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
6.5 Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid. Besides, original documents related to the bid shall be submitted by L1 before issuance of Allotment in his favour.
6.6. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents EMD, tender documents fee in terms of soft copies and all other documents required as per NIT with technical bid. No document (s) which has/has not been uploaded shall be entertained for technical evaluation in the form of hard copy. However in case of any clarification the bidders will have to produce original documents in support of soft copies if need arises.
Note:- Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.
6.6(a) Bidders should note that if the documents uploaded/submitted on the basis of which the contract has been awarded are found forged/fake/not genuine at any time, the contract shall be cancelled and the contractor/bidder shall be recommended for blacklisting and debarred from taking part in tendering in PWD/ Other Departments for a period of one year in the first instance, besides the performance security deposited for the said work shall be forfeited.

Sd/- sd/- sd/- sd/- sd/-
Camp Clerk A.A.O No Education Technical Officer Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Shopian
DIPK-899/26
DATED: 30-04-2026

INTERVIEW

Parents first line of defence against drug abuse: SSP Anantnag

UMAISAR GUL GANAIE

Anantnag, Apr 30: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Anantnag, Amod Ashok Nagpure, believes that parents are the first line of defence against drug abuse, saying their close involvement with children puts them in the best position to detect early warning signs.

In an interview, the SSP said that stigma often prevents families from reporting addiction or links to narcotics, allowing the problem to escalate. He urged people, especially parents, to come forward without hesitation and seek timely intervention.

Excerpts:

KNO: What is the objective of 'Nasha Mukht J&K' campaign and Anantnag Police's response?

SSP: The campaign was launched by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to make J&K drug-free. Anantnag Police have intensified anti-drug operations and are working proactively to curb trafficking and abuse.

KNO: What achievements have been recorded so far in the district?

SSP: In just seventeen days, we have registered 81 FIRs under the NDPS Act and arrested 60 drug peddlers. This reflects our strong, focused efforts to combat the drug

menace.

KNO: What contraband was seized during this period?

SSP: We have recovered a huge quantity of contraband, including nearly 160 kilograms of charas and ganja. Investigations into other substances are also underway.

KNO: What steps have been taken against illegal poppy cultivation?

SSP: We have conducted around 300 drives to destroy illegal poppy cultivation and registered 30 FIRs against those involved.

KNO: Has any action been taken against properties linked to drug trafficking?

SSP: Yes, properties worth Rs 3.25 crore, raised through illegal drug trade, have been attached under the NDPS Act. Additionally, illegal encroachments on prime land worth Rs 2.5 crore have been demolished.

KNO: How has the public responded to the anti-drug campaign?

SSP: The response has been very encouraging. We have received 362 inputs through a secured helpline and personal contacts, which have significantly aided our operations.

KNO: How are K9 units being used in seizure operations?

SSP: We have six K9s. These are newly trained in various assignments



such as narcotics detection, explosives detection, tracking, and other roles. They are a great help in detecting narcotics. Their presence also adds to deterrence.

KNO: What role do parents and society play in preventing drug abuse?

SSP: Parents are the first line of defence. They are the closest to the young generation. They spend the maximum time with their children.

So, parents have a significant responsibility in, first of all, identifying if there is any erratic behaviour on the part of their children - the kind of company their children are keeping, the kind of content their children are consuming on social media, their habits, and any changes in habits if they occur.

Parents are our first detection source. They should be aware of their children's habits and behaviour. In

case of any aberration or any extraordinary observation, they should bring it to the notice of teachers, the nearest health facility, or the nearest police facility.

KNO: How are mosques and religious leaders involved in awareness efforts?

SSP: Community platforms such as mosques, temples, other religious institutions, media platforms, and educational institutions have a very significant responsibility in reducing the demand for narcotics. We have appealed to all social institutions to contribute their part in raising awareness and promoting the anti-drug campaign. We have received a very good response from all stakeholders of society. I am happy that religious institutions, especially, are very forthcoming. They are continuously using their platforms to raise awareness, explain the ill effects of drugs to people, and amplify the efforts of the government and the police administration.

KNO: What rehabilitation facilities and support systems are available for victims?

SSP: We have a Government Medical College (GMC) facility with addiction services available at GMC

Anantnag. We also have a police-run de-addiction centre, as well as another police-run de-addiction centre at PCR Hospital, Srinagar. So, various facilities are available.

The need is that people should come forward, especially parents, and report these cases. Usually, because of the stigma attached to it, people hide their addiction and hide connections with narcotics, and that leads to the escalation of problems. It is necessary that we nip it in the bud and that people come forward and accept the challenge.

KNO: Your appeal to people to fight drug abuse?

SSP: My appeal to the general public as the police chief is that this is a war against drugs, and we are all frontline warriors. We are all stakeholders. This is not just the job of the police; it is a community effort. Only when all stakeholders of the community join hands will we be able to deliver a serious blow to the narcotics syndicate.

Therefore, I appeal to everyone to come forward, join hands with the police, share information, share intelligence, raise awareness, stay safe, and let us together defeat this menace of narcotics—(KNO)

J&K records historic Rs 5,824 Cr investments in FY 25-26

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Apr 30: Jammu and Kashmir has recorded its highest-ever annual investment of Rs 5,824.42 crore in the financial year 2025-26, marking a major milestone in the Union Territory's industrial growth and ongoing economic transformation.

According to official data, the investment is over 13 times the average annual inflow recorded between 2014 and 2021, reflecting a sustained surge in industrial activity across the UT.

The data shows that the upward trend has remained consistent over recent years, with investments rising from Rs 2,153 crore in FY 2022-23 to Rs 3,389 crore in FY 2023-24 and Rs 4,145 crore in FY 2024-25, culminating in the current record.

For the first time, multiple anchor investments exceeding Rs 500 crore are being grounded in the region. As per the data, 312 industrial units involving a cumulative investment of Rs 7,864 crore have completed more than 50 percent of groundwork and are expected to begin production soon.

The conversion of investment proposals into functional units has also improved notably. Under the New Central Sector Scheme (NCSS), 88.6 percent of registered units have already commenced production. Over the past three years, incentives worth Rs 2,513 crore have been disbursed under



various schemes, including NCSS, GST reimbursement, PMEGP and other programmes of the Industries and Commerce Department.

The MSME sector has seen significant formalisation, with Udyam registrations increasing from 0.24 lakh in 2021 to 6.16 lakh in FY 2025-26. The total number of registrations is expected to reach 7.1 lakh within the current financial year. On ease of doing business, J&K has been ranked 5th nationally under the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) 2024, based on independent stakeholder feedback. Reform implementation has improved from just 0.30 percent in 2016 to 100 percent compliance.

The data further shows that nearly 79 percent of over 8.11 lakh applications received through the single-window system have been approved, with 89 percent cleared within stipulated timelines, while rejection rates remain below 5 percent. The startup ecosystem

has also witnessed rapid expansion. A total of 1,305 startups have been registered with the J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) till FY 2025-26, compared to just 69 in 2020. Notably, 816 startups were registered in FY 2025-26 alone. The New Startup Policy 2024 is currently operational, with funding support extended to 25 startups and four incubators.

To enhance industrial competitiveness, the UT is offering highly subsidised industrial land at premiums ranging between Rs 2.5 lakh and Rs 8 lakh, even in areas where market rates run into several crores. This, coupled with low power tariffs, has created a cost-competitive environment for investors.

Key reforms include the introduction of a single certificate of in-principle approval based on self-declaration to reduce procedural delays, and the revival of sick MSMEs by extending incentives at par

with new units under the existing policy framework and RBI guidelines.

The government has also introduced systemic measures such as the first MSME Health Clinic to support stressed units and signed an MoU with the National Stock Exchange to facilitate access to capital markets. The MSME Facilitation Council, Jammu, has received the MSEFC Excellence Award from the Government of India for effective dispute resolution.

J&K's performance under flagship central schemes has further strengthened its position. Under PM Gati Shakti, the UT ranks among the top five, with 676 GIS layers integrated and 51 major infrastructure projects mapped with an outlay of Rs 5,000 crore.

Under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative, J&K has secured the National Gold Award for the second consecutive year in 2024, reaffirmed in 2025, reflecting sustained progress in value-chain development and artisan support.

In the past five years, 73,524 units have been established under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), with J&K ranking first for three consecutive years in both employment generation and margin money utilisation, while exceeding FY 2025-26 targets.

Similarly, under PM Vishwakarma, the UT has topped all Union Territories in registrations, skill training and loan disbursement—(KNO)

Traffic plan issued for Nasha Mukht rally

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Apr 30: The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Srinagar City Ajaz Ahmad Bhat on Thursday shared a detailed traffic advisory for the Nasha Mukht Rally scheduled to be held on May 3.

Sharing details while addressing the media in Srinagar, SSP Bhat said, "The 100-Day Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyaan event is expected to witness large participation and elaborate arrangements have been put in place."

He said the rally will be flagged off by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha from the Synthetic Turf Football Ground (opposite Radio Kashmir) and will culminate at Lal Chowk.

Bhat said vehicles from South Kashmir will be parked at Rajbagh, while those from North Kashmir and Downtown areas will be accommodated at Jehangir Chowk.

He added that additional parking facilities have been designated at Gindun Park, Cluster University, Indoor Stadium, and SP College (rear side).

Roadside parking, especially along the Bund stretch, has been strictly prohibited, he said.

SSP Bhat said vehicles from South Kashmir will move via Rajbagh and

deboard at Gindun Park, while vehicles from North Kashmir and Downtown will proceed via Jehangir Chowk, LD Hospital, and Jawahar Nagar.

He said participants will then reach the venue through designated footbridges.

He added that movement of heavy vehicles will remain restricted between LD Hospital and Abdullah Bridge during the event.

He said special arrangements have also been made for the NEET examination scheduled on the same day, with around 4,000 candidates appearing at centres along MA Road.

He said admit cards will be treated as valid passes to ensure smooth movement of students.

SSP Bhat added that students from far-flung areas will be allowed early passage, while parents have been advised not to park vehicles on MA Road and instead use SP College parking.

He said the traffic restrictions will come into force from 7:00 AM on May 3 and will remain in effect till the conclusion of the programme.

He further urged people to cooperate with traffic personnel for smooth conduct of both the rally and examination—(KNO)

NHPC Executive Director calls on LG Sinha

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Apr 30: Anish Gouraha, Executive Director, National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Regional Office Jammu called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday.

He apprised the Lieutenant Governor of various ongoing projects of NHPC for harnessing the vast untapped Hydropower potential of J&K

Counter-terror drill held at Srinagar Airport

Agencies test response readiness

KNO

Srinagar, Apr 30: A multi-agency counter-terrorist exercise was conducted at Srinagar international airport on Thursday to test emergency response and coordination among security forces, officials said.

As per the details available, the CISF-led drill, in coordination with CRPF, police, AAI, BCAS and other stakeholders, simulated real-time scenarios to assess preparedness, communication and evacuation procedures under the airport's counter-terror contingency plan.

It said the exercise evaluated response protocols through the coordinated deployment of specialized units, real-time scenario simulation and comprehensive testing of actions as per the Counter-Terrorist Contingency Plan, including communication channels, evacuation drills, and inter-agency coordination mechanisms.

"Such exercises play a vital role in enhancing operational readiness by identifying potential gaps, strengthening response capabilities through practical training and reinforcing collective vigilance and synergy among all airport security stakeholders," said an official—(KNO)

Smoking fuels Kashmir's lung cancer rise: SKIMS Director

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Apr 30: Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Director Prof. M. Ashraf Ganie on Thursday said that the Kashmir Valley—particularly Srinagar—is witnessing one of the highest burdens of lung cancer cases in the country, with smoking emerging as the leading cause.

Speaking during an informal media interaction held alongside the inauguration of upgraded medical infrastructure at SKIMS, Prof. Ganie described the trend as "deeply concerning," stressing that tobacco consumption remains the most significant contributor to the rising incidence of lung cancer in the region.

He noted that lifestyle-related factors, especially smoking, are driving the surge and require urgent attention at both the policy and community levels.

"While we are strengthening treatment facilities, prevention must now take centre stage," he said, underlining the need for widespread awareness campaigns to discourage tobacco use and promote healthier lifestyles.



"Smoking kills," he warned. He emphasized that early detection is critical in improving survival rates, as most lung cancer cases are

currently diagnosed at advanced stages.

To tackle the growing cancer burden, SKIMS has intensified efforts to upgrade

its oncology services. The institute is enhancing diagnostic and treatment capabilities to ensure that patients can access advanced care within Jammu and Kashmir, reducing dependence on outside referrals.

A key upcoming initiative includes the establishment of a dedicated screening and prevention facility aimed at large-scale early detection of cancers. This centre will focus on identifying high-risk individuals—particularly smokers—and initiating timely interventions. It will also play a crucial role in educating the public about risk factors such as tobacco use and the importance of regular screenings.

Prof. Ganie said that bridging the gap between diagnosis and prevention is essential to reversing current trends. "Systematic screening and preventive strategies can significantly reduce the long-term burden of cancer," he added.

He said that Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences is set to strengthen its clinical and research capabilities with the addition of advanced equipment across

multiple departments, including nephrology, paediatrics, critical care, maternity services, and surgical oncology.

He added that SKIMS will also present key scientific findings at an upcoming Research Dissemination Meet, where experts are expected to highlight data-driven insights on the rising cancer burden in the Valley. The research is aimed at dispelling myths and addressing public concerns surrounding the increasing incidence of cancer, with a focus on evidence-based understanding and early detection strategies.

The Director inaugurated a series of advanced medical facilities across multiple departments at SKIMS, marking a major step toward strengthening patient care.

The upgraded infrastructure—worth over Rs 24 crore—includes high-end equipment for critical care, oncology, surgery, and diagnostics, aimed at improving precision, efficiency, and overall patient outcomes.

He said the upgraded infrastructure aims to enhance patient care, improve diagnostic precision, and support complex treatments at the tertiary care institute—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Friday Special: Jumu'ah As The Master Of All Days

In the Islamic calendar, Friday (Jumu'ah) is not merely another day of the week but a weekly festival, the master of all days, and the most sacred day upon which the sun rises. The Quran and Hadith elevate Friday to a status that no other day of the week shares, making it a recurring opportunity for spiritual renewal, communal bonding, and divine mercy. The Quran dedicates a full chapter to Friday, instructing believers: "O you who have believed, when the call

is proclaimed for prayer on Friday, then hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave aside trade. That is better for you, if you only knew" (62:9). This verse establishes the priority of the Friday prayer over worldly commerce, reminding the believer that spiritual engagement must take precedence over material pursuits at least once every week. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) described Friday in unparalleled terms. He said: "The best day on which the

sun rises is Friday. On it Adam was created, on it he was admitted to Paradise, and on it he was expelled from it. And the Hour will not be established except on Friday" (Sahih Muslim). The Prophet (PBUH) also taught that Friday contains an hour of special acceptance. He said: "There is an hour on Friday during which no Muslim stands in prayer and asks Allah for something except that He gives it to him" (Sahih al-Bukhari). Scholars have differed on which

hour it is, but the consensus is that it falls somewhere between the sermon and the prayer or in the last hour before sunset. This uncertainty encourages believers to increase supplication throughout the day. The Friday prayer itself is a powerful symbol of Muslim unity. Men from across the city gather shoulder to shoulder in the mosque, leaving behind their differences of class, wealth, and status. The sermon addresses the community on matters of faith, ethics,

and current challenges, providing guidance that carries through the week. In a world of distractions and disconnection, Friday stands as a weekly anchor. It pulls the believer back from the rush of earning and spending, reminding him of his Creator, his community, and his ultimate return. It is a day of prayer, purification, and preparation for the Hereafter. Let every Friday be a milestone of spiritual progress, not a break from it.

Skilling India For A Future-Ready Workforce

Press Information Bureau

Skilling Strengthening India's Growth Engine

India is at a pivotal demographic moment. With one of the youngest workforces in the world, the country has significant potential for higher productivity and growing consumer demand. The Economic Survey 2025-26 highlights that employment-focused skilling initiatives help bridge skill gaps while improving productivity and expanding opportunities for decent work. Such initiatives also promote social mobility by enabling upward economic advancement, thereby supporting more equitable access to inclusive labour markets.

Data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey indicates a broadly stable labour market with typical seasonal variations. In February 2026, the overall Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for persons aged 15 years and above remained stable at 55.9%. The period also reflected a strong recovery in the labour market, marked by increased participation of women and a notable decline in unemployment rates across both rural and urban areas.

Further focusing on the potential of young population and realising the importance of skilling ecosystem, the Union Budget 2026-27 positions skill development as a cross-sectoral priority. It is noteworthy that the recent interventions and initiatives reflect a sustained policy commitment to ensuring that India's young population is not just large in number, but prepared and empowered to contribute meaningfully to the country's economic future.

Budget Focus on Skilling: A Push for the Economy

The Union Budget 2026-27 introduces targeted initiatives to expand institutional capacity, modernize training infrastructure and align skills with emerging industry demands. These measures aim to enhance employability, promote entrepreneurship and create large-scale livelihood opportunities across urban and rural India.

Education
A skilled and educated population is key to realising India's demographic potential. The Union Budget 2026-27 provides further impetus to the education sector with a total allocation of 1.39 lakh crore. This represents an increase of 8.27% over the Budget Estimates of 2025-26. The allocation focuses on expanding access, strengthening infrastructure, and making education more aligned with industry needs.

In this direction, the Budget has announced: Creation of 5 University Townships near major industrial and logistics corridors to host universities, colleges, research institutions, skill centres and residential complexes.

Establishment of 1 girls' hostel in every district through Viability Gap Funding (VGF)/ capital support. This is announced to address access and retention challenges arising from extended academic and laboratory hours, in higher education STEM institutions.

Upgradation or establishment of 4 telescope infrastructure facilities including the National Large Solar Telescope, National Large Optical Infrared Telescope, Himalayan Chandra Telescope and COSMOS-2 Planetarium to promote astrophysics and astronomy via immersive experiences.

Textile & Apparel

The Indian Textile & Apparel industry contributes ~2% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), about 11% of the manufacturing GVA and 8.63% to exports. As the sixth-largest textile & apparel exporter globally, the sector supports over 45 million direct jobs, with a strong presence in MSME clusters and significant participation of women and rural workers. To further support weavers and artisans of the industry, the Budget proposes the following:

Man-made fibres (MMF): Fibres made in factories, either from natural sources like cellulose (e.g., rayon) or from chemicals (e.g., polyester), created to match or improve natural fibres.

New-age fibres: Modern, innovative fibres such as lotus silk, bamboo fibre, or smart textiles that are eco-friendly, sustainable, or have special functional features.

National Fibre Scheme to promote self-reliance in natural, man-made and new-age fibres. Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme for modernising traditional clusters through capital support, advanced machinery, technology upgradation and common testing infrastructure.

National Handloom and Handicraft Programme to integrate existing schemes and provide focused, income-enhancing support to weavers and artisans.

Tex-Eco Initiative to promote globally competitive and sustainable textiles and apparel.

Samarth 2.0 to modernise and upgrade the textile skilling ecosystem through structured industry-academia partnerships.

Mega Textile Parks which will focus on building scale, efficiency and value addition, particularly in technical textiles.

Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative to strengthen khadi, handloom and handicrafts through enhanced skilling, quality assurance and global branding linkages.

Health
The growing healthcare needs of India's population shaped by demographic shifts, rising non-communicable diseases, and global demand for skilled professionals, point to the need for a skilled and expanded healthcare workforce. In this regard, the Budget sets out a phased outlay of 980 crore over three years with an aim to expand and strengthen education of allied and healthcare professionals. Key initiatives in the Budget include:

Creation and upgradation of Institutes via Biopharma SHAKTI (Strategy for Healthcare Advancement through Knowledge, Technology and Innovation) with proposed outlay of 10,000 crore over five years to position India as a global biopharma manufacturing hub. The strategy includes setting up of 3 new National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs), upgradation of 7 existing NIPERs, creation of over 1,000 clinical trial sites, and strengthening of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation.

Upgradation of existing Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) Institutions and establishment of new AHP Institutions in private and Government sectors. This covers 10 selected disciplines, including optometry, radiology, anaesthesia, OT Technology, Applied Psychology and Behavioural Health. A total of 100,000 AHPs will also be added over the next 5 years.

Formation of a strong care ecosystem covering geriatric and allied care services. This comprises development of variety of National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF)-aligned programmes to train multiskilled caregivers combining core care and allied skills, such as, wellness, yoga and operation of medical and assistive devices. The focus is to train 1.5 lakh caregivers in the coming year.

A scheme to promote medical tourism services will also be launched, which will support States in establishing five Regional Medical Hubs in partnership with the private sector. These hubs will integrate healthcare complexes that combine medical, educational and research facilities. They will have AYUSH Centres, Medical Value Tourism Facilitation Centres and infrastructure for diagnostics, post-care and rehabilitation. These Hubs will provide diverse job opportunities for health professionals including doctors and AHPs.

AYUSH
India's AYUSH sector continues to gain global recognition, with yoga and Ayurveda emerging as important pillars of preventive and holistic healthcare. The Union Budget 2026-27 reaffirms this commitment with an allocation of 4,408 crore for the Ministry of AYUSH. To further strengthen the AYUSH sector and meet global demand, the Union Budget puts forward the following initiatives:

Establishment of three new All India Institutes of Ayurveda (AIIA) to strengthen education, clinical services and research; Upgradation of AYUSH pharmacies and Drug Testing Laboratories to ensure higher standards of certification ecosystem, and availability of skilled manpower; Upgradation of the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre in Jamnagar, to promote evidence-based research, training and awareness for traditional medicine.

Livestock
Livestock remains a critical pillar of rural resilience, contributing nearly 16% to farm income, particularly for poor and marginal households. With a Budget allocation of 6,153 crore, the Union Budget 2026-27 reinforces the sector's role in income diversification, nutritional security, and employment generation.

Further, to scale up availability of veterinary professionals by more than 20,000, the Union Budget introduces a loan-linked capital subsidy support Scheme to support establishment of veterinary and para-vet colleges, hospitals, diagnostic laboratories and breeding facilities in the private sector, with facilitation of collaboration between Indian and foreign institutions.

Orange Economy
The Orange Economy driven by creativity, culture and intellectual property, has emerged as a significant contributor to modern economic growth. Globally, creative industries contribute between 0.5% and over 7% of GDP, with strong spillover effects across tourism and urban services. In India, the media and entertainment sector, valued at around 2.5 trillion in 2024, is projected to grow at nearly 7% annually, reaching about 3.06 trillion by 2027.

To strengthen the talent pipeline in high-growth creative segments, the Budget emphasises setting up AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics) Content Creator Labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges. With the AVGC sector projected to require nearly 2 million professionals by 2030, this initiative aims to build early-stage creative capacity, enhance industry-aligned skills, and strengthen India's presence in global digital content production.

Design
The Indian design industry is expanding rapidly, with growing demand for skilled design professionals across sectors. To strengthen design education and support this growth, a new National Institute of Design is set to come up in the eastern region of India.

Tourism
Tourism remains a high-impact driver of exports, employment, and India's global cultural footprint. The travel and tourism sector contributed 5.22% to India's GDP in FY2024, close to pre-pandemic levels. The sector also supported an estimated 8.46 crore jobs, both direct and indirect, accounting for about 13.3% of total employment in the country. The Union Budget 2026-27 advances this momentum through targeted institutional and skill-based initiatives:

Setting up of National Institute of Hospitality by upgrading the existing National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology. It will serve as a bridge between academia, industry and Government, strengthening hospitality education standards.

A pilot scheme for upskilling 10,000 tourist guides across 20 iconic tourist sites through a standardised 12-week hybrid course, developed in collaboration with an Indian Institute of Management.

National Destination Digital Knowledge Grid will be established to digitally document cultural, spiritual and heritage sites, generating new opportunities for researchers, historians, content creators and technology partners.

Sports
The Union Budget 2026-27 has increased financial support for the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, with the overall allocation rising by 1,133 crore. This step aligns with the vision of placing India among the top 10 sporting nations by 2036 and the top 5 by 2047. The Ministry's allocation has expanded from 3,346 crore (revised estimate) in 2025-26 to

4,479.88 crore (budget estimate) in 2026-27.

The higher allocation is expected to strengthen the implementation of centrally sponsored sports and youth development programmes, including athlete development initiatives, youth engagement programmes, coaching and support systems, integration of sports science, and sports infrastructure development.

Building on this, the Budget includes the launch of Khelo India Mission to comprehensively strengthen the sports sector. The Mission will facilitate:

An integrated talent development pathway, supported by training centres across foundational, intermediate and elite levels;

Systematic development of coaches and support staff;

Integration of sports science and technology;

Competitions and leagues to promote sports culture and provide platforms for athletes; and

Development of sports infrastructure for training and competition.

Policy Support Strengthening Skilling
The Government has always prioritised strengthening of a range of flagship skilling initiatives to develop a skilled and future-ready workforce. These programmes focus on large-scale training, apprenticeship promotion and vocational education across sectors. Together, they aim to enhance employability and align skill development with evolving industry needs.

Skill India Mission
Skill India Mission (SIM), launched in 2015, provides skill, re-skill, and up-skill training through an extensive network of skill development centres under major schemes. The mission focuses on all sections of the society across the country, and concentrate on enhancing the skills and employability of the working age population. Under this mission, following schemes are covered:

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY),

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS),

Craftsman Training Scheme (CTS) in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) / PMKVY 4.0: It is a flagship short-term skilling initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. Over the course of its four phases, it has progressed from a pilot incentive-based certification initiative to a large-scale, demand-driven and outcome-oriented skilling ecosystem.

Under its 4th phase, PMKVY 4.0, training is imparted in National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) aligned job roles developed by industry-led Sector Skill Councils (SSC), and several courses are delivered directly within industrial premises with trainers sourced from the employer ecosystem. Key achievements are highlighted below:

PMKVY 4.0 has trained 27.24 lakh candidates across 38 sectors, covering 36 States and 737 districts as of 31 March 2026.

Between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2026, more than 10.91 lakh candidates were trained in sectors such as IT-ITeS, aerospace & aviation, agriculture, rubber, leather, apparel, electronics, construction and tourism & hospitality across 34 States and 737 districts.

69 customised courses and 154 future-skill job roles have been introduced to improve employability in emerging domains including AI, Industry 4.0, green jobs and digital services.

Over 16,900 institutions are implementing PMKVY 4.0, including more than 6,800 Skill Hubs in schools, higher educational institutions and ITIs as on March 31, 2026.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS): The JSS Scheme, initially launched as Shramik Vidyaapeeth (SVP) in 1967, aims to provide skill training in a non-formal mode at the doorsteps of the beneficiary through registered Societies (NGOs) with 100% grant from the Government. It promotes inclusive, community-based skilling for non-literates, neo-literates and school dropouts. The following reflects the progress achieved:

A total of 36,48,692 lakh beneficiaries have been trained since 2018 till 31 March 2026

Courses are tailored to local demand including tailoring, embroidery, handicrafts, food processing and health-related services.

26,720 tribal beneficiaries have been enrolled and 26,519 have been trained as of 31 March 2026

To diversify skilling options, 32 new NCVET-approved courses at NSQF Levels 3, 3.5 and 4 have been introduced under JSS.

Since December 2024, JSS products are marketed on the UdyamKart portal, directly

connecting artisans and micro-entrepreneurs with buyers

National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS): Launched in August 2016, the scheme is currently being implemented in its second phase, NAPS 2.0. The programme promotes apprenticeship training by providing partial stipend support to apprentices thereby strengthening the apprenticeship ecosystem, and offering advocacy support to stakeholders. Apprenticeship remains a key pillar for "earn while you learn" and industry-centric skill development. The Government contributes 25% of stipend (up to 1,500 per month) directly to apprentices' bank accounts via NAPS portal.

Since 2016, more than 54.41 lakh+ apprentices have been engaged across sectors such as automotive, IT-ITeS, electronics, retail and manufacturing until March 31, 2026

In FY 2025-26, around 12.35 lakh apprentices were engaged. Additionally, about 6.42 lakh apprentices completed their On-the-Job Training in FY 2025-26.

CoP (Certificate of Proficiency), launched in September 2025, is an additional recognition for apprentices who complete the full duration and practical assessment. As of March 31, 2026, 67,711 CoPs were generated.

From 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026, more than 562.75 crore were disbursed through 40.10 lakh Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) transactions.

Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS): The CTS was introduced in 1950 to ensure a steady flow of skilled workers in different trades for the domestic industry. It also aims to raise quantitatively and qualitatively the industrial production through systematic training and reduce unemployment among the educated youth by providing them employable training.

Under CTS, training is imparted in 169 courses through 14,688 ITIs (Government - 3,345 & Private - 11,343) across the country.

As of March 2026, a total of 14 CTS courses have been developed and 22 existing courses have been revised in a span of three years. These courses align with industry requirements.

The enrolment in ITIs has increased from 12.51 lakh in FY 2022-23 to 14.70 lakh in FY 2025-26.

Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)

ITIs are the backbone of long-term vocational education in India. They have been set up with the objective to ensure a steady flow of skilled personnel to the industry.

To further strengthen this ecosystem, PM-SETU (Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs) was launched in October 2025 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme at an estimated cost of 60,000 crore. Key features include:

Upgradation of 1,000 Government ITIs (200 hub ITIs and 800 spoke ITIs) in a hub-and-spoke model, with state-of-the-art infrastructure and modern equipment.

Establishment of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) with Anchor Industry Partners (AIPs) to co-own and co-manage clusters.

Introduction and redesign of courses based on labour market demand, including high-demand traditional trades upgraded with modern technology.

Many states including Haryana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and others are co-creating the upgradation of 1,000 ITIs around their core strength.

Capacity augmentation of five National Skill Training Institutes (Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur and Ludhiana) as National Centres of Excellence for Skilling with global partnerships.

Conclusion
India's skilling ecosystem is undergoing a structural transformation with coordinated, technology-enabled and industry-aligned frameworks. The Union Budget 2026-27 strengthens this shift by integrating sector-specific skill programmes with infrastructure development. Initiatives spanning ITI upgradation, PMKVY 4.0, PM-SETU, NAPS and other reforms collectively aim to improve scale, quality, transparency and industry linkage across the skilling value chain.

As India progresses toward Viksit Bharat @2047, the Government is emphasising on demand-driven training, measurable outcomes and inclusive access. By aligning skills in sectors such as healthcare, care economy, AVGC, tourism etc., the policy framework positions human capital as a core growth driver. Overall, India's resilient and future-ready skilling ecosystem enhances productivity and accelerates formalisation. It also helps translate the country's demographic advantage into broad-based, sustainable growth.

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

Satish Sharma meets Union MoS, pushes for NFSA cap removal, expanded ration coverage

KT News Desk

JAMMU, April 30: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, IT, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Thursday held a detailed meeting with Union Minister of State for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, B. L. Verma and raised a comprehensive set of demands aimed at strengthening the Public Distribution System (PDS), enhancing food security and addressing the key welfare concerns in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister, as per an official statement, strongly pressed for lifting the cap on NFSA food grain allocation, stating that the existing restriction has stalled the bifurcation of ration cards and is adversely impacting the families whose size has increased over time. He urged the Union Government to revise and enhance Jammu and Kashmir's allocation quota to facilitate issuance of new and bifurcated ration cards. He also sought sanction of additional food grain quota to meet genuine demand, particularly in remote, border and tribal areas.

Highlighting Jammu and Kashmir's preparedness, Sharma requested expedited approval for new ration card applications, noting that e-KYC processes and database cleansing are nearing completion.



Focusing on systemic strengthening, the Minister called for a special infrastructure grant for PDS in difficult terrains, citing challenges in high-altitude, snowbound and border areas. He also sought an increase in FPS dealer margins to ensure sustainability and reduce attrition and proposed introduction of additional commodities such as pulses, edible oil, and millets through FPS with central support.

The Minister highlighted Jammu and Kashmir's achievement in implementing the

SMART PDS framework and sought performance-linked incentive funding, noting the region's early adoption of digital systems including RCMS, SCMS and route optimization.

Addressing the vulnerable sections, Sharma raised the issue of Kashmiri migrant ration card integration and sought continued support to ensure uninterrupted entitlements. He also advocated for special ration provisions for border and nomadic communities, including Gujjars and Bakerwals with flexible e-KYC norms.

With Reference to Consumer Affairs, the Minister called for modernization of Legal Metrology infrastructure, including advanced testing equipment and manpower support, particularly for remote districts. He also sought enhanced funding under CCPA for consumer awareness campaigns in rural and semi-urban areas.

Under social justice initiatives, Sharma emphasized the timely release of PM-AJAY and DA&DBT funds, including scholarships for SCs, OBCs and EWS categories. He further urged for expedited action on inclusion of Pahari and other deserving communities in central OBC/deprived lists. He called for sanction of additional hostels under Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana in districts like Jammu, Samba, Udhampur and Rajouri.

On administrative and financial matters, the Minister requested the release of pending central assistance and CSS instalments and sought capacity-building support for FCS&CA officials in areas like data analytics, supply chain management and enforcement.

Sharma reiterated the commitment of the Jammu and Kashmir government to ensure efficient service delivery and inclusive welfare and expressed confidence that the Union Government would extend full support in addressing these critical issues.

J&K RERA inspects Residential Projects in Jammu

KT News Desk

JAMMU, APRIL 30: Continuing its crackdown on unregulated real estate practices, the team of the Jammu and Kashmir Real Estate Regulatory Authority (JKRERA) conducted a series of comprehensive inspections across various ongoing and completed residential flat developments in Jammu.

The inspections, led by the Authority's enforcement team, targeted nine prominent locations to verify compliance with the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA) and the Unified Building Bye-Laws (UBBL).

The Authority, as per an official statement, visited and inspected the progress on Trikuta Apartments, Trikuta Nagar (Sector-4), Nidesh Apartments, Trikuta Nagar (Sector-1), Royal Nest Apartments, Trikuta Nagar, Florence Apartment, Trikuta Nagar, Dream Home Apartments, Greater Kailash, Preeti Day Apartment, Sainik Colony Extension (Chowdhri Road), Shanti Kunj Apartments, Sainik Colony (Near Ford Workshop), Imperial Apartment, ChanniHimmat and Aerobera Resident Welfare Society, Channi Himmat (Sector-1).

During the site visits, the promoters and representatives were directed to submit all project-related documentation to the JKRERA office



immediately. The Authority issued strict instructions for the developers to abide by the Unified Building Bye-Laws (UBBL), obtain necessary layout approval and secure Environmental Clearances as required by law. The developers were reminded that once statutory formalities are met, registration with JKRERA is mandatory for all eligible projects.

Further, in a move to ensure transparency, the RERA team interacted directly with the residents of the apartments to understand the practical challenges and grievances they face. JKRERA has issued a public appeal to all the prospective homebuyers to invest only in RERA-approved projects to safeguard their financial interests and ensure legal protection.

The Authority also addressed the role of digital marketing in the real estate sector. Content creators and

influencers present during the proceedings were explicitly directed to abstain from advertising any projects that are not registered with RERA. Furthermore, the Authority mandated that all such creators must register themselves as Real Estate Agents with JKRERA before promoting or facilitating the sale of any property.

Chairman J&K RERA, Satish Chandra, reiterated that any violation of the RERA Act or the Rules framed thereunder will attract strict penal action. He said that the Authority remains steadfast in its mission to foster accountability, protect homebuyers and develop the real estate sector in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Deputy Secretary Esha Chib, Town Planner JKRERA, Vitasta Raina along with other officials of JKRERA conducted the inspections.

DC Kulgam inaugurates Milk Value Addition startup



KT News Desk

KULGAM, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Thursday inaugurated a Milk Value Addition Startup at Poniwah established under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

The unit has been set up by beneficiary Jalaludin Bhat through the Department of Animal Husbandry, Kulgam under HADP, Project-23 (Dairy Development in J&K), with a subsidy/grant of Rs 25 lakh provided to support the venture.

The inauguration was held in the presence of Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Kulgam, Dr. Shakeel Ahmad Dar, along with officials from the Animal Husbandry Department and other concerned stakeholders.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted the importance of value addition in enhancing farmers' income and creating sustainable livelihood

opportunities.

He emphasized that such initiatives under HADP aim to modernize the agriculture and allied sectors while encouraging entrepreneurship.

He also urged the youth to actively leverage government-sponsored employment schemes to establish income-generating units and become self-reliant.

Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Kulgam shared that the unit has a processing capacity of around 10 quintals of milk per day and is producing a range of value-added dairy products including curd, yoghurt, and cheese.

He added that the department is committed to support dairy farmers through innovative interventions, infrastructure development, and capacity building.

He added that such initiatives play a vital role in boosting local dairy production and promoting self-reliance.

Census-2027: DC Anantnag reviews preparations

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, who is also the Principal Census Officer of the district, Thursday chaired a comprehensive meeting to assess the preparations and progress achieved on the Census 2027 so far.

ADC, Dr. Muzamil Maqbool (District Census Officer), ACR, Tariq Ahmad Malik (District Nodal Officer), Master Trainer, Field Trainers besides other officials and census functionaries attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the ADC, as per an official statement, briefed the chair about the administrative framework and measures, timelines, digital tools, and roles and responsibilities of various census functionaries. He highlighted key aspects including the two phases of Census 2027 viz. House Listing and Housing Census Operation (HLO) and Population Enumeration as well as the use of digital platforms such as mobile applications and the Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS) for efficient data collection and monitoring.

He informed that charge officers and field trainers have been appointed and trained while the appointment and training of supervisors and enumerators as mandated by the guidelines will be done soon.



Reviewing the preparations, the DC directed for early formation and mapping of Houselisting Blocks (HLBs), appointment of enumerators and supervisors, and readiness of logistics and digital infrastructure. He stressed for strict adherence to the notified dates and ensuring completion of all preparatory activities within the stipulated timeframe.

Emphasizing the significance of Census as a vital exercise for planning and policy formulation, the DC directed that accuracy, completeness, and transparency in data collection through close monitoring of field-level tasks be ensured by all census functionaries. He noted that various key aspects

of development of a district are projected on the basis of population and other census parameters.

On the occasion, Dr. Bilal instructed to devise a comprehensive schedule for training of enumerators and supervisors to ensure they are adequately trained and equipped before the commencement of field operations. He called for proper utilization of the CMMS Portal for real-time monitoring and reporting, and asked officers to ensure seamless coordination among all stakeholders. Directions were also issued to impart wide publicity to the procedures and crucial dates so that the whole process is completed in a fair, smooth and successful manner.

Sakeena Itoo expresses solidarity with MLA Showkat Hussain Ganie on mother's demise

KT News Desk

KULGAM, APRIL 30: Minister for Health & Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Thursday visited Zainpora to offer her heartfelt condolences and express solidarity with MLA Showkat Hussain Ganie on the demise of her mother.

During the visit, Minister Sakeena also interacted with the bereaved family members, sharing their grief and expressed solidarity with them. She prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and strength to the family to bear the irreparable loss.

The Minister, as per an official statement, conveyed her deepest sympathies with the grieving family during this difficult time. She expressed profound grief over the loss and also joined in prayers, hoping that the departed soul attains the highest place in Jannah. She also prayed for strength to the family members to bear this loss with courage and fortitude.

MLA Pampore, Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi; MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani; MLA Devsar, Peerzada Feroze Ahmad and other local representatives also accompanied the Minister during the visit.

Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan Central Kashmir Excise Range destroys Poppy cultivation

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, APRIL 30: Central Kashmir Excise Range intensified its crackdown against the illicit cultivation of Narcotic crops (Poppy) under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan.

During the drive, illegal poppy cultivation was destroyed at multiple locations across the Srinagar-Budgam-Ganderbal Excise Range in collaboration with the Police, Revenue and Agriculture Department.

The FIR was lodged under the relevant sections of NDPS Act at the concerned Police Stations. All legal formalities including seizure, Sampling and destruction were reportedly completed on spot.

The enforcement action exemplifies the commitment of the Excise Department to curbing illegal activities and upholding the rule of law under the supervision of the Excise Commissioner and the Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive), Kashmir.

DLTC Meeting stresses timely completion of connectivity works in Ganderbal

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, APRIL 30: A meeting of the District Level Telecom Committee (DLTC) was held here Thursday under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Syed Faheem Bihagi to take stock of the progress of mobile tower installation, elimination of communication gaps, and the status of broadband connectivity works across the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, held a detailed review of mobile tower installation by various service providers, with particular focus on areas that continue to lack adequate network coverage. It was noted that out of total identified tower sites for which land has been made available, almost all are now functional while work on the remaining a few sites is still

pending, and all concerned agencies were directed to complete these without further delay.

Concern was expressed over BSNL's failure to complete assigned works despite earlier directions at previous committee meetings. The state-run operator was specifically directed to immediately take up pending tasks and provide a compliance report. Airtel and Jio were directed to expedite installation of towers at critical locations, particularly at District Hospital Ganderbal and the Darend area, where absence of reliable connectivity poses a direct challenge to healthcare access and emergency response.

The meeting also reviewed the progress of BharatNet, the national programme to bring broadband connectivity to all gram panchayats.

The meeting was informed

that surveys across all blocks in the district have been completed, active work is currently underway in Kangan and Lar blocks. Work in Safapora block, however, remains incomplete, and the executing agencies were directed to accelerate progress there and adhere to the prescribed timeline.

KPDCL was specifically directed to prioritise the provision of electricity to all telecom installation sites, as power availability remains a prerequisite for the commissioning of towers and broadband nodes.

All agencies were further directed to ensure that pending work orders are issued within a week, so that ground-level execution is not stalled on account of procedural delays.

Telecom companies were also directed to carry out proper restoration of sites following installation works and to take

full responsibility for protecting public infrastructure and civic assets during execution. Any damage to roads, footpaths, or utilities caused during cabling or tower installation must be made good by the concerned agency.

The ADC underscored that seamless telecom connectivity is not a matter of convenience but a necessity for effective delivery of public services, functioning of healthcare facilities, coordination during emergencies, and the broader development goals of the district.

He stressed that strengthening telecom infrastructure is vital for public service delivery, emergency response, and overall socio-economic development of the district, and called upon all stakeholders to work in close coordination to achieve targets within the prescribed timeframe.

Census 2027

PCO kick-starts training for enumerators, supervisors in Kulgam

KT News Desk

KULGAM, APRIL 30: Training programme for Enumerators and Supervisors for Census 2027 was Thursday kick-started in Kulgam by Principal Census Officer (PCO) (Deputy Commissioner), Shahzad Alam here at Mini-Secretariat.

The programme is aimed at equipping field functionaries with the necessary skills and knowledge for accurate, efficient, and error-free data collection during the upcoming Census.

Enumerators and Supervisors from across the district are participating in training sessions. Speaking on the occasion, the PCO stressed the need to maintain the highest standards of accuracy, transparency, and strict adherence to prescribed



guidelines during the enumeration process.

He further emphasized that well-trained field staff are essential to ensuring the credibility and reliability of Census data.

Participants were sensitized on the use of digital tools, modern data collection techniques, and ways to effectively address field-level challenges.

The training programme also

includes detailed sessions on the roles and responsibilities of Enumerators and Supervisors, data validation procedures, and the importance of maintaining confidentiality of collected information.

The programme will continue over the coming days, focusing on strengthening the capacity of field staff for the smooth and successful conduct of Census 2027 in the district.

CS inaugurates 3-day 'The Meanderings' exhibition at Kala Kendra Jammu

KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 30: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Thursday inaugurated a three-day painting exhibition titled "The Meanderings" by Pradeep Wahule (IFS, Conservator of Forests) at Kala Kendra Jammu.

Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary, Department of Culture, J&K, was the Special Guest on the occasion. Sarvesh Rai, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests; Harvinder Kour, Secretary JKAACL and Dr. Javaid Rahi, Secretary, Kala Kendra Jammu, were part of the podium during the inaugural programme.

The event was organized by Kala Kendra Jammu under the aegis of the Department of Culture and witnessed participation from artists, writers, poets, and officers of the Department.

In his address, Atal Dulloo appreciated the artistic depth of Pradeep Wahule's work, observing that his paintings make a significant contribution to environmental awareness and foster



a deep emotional connection with nature.

He emphasized the need for cultural institutions to actively engage younger generations with their age-old culture and heritage. He further stated that Kala Kendra would be provided full assistance to develop into a

vibrant institution of J&K's cultural landscape. He also appreciated the administration of the Kendra for transforming the institution into a centre of art and cultural activities.

While making his address Brij Mohan Sharma remarked that while he has known Pradeep

Wahule as an efficient officer, his high-quality artworks left a lasting impression, adding that such creativity deserves national recognition. He further noted that efforts are underway to fully utilize all the galleries of Kala Kendra for the purposes they were originally envisioned.

Welcoming the guests, Javaid Rahi stated that the primary objective of the exhibition is to provide a platform for artists of Jammu & Kashmir to interact and engage with contemporary art through the works of Pradeep Wahule. He informed that around 40 artworks are on display at the Master Sansar Chand Gallery of Kala Kendra.

Speaking on the occasion, Pradeep Wahule (artist) reflected on his three-decade-long journey in the field of art. He stated that he is a self-trained artist and developed a deep interest in fine arts from an early age, drawing inspiration from nature and the works of great masters.

Rashmi Rao, who curated the exhibition, shared that this is the sixth State/UT where she is managing the display of the show. She expressed hope that art lovers and the general public will visit Kala Kendra during the three-day exhibition.

Kusam Ticko conducted the programme. The exhibition will remain open to the public for three days.

Centre approves 243 cr for PM SHRI Schools in J&K for 2026-27

KT News Desk

Jammu, Apr 30: The Project Approval Board of the PM SHRI - Schools for Rising India scheme has approved a total outlay of 243 crore for Jammu and Kashmir for the financial year 2026-27.

The PAB meeting, chaired by Union Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Sanjay Kumar, was attended by Commissioner Secretary, School Education, Ram Nivas Sharma, along with the Project Director and other senior officials of Samagra Shiksha, J&K.

During the meeting, the Board reviewed the financial and physical progress made under the scheme in the previous year. Out of 200.11 crore available for 2025-26, 194.53 crore was utilized and released to executing agencies, including PWD

(R&B), mainly for civil works and allied activities.

The Board appreciated the significant academic improvement in the UT, especially the 10 percent increase in Board Examination results at the secondary and higher secondary levels. It also commended the overall financial and physical progress achieved by Jammu and Kashmir under the scheme.

The Ministry of Education, Government of India, assured continued support for effective implementation of the plans in the coming years. At present, the PM SHRI scheme is being implemented in 396 schools across J&K, mostly at the high and higher secondary levels.

The officials also clarified that reports in certain sections of the media about meagre expenditure under the scheme are false.

Oil prices whipsaw while US stocks glide near their record heights

AP

New York, Apr 30: Oil prices whipsawed on Thursday and surged toward their highest levels since the war with Iran began, only for the leaps to quickly vanish. The US stock market, meanwhile, is gliding following strong profit reports from big companies like Alphabet.

The S&P 500 rose 0.4% and is just below its all-time high set earlier this week, as companies keep delivering fatter profits for the start of 2026 than analysts expected, even with very high oil prices and uncertainty about the economy.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 632 points, or 1.3%, as of 11:30 am Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.2% higher.

Alphabet led the way and climbed 7.3% after the owner of Google and YouTube reported profit for the latest quarter that almost doubled analysts' expectations. Investments in artificial intelligence "are lighting up every part of the business", CEO Sundar Pichai said.

The steadiness on Wall Street followed manic swings in the oil market, where prices surged overnight on worries that the Iran war will affect the flow of crude for a long time. Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz to oil tankers, keeping them pent up in the Persian Gulf and away from customers worldwide, while a US Navy blockade is preventing Iran from selling its own oil.

Traders are always buying and selling contracts for different kinds of oil, going out for many months. In the most actively traded part of the market for Brent crude, for delivery in July, the price got as high as USD 114.70 per barrel overnight. It then fell back toward USD 107 before sitting at USD 109.82, down 0.6%.

So far during the war, the peak price for the most actively traded Brent contract is USD 119.50, which was set last month.

In a less actively traded corner of the Brent market, the price for a barrel to be delivered in June briefly went above USD 126 overnight before pulling back toward USD 114.

Bike rider, elderly woman killed in accidents

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Apr 30: Two persons were killed in separate road accidents in the Handwara area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Thursday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a motorcyclist was killed after his bike collided with a load carrier on the Handwara bypass road.

He said the accident involved a motorcycle bearing registration number JK09E-0932 and a load carrier JK09E-1239. The rider, identified as Shahid Ahmad Shah, son of Irshad Ahmad Shah and a resident of Maidan Chogal, sustained critical injuries.

"He was shifted to GMC Handwara, where doctors declared him brought dead," the official said, adding that the load carrier driver fled the scene.

In another incident at Maratgam in Handwara, a load carrier



bearing registration number JK09C-4575 hit a pedestrian. The victim sustained critical injuries and was taken to GMC Handwara, where she was declared brought dead.

She was later identified as Aazi Begum (70), wife of Mohd Abdullah Bhat.

Police have taken cognizance of both incidents and initiated further investigation. (KNO)

Union Jt Secy MoFPI concludes 5-day visit to Kishtwar

Reviews PMDDKY progress in district, sets targets for 2026-27

KT News Desk

Kishtwar, Apr 30: Preet Pal Singh, Union Joint Secretary, Ministry for Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) and Central Nodal Officer for the Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhanaya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY), today concluded his five-day visit to Kishtwar district, aimed at conducting a comprehensive review of the scheme and finalising targets for the upcoming financial year.

During his visit, on the last day, the Joint Secretary chaired a detailed review meeting with the officers of the agriculture and allied departments at the new DC Office Kishtwar.

The discussions focused on assessing the progress on PMDDKY in the district, strengthening its implementation, addressing field-level challenges and setting realistic and achievable targets for the



next financial year.

As part of his field engagements, Singh visited the Padder area, where he inspected the apple orchards rejuvenated under the initiatives of the Horticulture Department. He interacted with the local farmers to understand their experiences, gather feedback on government interventions and encouraged them to adopt improved horticultural practices for better productivity and income.

The senior officers from Agriculture and allied departments accompanied the Joint Secretary during the review

meetings and field visits. They reiterated their commitment towards effective and timely implementation of PMDDKY in the district.

The visit highlights the government's sustained focus on enhancing the agricultural productivity, boosting farmers' income and strengthening the food processing ecosystem in the region. The meeting was attended by ADDC Vinod Kumar Behnal, ACD Manoj Kumar, CAO Kushal Chandel, DSHO Dr. Jamil Nasir, CHO Sajid Mustafa, LDM besides other officers from the concerned departments.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Narcotics smuggling

silence. We must remember: a drug-free society is built by those who resist this menace even when they are not directly affected. Every family must recognize that prosperity is not measured by economic growth alone, but by the vigilant and responsible choices of its citizens," he said.

LG Sinha also highlighted that with the public support, in just the last 20 days around 350 FIRs were registered and 440 drug traffickers were arrested. He also called upon schools, colleges, social organizations, and the media to join this campaign.

"When communities stay alert, they can resist infiltration. When society is vigilant, addiction cannot spread," the Lieutenant Governor said. (KNO)

India treats

action beyond military responses. He said tackling its operational networks alone would not be sufficient unless its ideological and political backing is also addressed.

"Terrorism survives on ideological support and political patronage. These roots must be dismantled to end the threat effectively," he said.

Sinha also highlighted the role of India's defence manufacturing ecosystem, saying it has developed the capacity to support both peacetime requirements and rapid wartime mobilisation. He said the country now possesses strong "surge capacity" to scale up operations when required.

"Our military-industrial framework has proven capable of meeting sudden demands. It is equipped to sustain operations in challenging situations," he said.

Without naming specific incidents, Singh reiterated that India's response mechanisms are no longer limited to conventional approaches and have adapted to emerging security challenges.

He maintained that India's security forces remain vigilant and capable of responding decisively to any future threats, reiterating the government's policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism. (KNO)

LG, CM greet

present times, when the world seeks harmony and mutual understanding. Highlighting the importance of communal harmony, he said

that the occasion is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to peaceful coexistence, brotherhood and respect for diversity.

The Chief Minister prayed for peace, prosperity and well-being of the people of Jammu & Kashmir and the entire country.

Vande Bharat extended

flanked by J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and senior railway officials, and BJP leaders.

Speaking to reporters, Vaishnav, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the Vande Bharat service, launched last year after the inauguration of the Jammu-Srinagar rail line by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has now been upgraded from 8 to 20 coaches. "The service has been extended from Katra to Jammu to meet rising demand," he said.

He said the trains have witnessed 100 per cent occupancy since launch, with over 5.5 lakh passengers already travelling on the route.

Vaishnav said improved rail connectivity has boosted freight movement and reduced logistics costs. "Cement prices have dropped by around Rs 50 per bag. Over 2 crore kilograms of apples have been transported to Delhi, and movement of perishables like cherries will become easier," he said, adding that essential goods such as milk and salt are now being transported efficiently by rail.

He said train services remained operational even during heavy snowfall and landslides, reflecting system reliability. The trains are equipped with advanced electronics suited for high-altitude and extreme winter conditions, including temperatures up to minus 10°C.

The Railway Minister said efforts are underway to further enhance capacity through automatic signalling and additional crossing stations. He added that a proposal to extend the rail line from Baramulla to Uri is under consideration, while survey and design work is in progress for connectivity to Rajouri and Poonch.

"The next focus is doubling the Qazigund-Srinagar stretch to allow more trains on the route," he said, adding that modern railway technologies on par with European standards are being implemented in J&K.

Vaishnav further said that Jammu railway station is being developed into a modern facility, with multiple stations across the Union

Territory undergoing upgrades.

On the occasion, CM Omar Abdullah said the increase from 8 to 20 coaches will enable nearly 1,400 passengers to travel per trip, terming it a major boost to connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar.

He said Pankaj Gangwar, Principal Chief Security Commissioner, Railway Protection Force, said CORAS commandos have been deployed to secure Vande Bharat trains on the Katra-Srinagar route.

"We have implemented a 'one plus twenty' guard system led by an inspector, with RPF commandos ensuring security along the route," Omar said.

SSP Railways J&K Waseem Qadri said comprehensive security arrangements are in place, with around 3,000 CCTV cameras monitoring the track and guard rooms established along the route.

"Drone surveillance and peripheral guarding have been deployed across all stations. Passengers, including tourists, need not worry as robust security measures are in place," he said, adding that the system will be strengthened further.

Meanwhile, senior Congress leader and AICC General Secretary Ghulam Ahmad Mir has urged Ashwini Vaishnav to consider introducing a halt for the Vande Bharat Express at Anantnag Railway Station.

Mir said Anantnag serves as a major commercial and tourism hub of South Kashmir, catering to a vast population across several districts. The absence of a scheduled stop, he said, is causing inconvenience to passengers, including students, traders, patients, and tourists.

"A halt at Anantnag would improve regional connectivity, promote tourism, ease congestion at nearby stations, and support local economic growth," Mir, an MLA from Dooru, said. He expressed hope that the Railway Ministry will give due consideration to this genuine public demand in the larger interest of the people. (KNO)

Vande Bharat connectivity

Centre. "This inland or dry port will prove very beneficial for Jammu and Kashmir," he said, adding that people had been waiting for it for many years.

"For many years, we had been waiting to travel by train from Jammu to Srinagar. Now, there is no need to travel to Katra from Jammu,

or vice versa, by road," he said.

CM Omar said that he had never expected the railway line to become so popular that he would have to seek favours to reserve seats. "Thankfully, the train has now been upgraded from eight coaches to 20. Earlier, around 500 passengers could travel; now, nearly 1,400 people can travel daily. This is a huge development for us," he added. (KNO)

Cabinet clears 2%

and Rajouri respectively at an estimated cost of Rs 37 crore and Rs 24 crore.

The cabinet also approved proposals of cadre review and reorganization of the Jal Shakti Department.

It also gave its nod to recruitment rules for the State Motor Garages, and re-designation of Medical Superintendents, Deputy Medical Superintendents, and Assistant Medical Superintendents in Government Medical Colleges as Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors respectively.

According to sources, the proposals will now go to the Lieutenant Governor for approval. (KNO)

Northern Rly officials

yard-based loading facilities. Additionally, phased development of cargo infrastructure has been proposed at Anantnag, Awantipora, and Pampore.

Operational bottlenecks at Budgam and Srinagar stations were also highlighted, with traders urging swift intervention to resolve issues impacting loading efficiency.

Growers and traders raised concerns over last year's challenges, including lengthy security checks, restricted access, and delays in handling consignments. To address these issues, the delegation proposed installation of modern security infrastructure such as high-sensitivity scanners and sensor-based systems, which would reduce manual intervention and speed up cargo processing.

The delegation noted that a Parcel Van (VP) service currently operates five days a week from Katra to Mumbai for cherry consignments. Railway officials informed that the service is under consideration for expansion to a seven-day schedule, a move expected to significantly benefit growers dealing with highly perishable produce.

The joint team also visited orchards in Tangmarg to understand production patterns

and align logistics planning with on-ground realities.

Railway officials assured that proposals for AC cargo services, upgraded infrastructure, and improved handling systems will be examined on priority.

Fruit traders expressed optimism that enhanced rail connectivity would improve efficiency, reduce transportation costs, and boost the competitiveness of Kashmir's horticulture sector.

The delegation also appreciated the continued support of the Ministry of Railways under Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, and welcomed improved connectivity initiatives such as the Vande Bharat Express on the Jammu-Srinagar route. (KNO)

Baramulla temple

devotees assembled at the Temple and performed Hawan as part of Ganesh Utsav, marking a significant moment for the community. The event saw participation and support from local Muslim residents, who helped facilitate the gathering.

Members of the Pandit community described the return as emotional and symbolic. "We are happy to be back in our village," they said, adding that the visit carries hope for a larger return in future.

Calling it a beginning rather than a full return, they said the moment reflects a deeper longing. "It is a trial. It is not ghaur vapasi yet, but by God's grace we are here. Wadh Xali Sheen Gali, Bie E Bahaar. We hope for that Bahaar when we will be back permanently," they said.

Community members also acknowledged the role of local Muslims, district administration and security agencies in ensuring smooth conduct of the event.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Syed Fakhruddin Hamid, termed the reopening of the temple a sign of normalcy. He said it reflects unity and brotherhood on the ground and congratulated both Muslim and Pandit communities for the occasion.

He said suggestions from the community have been received and will be examined. The DC added that the district administration plans to construct a Yatri Niwas at the site and will facilitate renovation of the temple. He also said that efforts will be made to promote Kachua as a destination for pilgrimage and religious tourism. (KNO)

To hit USD 30 trillion mark by 2047, India needs 12 pc growth: Chief Economic Advisor

PTI

Chennai, Apr 30: Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran on Thursday said India can achieve a 30 trillion dollar economy by the centenary year of its Independence, provided the country masters the challenge of technological prowess and frontier research.

"To hit the USD 30 trillion mark by 2047, the country would require about 12 per cent growth (year-on-year) in dollar terms," Nageswaran said.

He noted that the current GDP stands at approximately USD 3.91 trillion and is expected to reach USD 7.8 trillion within the next six years.

Speaking as the chief guest at the 67th Institute Day celebrations of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, Nageswaran highlighted that such a goal is doable but requires a deep understanding of the challenges present in a fraught geopolitical environment.

Frugal innovation, he pointed out, is India's strength. "But the important point is we have to remember that we have to keep at it for the next generation," he added.

"We have to generate frontier research in science and engineering. India's universities and labs must be at the cutting-edge



of the global knowledge ecosystem. We have to develop the capacity to acquire external technology and adapt it to Indian conditions, scale and cost constraints," Nageswaran said.

He called for Indian universities and laboratories to remain at the cutting edge of the global knowledge ecosystem, developing the capacity to acquire and adapt external technology to local conditions, scale, and cost constraints. He added that moving from pilot

projects to patents and economy-wide productivity gains in agriculture, manufacturing, and services is the primary challenge where premier institutes like IIT Madras play a vital role.

The event, which was also attended by faculty, students, and alumni, served as a platform to honour extraordinary achievers. Among the alumni recognised during the ceremony were Srinivas Narayanan, Chief Technology Officer of OpenAI, and Aravind Srinivas,

Co-Founder and CEO of Perplexity.ai.

Other prominent awardees included D K Sunil, Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, and professors from international universities.

IIT Madras Director Prof V Kamakoti, delivering the presidential address, noted that the institute has been ranked as the number one engineering institution in the country for ten consecutive years from 2016 to 2025 in the NIRF rankings.

He highlighted the launch of IITM Global as a defining milestone, reflecting a vision to establish the institution as the world's first multinational university. The international expansion includes the establishment of a campus in Zanzibar, Tanzania, in 2023.

Several academic and research awards were presented during the occasion, including the Srimathi Marti Annapurna Gurnath Award for Excellence in Teaching to Prof Srinivasa Rao and Prof Dhiman Chatterjee. The Institute Research and Development Awards for 2025-26 were conferred upon Dr Nagabhushana Rao Vadlamani and Prof Bobby George for their contributions to their respective fields.

Ahead of Op Sindoor anniversary Defence firms pitch for developing more indigenous tech, systems

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 30: A year on from India's Operation Sindoor, the 'atmanirbhar' ecosystem being fostered by the government is "getting stronger" and the country's private sector in defence needs to move in consonance with that vision, several defence firms said.

They also pitched for developing more indigenous systems and technologies, including those related to communication, so that sensitive data linked with national security "remain under Indian control".

From missiles to air defence system, several of India's homegrown platforms and technologies were used during the military operation in May 2025, conducted in retaliation to the deadly Pahalgam terror attack on April 22 last year.

As the armed forces gear up to mark the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor, many defence firms working in the field of drone and anti-drone technologies, cyber intelligence, counter-infiltration capabilities, counter-intelligence capabilities underlined the ecosystem of self-reliance being built in the defence sector and the role the private entities can play to strengthen the vision.

Lakshay Talwar, CEO of CST Cyber & Defence, a defence firm which also works in cyber defence capabilities, said he viewed "Operation Sindoor as a powerful affirmation of India's resolve against terrorism and



our rapidly advancing technological edge".

It underlined the decisive impact that Indian cyber intelligence, counter-infiltration capabilities and precise anti-drone responses can have when government, security forces and industry work with a "shared purpose", he said.

"In just one year, India has demonstrated an exceptional ability not only to absorb global technological developments, but to outperform them in semiconductors, cyber security and defence innovation," the top official of the defence firm was quoted as saying in a statement issued ahead of the first anniversary of the operation.

The ecosystem being built by the government of India is "strong and getting stronger," he said, adding, "the responsibility now lies with private industry, institutions and the armed forces to move in lock-step and deliver robust

communications for denied environments, advanced weapon and air-defence systems, and AI-enabled robotics that deter and disorient any adversary".

The logical next step is a push for "fully indigenous video management platforms and command and control solutions for all security forces" to bolster national security, Talwar said.

Just as the armed forces stand shoulder-to-shoulder in times of conflict, India's cyber, defence and aerospace companies, and their leaders, "must stand united to provide the most resilient, sovereign and future-ready systems first to our own government, and then to partners across the world," he added.

Many other defence firms expressed similar views and also pitched for greater 'Atmanirbharta' in defence sector with private sector playing a complementary role to advance the vision.

BJP to retain Assam, win Bengal; NDA to emerge strong in TN, Kerala, Pondy: Pradhan

PTI

Bengaluru, Apr 30: Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday said the BJP would retain power in Assam, while expressing confidence that there would be a change of government in West Bengal, citing people's continued faith in PM Narendra Modi and the party.

Asserting that NDA is likely to return to power in the union territory of Puducherry, he expressed confidence that the BJP-led alliance would emerge strongly in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

The counting of votes for all five Assemblies—West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala, and Assam—will take place on May 4.

Polls were conducted in a single phase in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, and Tamil Nadu, while West Bengal saw two phases of polling on April 23 and 29.

On April 9, Assam, Kerala, and Puducherry went to the polls, while Tamil Nadu voted on April 23.

"Beyond exit polls, all of us who worked in the election campaign this time in the five states (four states and one union territory) are confident that the BJP will retain power in Assam and that, for the first time in a long period, West Bengal is heading for a major change," Pradhan said. Speaking to reporters, the union education minister said there is significant anti-incumbency against the TMC government in West Bengal due to alleged misgovernance, appeasement politics, and corruption.

"The people of West Bengal are reposing their faith in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the policies of the BJP and the leadership of the state BJP. I am confident there will be a change of government in West Bengal," he added.

Pradhan said that, in all probability, the NDA (All India National Congress-BJP alliance) will retain power in Puducherry. "In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, I think we are all confident that our alliance will emerge strongly," he added.

Several exit polls on Wednesday predicted a thumping victory for the BJP in Assam and a clear edge for the party over the ruling TMC in West Bengal, while projecting a return of the DMK government in Tamil Nadu and a comeback by the Congress-led UDF in Kerala after 10 years.

India, Italy to boost defence industrial framework for co-production of military hardware

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 30: India and Italy on Thursday resolved to develop a defence industrial framework for co-production of military hardware, a move that came as both nations navigate an evolving security landscape, including the ongoing crisis in West Asia.

The decision to bolster bilateral defence and strategic ties was reached during talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Italian counterpart Guido Crosetto in New Delhi.

Following the meeting, the two sides unveiled a bilateral military cooperation plan (MCP) 2026-27 regarding military engagements between the armed forces of both the countries.

"We discussed a wide range of regional and global issues including the current situation in West Asia," Singh said on social media.

"We also discussed the avenues to further develop mutually beneficial defence industrial cooperation under India's Atmanirbhar Bharat programme and Italy's defence cooperation initiative," he added.

The defence ministry said Singh and Crosetto reiterated that the India-Italy strategic partnership is based on shared values of peace, stability, freedom, and mutual respect.

"Convergence between both the

ancient seafaring nations on various key maritime issues was also highlighted including information exchange through Information Fusion Center-Indian Ocean Region, Gurugram," it said.

Prior to the meeting, the Italian defence minister laid a wreath at the National War Memorial, and paid homage to the bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the



nation. Crosetto also inspected the tri-service Guard of Honour.

Under the broader framework of defence ties, both sides have been looking at boosting cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region with an aim to increase interoperability and cooperation.

The two sides have been exploring avenues for enhanced partnerships and dialogue among public and private stakeholders, focusing on technology collaboration, co-production and co-development of defence platforms and equipment.

Govt reviews households with dual LPG, PNG connections

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 30: The government is identifying households with both liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and piped natural gas (PNG) connections as it enforces an order prohibiting dual ownership, aiming to curb misuse and better target subsidies.

The government had last month barred households with piped cooking gas (called PNG) connections from retaining or obtaining subsidised domestic LPG connections. In a notification issued on March 14, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas amended the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation



of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000, under the Essential Commodities Act, making it mandatory for consumers with PNG connections to

surrender their domestic LPG connections. This was done with a view to accelerating PNG rollout to ease pressure on cooking gas supplies amid

global energy supply disruptions. The amended order also prohibits government oil companies and their distributors from providing domestic LPG connections or refilling cylinders for consumers who already have a PNG supply.

"Assessment is being done as to how many have dual connections," said Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, at an inter-ministerial press briefing on developments in West Asia. So far, more than 43,000 LPG users, also having PNG connections, have surrendered their LPG connections, she said. This "is a low number. We expect it to be more".

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER TRAL NIT

On behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K UT sealed rate quotations are invited from the desirous suppliers for the supply of diet to delivery patients under JSSK scheme for the year 2026-27 The rate quotations along with a CDR of Rs.2000/- (Two thousand only) pledged to BA/10 Ti al shall reach to the office of u/sd. within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice, in case of holiday the date following shall be the last date for submission of quotations. The detailed terms and conditions can be had from the office of u/sd. and the desired dealers can get it during office hours.

NO: BMO/TRL/NHM/280-82
DATED: 30-04-26

DIPK-902/26 BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER TRAL
DATED: 30-04-2026

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER TRAL NIT

On behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K UT sealed tenders/quotations are invited from the Registered dealers for the supply of free spectacles for Senior Citizens and School children under COB Scheme for the year 2026-27 The rate quotations along with a CDR of Rs.2000/- (Two thousand only) pledged to BMO Tral shall reach to the office of u/sd. within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice, in case of holiday the date following shall be the last date for submission of quotations. The detailed terms and conditions can be had from the office of u/sd. and the desired dealers can get it during office hours.

No: BMO/TRL/NHM/283-85
DATED: 30-04-2026

DIPK-901/26 BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER TRAL
DATED: 30-04-2026

Mamdani calls on King Charles to return Koh-i-Noor diamond



AFP

New York, Apr 30: New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani called for King Charles to "return" the prized Koh-i-Noor diamond, which the British Empire took from the Indian subcontinent in the 1800s, on the third day of the monarch's state visit on Wednesday.

Before greeting Charles and Queen Camilla at a 9/11 memorial event, Mamdani was asked what he would discuss with the king if he had the chance.

"If I was to speak to the king, separately from that, I would probably encourage him to return the Koh-i-Noor diamond," the leftist mayor said, adding that his focus would be honoring those

killed in the terror attacks.

It's unclear whether Mamdani followed through and brought up the contentious subject with Charles when the two met.

The monarch was seen laughing with Mamdani and having a brief conversation after they shook hands.

Housed in the Tower of London, the massive 106 carat stone is the star of Britain's crown jewels, adorning the Crown of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

The ownership of the jewel has been contested over the centuries, passing through the hands of Mughal emperors, Iranian shahs and Sikh maharajas before the Kingdom of Punjab gave it to Queen Victoria in 1849 as part of a peace treaty.

UK vows to tackle antisemitism 'emergency' as police probe double stabbing attack

AP

London, Apr 30: The British government on Thursday said the country was facing an antisemitism "emergency" and pledged funding to increase security for Jewish communities after a string of arson attacks and a double stabbing.

It announced 25 million pounds (\$34 million) for more police patrols and protection around synagogues, schools and community centers after an attack on two Jewish men on Wednesday. The victims, aged 34 and 76, were stabbed

and seriously injured in Golders Green, an area in north London that is an epicenter of Britain's Jewish community. Both men are in a stable condition. Police arrested a 45-year-old man on suspicion of attempted murder and labeled Wednesday's attack an act of terrorism. Detectives are working to determine a motive, and whether there could be a link to Iranian proxies.

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said Thursday she was treating antisemitism as "an emergency," describing it as "the top pressing issue in relation to security" she faced.

Iran's supreme leader says it will protect its nuclear, missile capabilities

AP

Dubai, Apr 30: Iran's supreme leader said Thursday that the Islamic Republic will protect its "nuclear and missile capabilities" as a national asset, likely seeking to draw a hard line as US President Donald Trump seeks a wider deal to cement the shaky ceasefire now holding in the war.

Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, speaking in a written statement read by a state television anchor as he has since taking over as Iran's supreme leader, struck a defiant tone, insisting the only place Americans belonged in the Persian Gulf is "at the bottom of its waters" and that a "new chapter" was being written in the region's history.

However, his remarks come as Iran's oil industry has begun to be squeezed by a US Navy blockade halting its oil tankers from getting out to sea.

Meanwhile, benchmark Brent crude for June delivery reached as much as USD 126 a barrel in trading on Thursday as Iran maintains its chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all crude oil and natural gas traded passes.

All this is putting additional



pressure on the world's economy as Trump likely weighs how to respond.

"By God's help and power, the bright future of the Persian Gulf region will be a future without America, one serving the progress, comfort and prosperity of its people," Khamenei said in the statement, read like all others since he reportedly was wounded in the February 28 attack that killed

his father, the 86-year-old Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"We and our neighbours across the waters of the Persian Gulf and the (Gulf) of Oman share a common destiny. Foreigners who come from thousands of kilometers away to act with greed and malice there have no place in it — except at the bottom of its waters."

Parag fined 25% match fees for vaping incident

■ BCCI exploring 'stringent action' on RR

PTI

New Delhi, Apr 30: Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag was on Thursday fined 25 per cent of his match fee for bringing the game into "disrepute" after being caught vaping on camera during the IPL game against Punjab Kings in Mullanpur.

Parag's actions during the Royals' chase on Tuesday night drew condemnation on social media.

PTI has learned that on field umpires Tanmay Srivastava and Nitin Menon had not reported the matter to match referee Amit Sharma right after the game. They only did that after seeing visual proof and Sharma found Parag guilty for a code of conduct breach as per the IPL guidelines.

The Level 1 offence carries 25 per cent deduction from match fees and one demerit point.

"Riyan admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction imposed by the Match Referee, Amit Sharma," said the IPL in a statement.

"The BCCI is also exploring other options to initiate proceedings for stringent action against the erring team, its officials and players to ensure that the reputation of IPL remains intact," the statement added.

When PTI reached out to BCCI secretary Devajit Saika on possible action on Rajasthan Royals, he said: "As it is written clearly in the statement, we are exploring what action to take on the team. It is not decided yet."

The Indian government had banned e-cigarettes back in

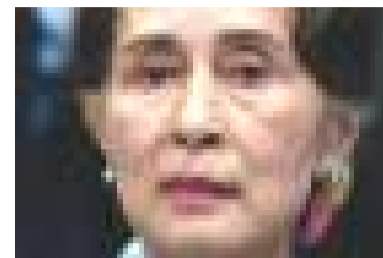


2019, prohibiting their production, sale and distribution. As per the law, the offender faces imprisonment up to one year and/or a Rs one lakh fine for a first time offence.

"Article 2.21 of IPL Code of Conduct is intended to cover all types of conduct that bring the game into disrepute and which is not specifically and adequately covered by the specific offences set out elsewhere in this Code of Conduct, including Article 2.20," the IPL Code of Conduct states.

"By way of example, Article 2.21 may (depending upon the seriousness and context of the breach) prohibit, without limitation, the following: (a) public acts of misconduct; (b) unruly public behaviour; and (c) inappropriate comments which are detrimental to the interests of the game.

Myanmar reduces ousted leader Suu Kyi's prison term in new amnesty



AP

Bangkok, Apr 30: Myanmar's military-backed government shortened the prison sentence of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Thursday, a move that came as part of a prisoner pardon tied to a Buddhist religious holiday, according to legal officials and reports in state media.

The amnesty is the second in two weeks, following an earlier one on April 17 when more than 4,500 prisoners were granted amnesty. It was not immediately clear how many people imprisoned for opposing military rule in Myanmar were included in Thursday's amnesty.

Two legal officials, who insisted on anonymity for fear of being punished by the authorities, said Thursday's measure would further reduce Suu Kyi's sentence by one-sixth, but did not specify the exact remaining term. Based on previous reductions, the 80-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate is expected to have more than 13 years left to serve.

State media said Thursday that in addition to the amnesty granted to 1,519 prisoners, including 11 foreigners, the sentences of remaining convicted prisoners were cut by one-sixth to mark the Full Moon day of "Kason," known as Buddha's Birthday and Demise.

The amnesties come after Senior General Min Aung Hlaing was sworn into office as president on April 10 following an election that critics say was neither free nor fair and was orchestrated to maintain the military's tight grip on power.

In his inauguration speech, he said his government would grant amnesties aimed at promoting social reconciliation, justice and peace.

Suu Kyi was arrested on Feb. 1, 2021 when the army seized power from her elected government.

She was originally sentenced to 33 years in prison in late 2022 for several offenses that her supporters and rights groups described as attempts to discredit her and legitimize the army takeover that removed her from office, as well as to prevent her return to politics. Her term was reduced to 27 years in August 2023 and then further cut by more than four years on April 17, when prison terms of less than 40 years were cut by one-sixth.

Let's cut a little slack for Jasprit Bumrah, says MI batting coach Kieron Pollard

PTI

Mumbai, Apr 30: A fast bowling genius like Jasprit Bumrah is entitled to have an off day or not have a good season, said Mumbai Indians' batting coach Kieron Pollard, appealing to cut some slack for the Indian pace spearhead who delivered his third most expensive spell in the Indian Premier League.

Going wicketless once again, Bumrah was hammered for 54 runs in four overs by Sunrisers Hyderabad en route to their six-wicket win on Wednesday night.

After Mumbai Indians stroked their way to their best-ever first-innings score of 243/5 riding on Ryan Rickelton's 123 not out, SRH came out all guns blazing to make 249/4 in 18.4 overs.

"When a cricketer is not doing well, we look at every single aspect as to why he's not doing well and there is no difference to Jasprit Bumrah," Pollard told reporters when asked about several factors around Bumrah's bowling in this IPL including lack of pace.

"He has done this for years. As a human being, you're entitled as well to make mistakes, not have a good day, not have a good season, not have a good couple months. I just feel that we need to sometimes remember the good things that he has done."

"Yes, we try to live in the present and he hasn't been up



to mark, but he has still been a No. 1 bowler for Mumbai Indians and India over a period of time. I just feel that sometimes we can cut some slack to us cricketers sometimes because, we are unfortunate to always be in the public eye so when we do bad, it's always been highlighted."

Pollard said cutting some slack for the right-arm pacer might even help him in the longer run.

"I know he's going to bounce back with greater heights and take wickets and we all, again, (are) going to be singing Bumrah-Bumrah not only for Mumbai Indians, but (also) for India."

Pollard admitted Mumbai Indians have not been able to play a complete game but refused to concede that they have been "defeated" in the season.

"We haven't been able to

string a complete game of cricket together as a team. It has not been as consistent as we would have hoped," he said.

"We have accepted that (but) we have not accepted defeat. When I said defeat, I didn't want the headlines to be that Mumbai Indians now are defeated because mathematically and from a points' perspective, we are still much in the tournament."

The former MI player refused to discuss much on the nature of pitches at the Wankhede Stadium — full of runs but carrying no assistance for bowlers — saying his side yet has not produced a complete game.

"There's no point in harping on the type of wickets and all of that. Two teams are going to play on the surface, and it all boils down to who plays the better cricket," he said.

Movies Schedule

Friday, 1 May



Raja Shivaji (U/A16+)
Hindi - 06:15 PM

BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+)
Hindi - 03:00 PM

Ek Din (U/A13+)
Hindi - 04:10 PM, 06:45 PM

Michael (U/A 13+)
English with English Subtitles
05:00 PM

The Devil Wears Prada 2 (A)
English with English Subtitles
02:30 PM, 07:40 PM

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