



PM Modi inspired citizens to transform resolve into action: LG Sinha

'India discovered renewed spirit of confidence, dignity under his leadership'

KNO DESK

Jammu, May 01: Asserting that during the past 12 years Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guidance has inspired citizens to transform resolve into action, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said that under his (PM Modi's) leadership India has discovered a renewed spirit of confidence, dignity, and progress.

Addressing the Foundation Day ceremony of Gujarat and Maharashtra at J&K Lok Bhavan LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Under the leadership of PM Modi, India has discovered a renewed spirit of confidence, dignity, and progress. Over the past 12 years, his guidance has inspired citizens to transform resolve into action, reshaping the nation's landscape with development and determination and his tenure has marked a historic milestone, making him India's longest-serving elected Head of Government."

"Today, Indian diaspora across the world is radiating with pride, as the Prime



Minister has restored the nation's timeless prestige. A new sense of self-respect stirs within every citizen, uniting all sections of society in the shared vision of a developed India by 2047," he said, adding, "By abrogating Article 370 on August 5, 2019, he (PM Modi) also fulfilled the unfinished dream of Sardar Patel, strengthening the foundation of Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat."

The Lieutenant Governor said

that Gujarat and Maharashtra are growth engines of the nation and besides massive contribution to country's GDP and exports, their social, cultural, and spiritual legacies stand unparalleled.

"Gujarat's soil is renowned for nurturing entrepreneurial spirit, zeal, simplicity, and innate warmth, while Maharashtra commands global respect for its enterprise, valor, and spiritual | More on P6

Ladakh's development Modi govt's top priority: HM Shah

» Says UT witnessed rapid transformation since 2019 » Calls region living land of Dhamma for centuries

Raja Syed Rather

Leh, May 01: Asserting that Ladakh has remained the top priority of Prime Minister Narendra Modi led regime, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that the Union Territory has witnessed rapid transformation since the 2019.

Addressing a gathering here, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) listed sweeping political, social and economic changes the region witnessed after bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. "Development of the region has remained the priority of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government's development agenda," he said.



Shah said Ladakh had long demanded Union Territory status due to lack of development. "Today change is visible across all sectors," he added.

Shah said that Ladakh has now seven districts and 193 panchayats, with five new

districts — Sham, Nubra, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass — created and notifications already issued.

Shah said that local languages had also been given administrative recognition. "Earlier only Hindi and English

were in use, but now Bhoti, Purgi and Urdu have also been accorded importance".

Highlighting infrastructure growth, he said road length in Ladakh has increased from about 1,799 km before 2019 to 4,040 km now. "The road constructions has almost doubled."

Shah said that the number of bridges has risen from 19 to 72 increasing the number by three times.

Spelling out development in other sectors, he said that mobile towers have increased from 344 to 653, while heli-pads have gone up from seven to 41, he said. "Snow-clearing machines, crucial for the region, have increased from 60 to 215." On power infrastructure, Shah said grid-related works have | More on P6

Join Centre's empowerment initiatives: HM to Kargil women

Raja Syed Rather

Saying that that under the cooperative model envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, multiple programmes are being implemented simultaneously in Ladakh, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that

women of Kargil can bring prosperity into their lives by joining the empowerment launched by the Centre. Addressing a gathering after laying the foundation stone of a 10,000 litres per day dairy plant in Kargil and launching a series of dairy development initiatives for Ladakh through | More on P6

MeT forecasts rain, hailstorm across J&K till May 5

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 01: The Meteorological Department on Friday said Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness a spell of rain and thundershowers between May 3 and 4, accompanied by gusty winds and possible hailstorms at a few places.

According to the evening weather bulletin accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), May 1 was generally dry, with a brief spell of light rain at isolated places towards the afternoon. On May 2, light rain or thundershowers may occur at scattered places with gusty winds.

"Generally cloudy conditions with one or two spells of light to moderate rain/thundershowers are expected at most places on May 3 and 4, with thunder, hailstorm and gusty winds (40-50 kmph) at a few locations," the MeT department said.

Light rain or thundershowers are likely at scattered places again on May 5, while largely dry weather is expected from

May 6 to 9, though brief isolated showers in the afternoon cannot be ruled out. Similar brief spells are forecast at isolated places on May 10 and 11.

The MeT has issued an advisory asking farmers to suspend farm operations between May 3 and 5 due to the likelihood of adverse weather.

Meanwhile, temperatures across the Union Territory showed a mixed trend. Srinagar recorded a maximum of 25.7°C, 3 degrees above normal, while the minimum settled at 10.2°C. Qazigund registered a high of 25.0°C and a low of 9.1°C.

Pahalgam recorded 19.6°C as the day temperature and 5.4°C at night, while Kupwara saw a high of 24.4°C and a low of 8.5°C. Gulmarg remained cooler at 14.4°C maximum and 3.0°C minimum.

In the Jammu division, the winter capital recorded a maximum of 34.5°C, slightly below normal, and a minimum of 20.7°C. Katra registered 30.5°C and 18.0°C, while Banihal recorded 24.8°C | More on P6

PDP aided BJP in RS polls: Omar Says no truth in Urdu dropping claims

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 01: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday accused the People's Democratic Party (PDP) of aiding the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the recent Rajya Sabha polls, claiming that the party was now raising the Urdu language issue merely to divert public attention from its role in the elections.

He also rejected claims regarding any rollback of Urdu in government functioning.

"There is no truth in claims about dropping Urdu. No order has been issued. The file is still on my table, and I have not approved it," Abdullah told reporters after inaugurating 368 residential quarters for government employees at Sempora in Pampore.

He said the government had only sought public feedback on the proposal. "The proposal had come from the department and remained under consideration," he said,



challenging critics to produce any official order regarding the removal of Urdu.

"May Allah protect us from those who do not see the difference between truth and lies," the CM, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), added.

Referring to the ongoing West Bengal Assembly polls, the Chief Minister said exit polls have repeatedly failed to reflect actual outcomes. "Earlier, also in West Bengal

elections, exit polls showed one picture, but the results were different. We don't have to wait long, and results will be out, and exit polls will again be proved wrong," he said.

He said one polling agency refrained from publishing its exit poll as it was not in line with expectations.

On EVMs, Omar reiterated that he does not believe in pre-poll rigging through EVMs, but said concerns exist over post-process integrity. | More on P6

Lt Gen Balbir Singh takes charge as GOC Chinar Corps

KNO Desk

Srinagar, May 01: Lieutenant General Balbir Singh on Friday assumed the command of the Army's Srinagar-based strategic XV Corps from Lt Gen Prashant Srivastava, who has been appointed as Quarter Master General at the Army headquarters.

In a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Army's Srinagar based PRO said that Lt Gen Singh had earlier commanded the Victor Force, which looks after counter-insurgency operations in south and central Kashmir.

"Lt Gen Singh is a highly decorated and battle-hardened officer with over 34 years of service. After assuming charge of the new role, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) paid respects at the Chinar War Memorial, honouring the supreme sacrifice of the nation's bravehearts."

In his inaugural address, Lt Gen Singh reaffirmed his resolve



to work in close synergy with the civil administration and the people of Kashmir to further strengthen the foundation of peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

He exhorted all sections of society to join hands with the security forces in overcoming the persistent challenges, the statement said. Lt Gen Srivastava relinquished the command and handed over the reins of the Chinar Corps after 19 months.

"His eventful and challenging tenure was | More on P6

Committed to employee welfare, housing infrastructure: CM Omar Inaugurates 368 residential units for govt employees in Sempora, Pampore

KT News Desk

Pampore, May 01: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday inaugurated 368 newly constructed residential quarters for government employees at Sempora in Pampore, developed across 23 blocks at an estimated cost of 90.65 crore.

Constructed by the Estates Department, the project marks the completion of a major residential infrastructure initiative aimed at strengthening government housing facilities in the Kashmir Valley. It forms part of the government's push to enhance employee welfare by providing modern, well-equipped residential spaces.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Pampore Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi, Additional Chief Secretary Estates Shaleen Kabra, Deputy



Commissioner Pulwama Dr Basharat Qayoom, Director Estates Ashwini Khajuria, along with senior officers, engineers and other concerned officials, were

present on the occasion. The Chief Minister inaugurated the Estates Quarters and inspected the newly constructed residential flats, including 2BHK and 3BHK

units. He also visited the canteen and mess facilities and was briefed by senior officers of the Estates Department on upcoming and proposed housing projects.

With its completion, the quarters are expected to significantly enhance the availability of accommodation for government employees and help ease long-standing shortage.

The project assumes added significance in view of the restoration of the annual Darbar Move by the present government, which has revived the need for adequate residential facilities for employees relocating between Jammu and Srinagar.

The residential quarters will particularly benefit a large section of Darbar Move employees, many of whom have faced persistent challenges in | More on P6

CM directs strengthening river embankments

KT News Desk

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday visited Shalina near Lasjan to inspect the site that had developed a breach during the floods in September last year.

During the visit, the CM reviewed the ongoing repair and flood mitigation works at the breach site. He directed the concerned departments to ensure strengthening of embankments to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

Emphasizing the need for durable and long-term solutions, Omar instructed officials to expedite the process and ensure that permanent restoration works are completed at the earliest. He stressed the importance of | More on P6

CBK files chargesheet in multi-lakh job fraud case

KNO

Srinagar, May 01: The Special Crime Wing Kashmir has filed a chargesheet in a major job fraud case, accusing three men of duping people of lakhs on the promise of government jobs, officials said.

They said the accused posed as influential officials and issued fake appointment orders, exposing a well-organised scam now before a Srinagar court for trial.

In a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), a spokesperson said the Special Crime Wing Kashmir of Crime Branch J&K has filed a chargesheet before the Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Srinagar in FIR No. 09/2019 under Sections 201, 419, 420, 468, 471, 120-B RPC against Fayaz Ahmad Khan S/o Gul Khan R/o Maloora Shalteng Srinagar, Showkat Ahmad Shah So Mohammad Yaseen Shah R/o Shanzipora Handwara and Owais Ahmad Rather S/o Assadullah Rather Ro Shalteng Khwaja Bagh in connection with a multi-lakh government job scam, following

a detailed investigation into allegations of fraud and forgery.

"The case originated from a complaint by residents of Pulwama, alleging that the accused fraudulently obtained lakhs of rupees on the pretext of securing government jobs for the children and relatives of complainants."

It reads, investigations revealed that the accused, acting in criminal conspiracy, posed as influential officials and issued forged appointment orders purportedly from the Forest Department, later confirmed to be fake.

The spokesperson said payments were allegedly taken in cash under the guise of "backdoor entry." The challan has been presented before the Hon'ble competent court for judicial determination.

He said the general public is advised to remain vigilant against fraudsters and report any such incidents directly to SSP SCW Kashmir (Crime Branch J&K). If you have been a victim of fraud, you may. (KNO)

Labour Day

DC Shopian commends unified efforts in minor's rescue operation



KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, MAY 01: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta, extended heartfelt appreciation and deep gratitude to all agencies and individuals involved in the extensive rescue operation that led to the recovery of the body of minor, Mohammad Hanzala from the Rambhara Stream.

He acknowledged the relentless and coordinated efforts of the J&K Police, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and the Indian

Army. He also expressed special gratitude to the general public and volunteers from various NGOs who stood shoulder to shoulder with the administration in these efforts. Their dedication and support were instrumental throughout the operation.

Further, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, on behalf of the District Administration, expressed his deep condolences and stands in solidarity with the bereaved family of Mohammad Hanzala, praying for patience to endure this profound loss.

DAJ launches digital platform, inaugurates recording studio

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MAY 01: In a significant step towards strengthening digital communication and outreach in the agriculture sector, Director Agriculture Jammu (DAJ) Anil Gupta Friday inaugurated a state-of-the-art recording studio and launched "KrishiSamvad FTC-Jammu", a dedicated YouTube-based digital platform for the farming community. The initiative was launched in the presence of Joint Director (Farms/SLUB) Amanjyoti Sharma; Deputy Director Agriculture Training KarunaNidhi and other officers and staff members.

Addressing the gathering, the Director said that the newly launched platform shall act as a dynamic interface between the department and farmers by facilitating timely

dissemination of expert knowledge, innovative practices and modern agricultural technologies. He emphasized that such initiatives are crucial for enhancing farmers' awareness, capacity building and overall productivity. He also appreciated the proactive efforts of the FTC Jammu team for conceptualizing and establishing the facility within a short span of time and with minimal resources.

The Joint Director (Farms/SLUB) underlined the importance of social media for sharing knowledge and ideas. "It has emerged as a powerful and transformative tool for sharing ideas, innovations and best practices in agriculture, thereby effectively bridging the gap between research and field-level implementation", she noted.

JKAACL pays musical tribute to Sarvanand Koul Premi

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MAY 01: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) organized a literary-cum-musical programme Friday here at KL Saigal Hall to commemorate the thirty-sixth death anniversary of noted scholar and poet Sarvanand Koul Premi.

Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants) J&K Dr. Arvind Karwani was the Chief Guest, while eminent historian Dr. Ratan Lal Hangloo presided over the function.

The distinguished gathering also included Padma Shri awardee B. L. Bhat and Rajinder Premi, who shared the dais.

In his address, Dr. Karwani lauded the sustained efforts of Rajinder Premi in preserving and promoting the rich literary and cultural legacy of Sarvanand Koul Premi. He highlighted Premi's invaluable contribution to Kashmiri literature and his role in fostering cultural harmony, describing him as a beacon of intellectual and artistic excellence.

Presiding over the function, Dr. Hangloo underscored the enduring relevance of Sarvanand Koul Premi's works, stating that his writings continue to inspire generations and reflect the composite cultural ethos of Jammu and Kashmir.

J&K Labour Dept organises outreach, awareness, workers' felicitation in Jammu



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MAY 01: On the occasion of Labour Day, the Labour Department J&K organized a series of impactful programmes in Jammu, reaffirming its commitment towards the welfare, dignity, and empowerment of workers.

This year's observance was aligned with the theme "Ensuring a Healthy Psychosocial Working Environment," emphasizing the importance of mental well-being, safe and supportive workplaces, and the need to address emerging challenges affecting workers' overall health and productivity.

Labour Commissioner J&K Chandan Singh, as per an official statement, joined workers at Labour Chowk, Gangyal, where he interacted with them and highlighted various labour welfare schemes aimed at improving their socio-economic conditions. Workers were sensitized about government initiatives, refreshments were distributed, and

it was assured that a special outreach camp would soon be organized to enhance access to these schemes.

As part of the celebrations, a webinar on the theme "Ensuring a Healthy Psychosocial Working Environment" was organized, bringing together officers, experts, and stakeholders from across the Union Territory. The session commenced with a welcome address by Deputy Labour Commissioner, Jammu, Sukhpal Singh, followed by opening remarks by the Labour Commissioner.

The webinar featured insightful deliberations by eminent speakers including Prof. Renu Nanda, Prof. Hema Gandotra, Ms. Nimisha Rajput, and Dr. Ritika, who discussed critical issues such as child labour prevention, gender pay disparities, and the working conditions of women employees. The session concluded with remarks by the Labour Commissioner, while the vote of thanks was presented by ALC Central

Roopali Gandotra.

In another programme held at Shram Bhawan, Jammu, workers were felicitated for their invaluable contribution to society. The event was attended by FA/CAO Nimisha Anand, Inspector of Factories Ravinder Krundoo, AMO JKESIS Dr Jyoti Jolly, and Dr Neeru Khajuria, among others.

Similar programmes were organized across various districts of Jammu and Kashmir, where officers of the Labour Department actively engaged with workers and stakeholders. These events focused on awareness generation, facilitation of welfare schemes, and strengthening coordination with stakeholders to ensure maximum outreach and benefit to the labour community.

The day-long programmes reflected the Department's sustained efforts to promote inclusive growth, ensure safe and healthy working conditions, and strengthen outreach of welfare schemes for the labour community across Jammu and Kashmir.

Krishi Udyamis: DC Kulgam presides over training programme



KT NEWS DESK

KULGAM, MAY 01: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam presided over a day-long training programme for Krishi Udyamis of District Kulgam.

The programme, as per an official statement, was organized with the objective of enhancing entrepreneurial skills, promoting modern agricultural practices, and strengthening value addition in the farm sector.

Experts from the Agriculture and allied departments, banking sector, CSC Coordinator, and KVK Kulgam delivered comprehensive sessions on key topics including introduction of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs), reporting, monitoring, accountability, farmer mobilization, CSC operations, service delivery, and various government schemes supporting agri-startups.

Addressing the gathering,

the DC emphasized innovation, transparency in daily reporting, and collective efforts to make agriculture a profitable enterprise. He urged Krishi Udyamis to work independently while ensuring accountability in KKG operations so that the benefits of schemes reach the last farmer.

In his address, District Agriculture Officer Kulgam, Mohammad Amin Sheikh, highlighted the pivotal role of Krishi Udyamis in operationalizing Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) as self-sustaining farmer service hubs.

The programme witnessed active participation from budding agri-entrepreneurs and field functionaries. Interactive discussions and practical demonstrations were held on sustainable agriculture, efficient resource utilization, and income diversification.

UFM Sub Committee meeting on 4th May 2026: JKBOSE

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MAY 01: The Unfair Means (UFM) Sub Committee of J&K BOSE is holding meeting on 4th May, 2026 to examine the nature of irregularities resorted to by certain candidates of Secondary School Examination (Class 10) and Higher Secondary Part- I Examination (Class 11th) Annual/ Regular, 2026 of Summer zone areas of Jammu Division to dispose of the cases in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The meeting, as per an official statement, to be chaired by the Joint Secretary Secrecy/UFM, JD, the committee shall take up UFM cases of Class 11th and deferred UFM cases of class 10th on 4th May, 2026 at 10:30 am at JKBOSE office Rehari Colony, Jammu as per Schedule notified vide Notification No. F(UFM-B) JD/2026 dated 30-04-2026

The concerned candidates have been informed to attend the proceedings and plead their cases with the committee through evidence. For any query candidates may contact their respective JKBOSE Sub/Branch Office or UFM Section at Rehari Colony, Jammu.

Director Sericulture calls for youth participation in Sericulture for sustainable livelihood

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 01: Director Sericulture, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat on Friday facilitated the distribution of silkworm seed to various districts of the Kashmir Valley, marking the commencement of the silkworm rearing season.

The event was organized by the Sericulture Development Department, J&K at the Main Grainage, Srinagar.

On the occasion, Bhat, as per an official statement, underscored the importance of ensuring the timely distribution of silkworm seed to each and every silkworm rearer. He exhorted all field functionaries to extend necessary technical guidance and advisory support to rearers so that they do not face any difficulties during the rearing.

The Director further stated that the department has embarked upon a mission to achieve self-sufficiency in



silkworm seed production adding that significant progress has already been made in this direction though much remains to be accomplished. He emphasized that the Department of Sericulture is working relentlessly not only to achieve indigenous production of silkworm seed at the local level but also to explore avenues for its export to other States and Union Territories across the country.

Highlighting the socio-economic potential of the sector, the Director called upon the local youth

to actively participate in sericulture activities to secure an honourable livelihood and support their families. He also stressed the need to attract more people towards the sericulture sector noting that it contributes to the preservation of nature, ecology and the environment while simultaneously helping steer youth away from the menace of drug abuse.

The Director was accompanied by senior officers of the department, field functionaries and silkworm rearers.

Kathua marks International Labour Day with awareness drives, anti-drug pledge

KT NEWS DESK

KATHUA, MAY 01: The Labour Department Kathua Friday observed International Labour Day with a series of awareness-cum-outreach programmes across the district, including a major event at a local factory, aimed at honouring the invaluable contribution of workers and promoting awareness about labour rights, welfare measures and social well-being.

The programme, as per an official statement, witnessed active participation of workers from both organized and unorganized sectors and focused on sensitizing them about recent labour law reforms and various welfare provisions available for their benefit.

Workers were provided detailed awareness regarding the newly introduced labour codes, including the Code on Wages, Industrial Relations Code, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code and the Code on Social Security. The participants were apprised of the key provisions, benefits and legal safeguards aimed at ensuring better wages, improved workplace safety, social security coverage and protection of workers' rights.

Assistant Labour Commissioner Kathua, Piyusha Khajuria, while addressing the gathering, highlighted the historical significance of International Labour Day and reiterated the department's unwavering commitment towards safeguarding the rights, dignity and welfare of the labour force. She stressed the importance of awareness and active participation of workers for effective implementation of labour laws and welfare schemes.

DM Reasi chairs NCORD meeting, calls for intensifying anti-drug campaign

KT NEWS DESK

REASI, MAY 01: District Magistrate Reasi Kumar Abhishek Friday chaired a meeting of the District Level Narco Coordination Centre to review enforcement measures and ongoing initiatives aimed at curbing drug abuse in the district.

During the meeting, the District Magistrate, as per an official statement, reviewed cases registered under the NDPS Act and directed the Police Department to furnish detailed inputs on identified hotspots in the district for the installation of CCTV cameras to strengthen surveillance and deterrence.

The District Magistrate also called for strict vigilance against illegal cultivation of poppy or cannabis in the district. The concerned departments were directed to take



stringent action against offenders. He further emphasized conducting regular tests of vulnerable sections

by using drug detection kits. The Motor Vehicles Department, Police and Health Departments were

asked to carry out such tests and conduct enforcement drives.

A comprehensive review of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities being conducted under the Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir campaign was also undertaken.

The District Magistrate directed the ACD to provide detailed reports on panchayats where awareness programmes have already been conducted and to ensure coverage of the remaining villages under the campaign. He further instructed the BDOs to actively sensitize the public about the ill effects of drug abuse during Gram Sabha meetings and to mobilize community participation in the campaign.

Emphasizing the role of educational institutions, the District Magistrate directed the School

Education Department to organize Parent-Teacher Meetings in all schools to raise awareness about the dangers of substance abuse among students and parents. The educational institutions were also instructed to ensure that at least one official from each institution is trained in counselling to effectively guide and support individuals vulnerable to substance abuse.

The DM further directed all SDMs and Tehsildars to sensitize members of Mahila Nigrani Samitis regarding their responsibilities at the grassroots level and to encourage their active involvement in local outreach efforts under anti-drug campaigns.

Senior Superintendent of Police Mukund Tibrewal, ADC Rakesh Kumar, Additional SP, ACD and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

Not Just a Recovery—A Valley's Tears Pull Him Ashore

■ Body of 4-year-old retrieved from Ranbiara after 5 days

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Shopian, May 01: Bringing a tragic end to days of anxious waiting, the body of a four-year-old boy from Pulwama, who had slipped into a fast-flowing stream in south Kashmir's Shopian district, was recovered on Friday morning after an extensive five-day search operation.

Officials said that the deceased, identified as Mohammad Hanzala, a resident of Tiken village in Pulwama, had accidentally fallen into the Ranbiara nallah near Dubjan Bridge on April 26. The strong current of the stream swept the minor away within moments, leaving his family and locals in shock.

"The body was retrieved from a downstream location in the Hirpora area this



morning after relentless efforts by multiple rescue teams over the past five days," an official said.

Soon after the incident, a massive search operation was launched involving teams from the Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF). Despite challenging conditions, including strong water currents and difficult terrain, the teams continued their efforts round the clock.

Authorities also deployed specialised equipment to scan deeper sections of the stream, while additional manpower was brought in to widen the search area. In a bid to intensify the operation, expert civilian body retrievers, including a well-known volunteer from Doda, were also engaged.

As news of the recovery reached his native

village, a pall of gloom descended over Tiken and adjoining areas. Thousands of mourners gathered to participate in the last rites of the young boy, reflecting the deep sense of grief and solidarity across the community.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed profound grief over the incident.

"Deeply shocked and saddened by the tragic death of young Mohammed Hanzala from Tiken in Pulwama. As the search for the young boy stretched into the sixth day, hope was running out, but it has still been a terrible shock when the unthinkable was confirmed. I join the tens of thousands of Kashmiris in grief at Hanzala's death. May Allah grant him the highest place in Jannat and may his family find strength to bear this unimaginable loss," he said in a post on X—(KNO)

International Labour Day

Dy CM vows workers' welfare, social security

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, May 01: Commemorating the Labour Day observance, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary on Friday described the working class as the backbone of the economy. He reiterated the government's firm commitment to ensure their economic welfare and social security across Jammu and Kashmir.

In his message, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasized that workers are the driving force behind development and progress. The government remains steadfast in safeguarding their rights through effective implementation of labour laws and welfare schemes.

"Our workers are the foundation of economic growth. The government is committed towards ensuring safe working conditions, fair wages, social security and dignity of labour for every worker across the Union Territory," he said.

Highlighting the key labour reforms, the Deputy Chief Minister referred to the introduction of reforms as comprehensive frameworks covering wages, industrial relations, occupational safety and social security.

Describing these as landmark



reforms, he said, "The new Labour Codes simplify the compliance while strengthening the protection and welfare of workers. They aim to ensure universal minimum wages, improved workplace safety, enhanced social security and robust mechanisms for dispute resolution."

"The Labour Department is actively working towards effective implementation of these reforms in Jammu and Kashmir to build a fair, transparent and worker-friendly

labour ecosystem," he added.

Stressing the importance of awareness and outreach, the Deputy Chief Minister called for extensive campaigns to ensure registration of all eligible workers so they can benefit from various Central and UT-level welfare schemes.

"Maximum outreach of labour welfare schemes is essential to strengthen the economic security and improve the living standards of workers," he said.

Minister Sharma reiterates youth-led growth, Nasha Mukht J&K ecosystem

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, May 01: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, IT, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma on Friday emphasized the pivotal role of youth in shaping a progressive and prosperous Jammu & Kashmir, calling for collective action to build a drug-free society, accelerate digital growth, and position the region as one of India's premier sports destinations.

The event was attended by International badminton star Sania Nehwal, sports enthusiasts, Academicians as well people from different walks of life.

Addressing a gathering of students at the India's International Movement to Unite Nations (IIMUN) Jammu Conference, the Minister underscored that the future of Jammu & Kashmir lies in the energy, discipline, and vision of its young population.

He highlighted that youth engagement remains central to the government's policy framework, with focused investments in skill development, digital empowerment, and



entrepreneurship. Reiterating the government's firm resolve to make Jammu & Kashmir Nasha Mukht, Satish Sharma said that drug abuse poses a serious threat to the social fabric and aspirations of the younger generation.

He noted that while enforcement and policy measures are being strengthened, the real change must come from within society.

"Every young individual who chooses to stay away from drugs and guides others towards a healthier path is contributing to nation-building," he said, urging students to act as ambassadors of a drug-free movement.

The Minister further

outlined a comprehensive strategy involving awareness campaigns, improved access to counselling, strengthening rehabilitation infrastructure, and coordinated action with law enforcement agencies to curb drug supply chains across Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the role of technology in shaping a modern Jammu & Kashmir, the Minister said the government is actively working to build a robust digital ecosystem across the region.

He noted that investments are being made in IT infrastructure, innovation hubs, and startup incubation centres to empower youth with future-ready skills.

Emphasizing digital inclusion, he said efforts are underway to expand internet connectivity, promote e-governance, and create employment opportunities in emerging sectors such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and data analytics. "Our aim is to make Jammu & Kashmir not just a consumer of technology, but a creator of innovation," he added.

Highlighting Jammu & Kashmir's immense sporting potential, Satish Sharma reiterated the government's vision to transform the region into a premier sports destination of the country.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Hepatitis outbreak among children in Zadibal

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, May 01: Health authorities in Srinagar have reported a suspected outbreak of acute viral hepatitis, commonly associated with jaundice, in the Reshipora locality of Khimber in the Zadibal zone, triggering swift intervention and surveillance measures. An official from the District Surveillance Unit (DSU) Srinagar informed that a total of 18 cases have been identified, predominantly among school-going children aged between 7 and 17 years. Of the affected, 12 are girls, and six are boys, pointing to a cluster concentrated within a specific age group and locality.

The cases were reported in a clustered pattern on April 30, prompting an immediate field investigation by health teams. "The epidemiological pattern suggests a common source outbreak, with most patients presenting symptoms such as jaundice, loss of appetite, fatigue, fever,

and vomiting," an official associated with the surveillance team said.

Preliminary findings indicate that the outbreak may be due to consumption of contaminated spring water used by the local population. The area relies significantly on this community water source.

"Initial assessment points toward a waterborne transmission, likely through the faecal-oral route, which is typical in Hepatitis A and E infections," the official added.

To ascertain the exact cause, water samples from both tap and spring sources have been collected and sent for Most Probable Number (MPN) testing, while blood samples from five patients have been forwarded for serological analysis to detect Hepatitis A and E markers. All samples are currently under examination at the District Public Health Laboratory (DPHL) at JLNH Hospital, with results awaited

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Pulwama Milk ATM defunct for 6 years

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pulwama, May 01: A public welfare initiative aimed at ensuring access to clean and unadulterated milk in Pulwama has failed to take off even six years after its infrastructure was put in place, raising serious questions over delays and official inaction.

The Milk ATM project, conceived to provide residents with round-the-clock access to fresh and hygienic milk, saw the construction of a dedicated building near the Animal Husbandry Department in 2020. The initiative came at a time when concerns over milk adulteration were mounting, and authorities sought to introduce a reliable, automated system to supply quality milk directly to consumers.

Under the plan, the facility was to house a Milk ATM that would dispense fresh milk to the public at any time, ensuring both



convenience and safety. However, despite the completion of the structure, the project has remained non-operational to date. Officials revealed that an amount of approximately Rs 28.9 lakh was spent on constructing the building. Yet, the core component of the project—the Milk ATM equipment—has not been

installed, rendering the entire facility unusable.

The prolonged delay has sparked concern among residents, who question the purpose of investing public funds into infrastructure that has not been put to use.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

8th CPC to visit Srinagar from June 1-4

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 01: The 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC) is scheduled to visit Srinagar Jammu & Kashmir, from June 1 to June 4, 2026 (Monday to Thursday).

A notice issued by Director 8th CPC in this regard reads, "Concerned stakeholders including Organizations/Institutions of Central Government as well as Jammu & Kashmir (UT) and Unions/Associations desirous of interacting with the Commission at Srinagar may kindly submit memorandum at Commission's website (<https://8cpc.gov.in>) and thereafter, submit their request seeking an appointment vide <https://nicfor.ms.nic.in/enRhmXlNjlmMzR-1YzY1MjkyNTIwMjYwNDMwODE>, on or before 16th May, 2026, along with 'unique memo Id' generated after submitting memorandum".

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Labourer killed in Jammu bridge mishap

UMAISAR GULL GANIE

Jammu, May 01: A portion of an under-construction bridge collapsed in the Bantabal area of Jammu on Friday, leaving one labourer dead and another injured, while rescue operations are underway to trace two workers still trapped under the debris. An official said that four labourers were working beneath the bridge at the Thathar area of Bantabal when a section of the structure suddenly gave way, trapping them.

Soon after the incident, teams from Police, Army, SDRF, NDRF and the civil administration rushed to the spot and launched a joint rescue operation. One injured labourer was pulled out alive and

shifted to a hospital for treatment, while another was found dead, the official said.

He said that efforts are ongoing to rescue the remaining two trapped labourers. "JCBs and other machinery have been pressed into service to clear the debris. Despite darkness, the rescue operation is underway and teams are trying to complete it at the earliest," he said.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADC) Jammu, Thakur Sher Singh told KNO that one person has died while another has been rescued alive in an injured condition.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

International Labour Day

Daily wagers, ASHA workers demand regularisation, wage enhancement

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, May 01: Daily wagers, casual labourers, and ASHA workers took to the streets in Srinagar on International Labour Day, demanding regularisation of services, enhancement of wages, and extension of social security benefits.

The main protest was held at Lal Chowk, where workers assembled under the banner of different unions and associations, carrying placards and raising slogans.

Protesting ASHA workers said they serve every day in villages and cities,



but their services are still not recognised as regular. They demanded a fixed monthly honorarium and timely payment.

"We are on duty every day, but our services are not recognised as

regular. We demand fixed monthly honorarium and timely payment," said one ASHA worker.

Another protester said, "We have been working for years, but there is no job security or future protection. We only want dignity for our work."

ASHA workers, who form a major part of frontline healthcare delivery, said their role in rural and urban health outreach has expanded significantly, but their employment status remains contractual and under-supported. Daily wagers and casual labourers said that despite continuous

engagement in government departments over long periods, their services remain unregularised. They demanded a structured policy for regularisation and social security cover, including pension and insurance benefits.

The protesters said repeated assurances over the years have not translated into concrete outcomes, leading to growing frustration among the working classes.

Labour Day events in Srinagar also saw participation from trade union representatives and political leaders.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

EDITORIAL

Treating Drug Peddlers Like Terrorists A Paradigm Shift

The government has now made it clear: drug peddlers will be treated like terrorists. This is a big change in how the war against drugs will be fought. For years, drug abuse has destroyed our youth, broken families, and pushed many young people towards crime. The time has come to call this what it really is—a silent form of terrorism. Why is this comparison important? Because it changes everything. When a drug peddler is treated like a terrorist, the law becomes much stricter. Bail

becomes harder. Punishment becomes longer. Police can seize their property and track their movements more closely. Right now, many peddlers take risks because they think the law is weak. If they know they will be treated like terrorists, they will think twice. Second, drug money often goes to terror groups. Across the border, terrorists use drug smuggling to fund their activities. By treating drug networks as terror networks, the police and other agencies can work together more effectively.

They can chase the money trail, break the supply chain, and catch the big fish, not just small peddlers. Third, this changes how society looks at the problem. Many people ignore drug peddlers because they think it is not their problem. Some even see them as small-time criminals. But if they are terrorists, no one will look away. Communities will start reporting them. Neighbours will not stay silent. This public resistance is exactly what will break the drug business. There is another

benefit. Police stations often treat drug cases as low priority. Too many files, too few officers. But when drug cases are treated like terror cases, they become a top priority. More raids will happen. More arrests will be made. The government has already shown results. In just 20 days, 350 FIRs were registered, and 440 drug traffickers were arrested. But there is one thing to remember: while peddlers deserve strict punishment, those who are addicted need help, not jail. The government must

also open more de-addiction centres and provide counselling and jobs to those who want to quit drugs. The Lieutenant Governor has given a clear message. Drug peddlers are enemies of society. Now it is up to us—the common people—to join this fight. Do not stay silent. Do not look away. Report peddlers. Support addicts who want to recover. Only then can we make Jammu and Kashmir truly drug-free. This is not the government's war alone. This is our war.

Redefining Energy Security: A 10-Point Guide

Energy security is no longer just about supply. It is about whether the system itself can function under stress.

Richard Haass and Carolyn Kissane

It is too soon to know when or how the war with Iran will end or what its geopolitical or economic consequences will be. But one thing is already certain: What is meant by energy security must be rethought.

Roughly 20 percent of the world's traded oil and gas passes through the Strait of Hormuz. The recent crisis demonstrated how quickly that flow can be disrupted, placing immediate pressure on energy-importing countries and on the global economy.

The current crisis also highlights that oil and gas facilities cannot be assumed to be secure. On the contrary, they are highly vulnerable to war and terrorism.

Energy security is often defined as ensuring reliable and affordable access to supplies. That definition is no longer sufficient. What recent events have exposed is that energy security must now encompass the maintenance and resilience of the systems that produce, refine, transport and deliver energy.

In a world of contested transit routes, intricate infrastructure and sophisticated forms of disruption, energy security is no longer just about supply. It is about whether the system itself can function under stress.

Recent conflicts make this clear. The war with Iran, together with Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, has shown that energy infrastructure is no longer collateral damage—it is a primary target. Refineries, pipelines, export terminals and electricity grids are now central to wartime strategy designed to weaken the capabilities and will of adversaries.

The change reflects new technology and "military math." Relatively inexpensive drones, often costing less than \$50,000, can disrupt assets worth billions. Cyber operations can destabilize grids without physical strikes. The asymmetry is striking: low-cost attacks can generate system-wide consequences with far-reaching economic and societal implications.

Artificial intelligence is accelerating both



risk and resilience. The rapid expansion of data centers and AI-driven computing is driving a surge in electricity demand. Yet AI is also becoming central to energy security, enabling real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance and faster responses to threats. As energy systems become more digital and more electrified, the intersection of AI and infrastructure will shape the next phase of security.

What this moment demands is a redefinition of energy security, one that takes the form of a comprehensive framework, built around 10 priorities.

First, diversify supply across regions. This calls for expanding access to supply from the Americas, Africa and other emerging producers.

Second, diversify routes as well as sources. Energy that cannot move is functionally

unavailable. This will require expanded investment in alternative corridors, including pipelines that bypass maritime chokepoints.

Third, harden critical energy infrastructure. Refineries, pipelines, liquefied natural gas terminals and electricity grids must be designed and reinforced to withstand disruption.

Fourth, build active energy defense systems. Modern conflict has made energy infrastructure a primary target. Protecting it requires real-time defense—layered air and missile systems, counterdrone capabilities and advanced cyberdefense to detect, deter and respond to attacks.

Fifth, design for resilience, not just efficiency. Systems optimized for cost and speed are inherently fragile. Energy systems require spare capacity, redundancy across critical components and the ability to absorb

and recover from disruption.

Sixth, expand and safeguard strategic reserves. Storage should not be viewed primarily as a tool to manage prices but as insurance against disruption.

Seventh, ensure a diversified energy mix. Renewables (including solar, wind, hydro, tidal and geothermal), nuclear power and hydrocarbons each play a role in reducing exposure to shocks. In periods of acute disruption, countries may also need to turn to readily available fuels, including coal, to maintain power generation, industrial output and economic stability. While this will complicate climate objectives, excluding such options altogether is inconsistent with the realities of energy security. The good news is that the climate impact can be offset through the accelerated development of alternatives that energy security also requires.

Eighth, depoliticize energy strategy. Energy systems must be guided by the objectives of reliability, affordability and security, not by short-term politics. Frequent shifts in policy direction—seen in the US, Europe, Japan and South Korea, among others—undermine investment, delay infrastructure development and can introduce a de facto political risk premium into energy systems.

Ninth, wherever possible, manage demand as a form of risk reduction. Efficiency lowers exposure and strengthens resilience.

Lastly, recognize that no country is insulated. In the US, energy abundance is often equated with energy security. But oil is priced globally and disruptions abroad translate directly into higher costs at home, affecting fuel prices, supply chains and inflation. Energy independence does not mean immunity from energy crises.

The economic consequences of failing to adapt are significant. Countries most exposed to disruption face rising input costs, pressure across industries and slower growth. Energy insecurity is economic insecurity and maximizing both has become a defining feature of military strategy.

There is a clear parallel with global supply chains. In the aftermath of COVID-19, firms shifted from a "just in time" model to a "just in case" approach that sought to strengthen resilience. Energy systems must now undergo a similar transition. It is well worth paying an added premium; delay will only drive the cost of energy insecurity higher.

Richard Haass, President Emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, is a senior counselor at Centerview Partners, Distinguished University Scholar at New York University, and the author of the weekly Substack newsletter "Home & Away."

Carolyn Kissane is Associate Dean and Clinical Professor at the New York University School of Professional Studies Center for Global Affairs and Founding Director of NYU's Energy, Climate and Sustainability Lab.

Source: Project Syndicate

AI Boom Is Fundamentally Different From Dot-Com Bubble

AI has applications across nearly every sector. Some even argue that, in that respect, it is similar to electricity.

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

The bursting of the dot-com bubble in 2000 was a hugely important development. Some commentators and analysts are now attempting to frame the present artificial intelligence boom through that historical lens. Such comparisons, however, are inaccurate.

It has been argued that the enthusiasm surrounding AI resembles the speculative landscape that preceded the bursting of the dot-com bubble. But this view is detached from the economic reality of AI.

Some technological cycles and booms do contain speculative elements, but the current AI boom is not merely a repetition of the internet bubble.

Yes, the dot-com era was defined in large part by expectations and speculations. But by contrast, the rise of AI is occurring in a world where there is already an infrastructure for deploying it. Secondly, it is already generating tangible outcomes.

AI is not just a promise that may happen in the future. It is already reshaping sectors such as production, services, logistics, healthcare, finance, education and governance. As a result, this is not just a replay of 2000 but rather the early phase of a structurally transformative technological shift.

While the dominant perception of the late 1990s that the internet would change communication, media and other sectors was correct, the infrastructure to support such a large shift was not in place.

For example, we did not have a digital system or smartphones or the cloud, while networks were underdeveloped. This means



that while the internet was revolutionary, we did not have the infrastructure to translate its potential into reality. In other words, the markets had anticipated the future too quickly.

The current AI boom is emerging under profoundly different circumstances. Firstly, we already have high-speed connectivity, hyperscale cloud computing, advanced semiconductor manufacturing, sophisticated software ecosystems, mature digital payment systems and billions of digitally connected users. We do not have to wait to be technologically ready before using AI.

Secondly, we can examine the revenue profile of leading participants. The dot-com

era was heavily populated by unprofitable startups that were dependent on speculative financing. But AI is led, to a significant extent, by some of the most profitable corporations in modern economic history. Firms such as Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, Nvidia and Oracle are financing large-scale AI investment from existing cash flows, diversified revenue streams and robust balance sheets. This shows how unlikely it is that these investments are just speculative.

Thirdly, AI is already producing measurable outcomes. Many organizations are using it to lower costs, increase efficiency and improve decision-making, as well as to expand service capacity.

For example, in healthcare, AI systems are helping with various issues, such as radiology analysis, medical imaging, clinical documentation and appointment scheduling. Hospitals and healthcare networks are increasingly adopting these tools to reduce administrative burdens and improve operational efficiency.

In finance, AI is being used for fraud detection, anti-money laundering reviews, credit scoring, compliance monitoring and customer service automation. Financial institutions are not investing in AI because it is trending but because they are seeing tangible results.

When it comes to manufacturing, Germany's industrial sector, Japan's robotics ecosystem, South Korea's electronics manufacturers and China's smart factories all show how AI has become an indispensable part of growth.

Even in education, AI tutoring systems, language learning assistants, grading tools and curriculum generators are changing how students are learning and how instruction is delivered.

All these examples demonstrate the crucial issue that AI is not limited to one industry. It has applications across nearly every sector. Some even argue that, in that respect, it is similar to electricity.

While the internet certainly had transformative potential in the late 1990s, AI today can often be inserted directly into existing workflows. It enhances processes already taking place inside firms and institutions.

Fourthly, the dot-com bubble was strongly centered on US equity markets and start-up culture, though its effects were broader.

The current AI expansion is occurring across multiple regions.

While the US remains central, China is aggressively deploying AI across manufacturing, logistics, e-commerce and financial technology. Europe is focusing heavily on industrial AI and advanced manufacturing. India is leveraging AI within its vast information technology services sector. Japan and South Korea are integrating AI into robotics and automotive production. And Gulf states are investing in sovereign-scale AI infrastructure, data centers, smart city initiatives and diversification strategies. This worldwide competition is critical.

Some people might criticize the massive spending on data centers and chips, but it is vital to remember that, historically, transformative technologies often require large up-front investment.

Finally, labor markets also reveal that AI capability is already economically meaningful. Firms across many sectors are using AI to automate customer support; therefore, it is affecting real tasks now, not merely as a speculative narrative. In other words, AI has crossed an important threshold from demonstration to implementation.

In a nutshell, the current AI boom is not the same as the late-1990s dot-com bubble. AI is already generating tangible outcomes and is a tool that governments are increasingly funding, firms are deploying, scientists are using and industries are integrating.

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh is a Harvard-educated Iranian-American political scientist. X: @Dr_Rafizadeh

Source: Arab News

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

A New Era Of Online Gaming Governance

Enabling safe and responsible gaming under the Online Gaming Rules, 2026

Press Information Bureau

Operationalising the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Rules, 2026 will come into force on 1 May 2026. This marks a decisive step in shaping India's digital gaming landscape. The Rules establish a structured system to govern online games. The focus is on user safety and industry growth. Their commencement signals a shift from broad policy intent to enforceable regulation.

The Rules flow from the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming (PROG) Act, 2025, enacted by Parliament in August 2025. The Act addresses the rising harm of online money gaming. It also enables growth of e-sports and online social games. It reflects the Government's vision to make India a global gaming hub. The aim is to foster innovation and creativity while protecting users from financial and social risks.

Understanding the Online Gaming Sector

The online gaming sector has expanded rapidly and now forms a significant part of India's digital economy. The Indian market generated INR 232 billion in 2024. 77 per cent of this revenue came from transaction-based games. The sector is projected to grow at a CAGR of 11 per cent, reaching INR 316 billion by 2027. Recognising this scale, the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Rules, 2026 introduce a clear framework. It distinguishes between safe and harmful forms of online gaming. In this regard, determination and classification is central to effective regulation and enforcement. The sector can be broadly divided into three distinct segments with varying implications for users and society.

E-sports: This refers to competitive digital sports, which are part of multi-sports events and where teams or individuals participate in organised tournaments. Success in e-sports requires strategy, coordination, and advanced decision-making skills.

Online Social Games: These are casual games that form part of everyday recreation. They are primarily skill-based and designed for entertainment, learning, or social interaction. Such games are generally considered safe.

Online Money Games: This segment includes games involving financial stakes. These may be based on chance, skill, or both. These platforms have raised serious concerns due to reports of addiction, financial losses, money laundering and even suicides.

The rapid growth of the online gaming sector highlights both its economic potential and the need for safeguards. E-sports and online social games support innovation and recreation. Online money games, however, raise serious financial and social concerns. It is estimated that around 45 crore people have been affected by such platforms, with losses exceeding Rs. 20,000 crores. This magnitude of impact highlights the urgency of clear classification and effective regulation. In response, the Government has acted to protect citizens while promoting safe and responsible gaming.

Overview of the PROG Act, 2025

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 was enacted to bring clarity and balance to India's online gaming ecosystem. It seeks to promote innovation in e-sports and online social games while firmly prohibiting online money games. The law sets out a clear distinction between permissible and prohibited activities in the sector.

The Act imposes a complete ban on all forms of online money games. This applies to games of chance, games of skill, and any mix of the two. It also prohibits their advertising, promotion and facilitation. Banks and payment systems are barred from processing transactions linked to such games. Unlawful platforms may be blocked in accordance with the Information Technology Act, 2000.

Strict deterrent penalties have been prescribed to ensure compliance. Offering or facilitating online money games may attract imprisonment of up to three years or a fine up to one crore rupees or both. Repeat offences carry a minimum of three years imprisonment, extendable to five. Fines range between one crore and two crore rupees. Advertising such games may invite up to two years imprisonment. Alternatively, a fine of up to fifty lakh rupees may apply, or both. Repeat violations attract higher penalties. Cyber cell officers at State and UT levels are empowered to investigate offences. This includes officers at police station, district, and Commissionerate levels.

Alongside prohibition, the Act promotes a safe and structured gaming environment. It provides recognition to e-sports and online social games. It establishes the Online Gaming Authority of India. It also introduces a transparent determination and registration system. Additionally, it provides a grievance redressal mechanism and safeguards to protect users from harm.

To learn more about the Act please click here.

What the Rules Aim to Achieve

The Rules give practical shape to the provisions of the PROG Act, 2025. They translate the intent of the law into clear procedures and obligations.

Their purpose is to:

Provide a clear, transparent, and time-bound mechanism. This determines whether a game is an online money game and thus prohibited. Or whether it qualifies as



a permissible online social game or e-sport. Establish the Online Gaming Authority of India as a unified, digital first regulator for the sector.

Create a statutory registration regime for e-sports and such categories of online social games as may be notified.

Issue mandatory user safety features, grievance redressal and transparency obligations for online game service providers.

Lay down the procedure for inquiry and imposition of civil penalties under Section 12 of the Act.

Provide an appellate mechanism to ensure accountability, fairness and observance of the principles of natural justice.

Collectively, these measures establish a clear, fair and effective framework for regulating the online gaming sector.

Key Pillars of the Regulatory Framework
The Rules are built around six key pillars. Together, they create a structured system for online gaming regulation in India. The framework is clear and comprehensive. It

rests on core governance principles. These include oversight, classification, user protection, and enforcement.

These pillars are outlined below.
Online Gaming Authority of India
Constituted as an attached office of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology with its head office in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. It is designed to function as a digital office.

Structured as a compact and multi-sectoral body. It is chaired by the Additional Secretary, MeitY. It includes Joint Secretary level representation from Home Affairs, Finance, Information and Broadcasting, Youth Affairs and Sports, and Law and Justice.

Maintains and publishes the list of online money games and inquiries into complaints.

Issues directions, orders and codes of practice, hears appeals on user grievances, and coordinates with financial institutions. It also works with law enforcement agencies. This ensures effective and timely action.

Determination of an Online Game

Rules provides a clear test to classify whether a game is an online money game or a permissible category.

Triggered through Suo motu action by the Authority, application by a service provider, or notification by the Central Government.

It is based on objective factors such as payment of stakes, expectation of monetary winnings, revenue model, and monetisation of in game assets outside the game.

To be completed, as far as practicable, within 90 days, with the outcome recorded in a determination order specific to the game and provider.

Registration of Online Games

Required only when notified by the Central Government. It applies to all games offered as e-sports. The decision is based on risk to users, scale, financial transactions and country of origin.

Successful registration leads to a digital Certificate of Registration with a unique number, valid for up to 10 years.



Online money games are not eligible for recognition or registration as e-sports under the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.

Service providers must display registration details. They must designate a point of contact. They must comply with data retention requirements and follow directions on facilitating payments.

User Safety Features

Introduces user safety features as technical, procedural and behavioural safeguards suited to the risk profile of each game.

Includes age verification, age gating, time restrictions and parental controls.

Covers user reporting tools, counselling support, and fair play and integrity monitoring.

Requires disclosure of safety features and internal grievance mechanisms at the time of application for determination or registration.

Two-Tier Grievance Redressal and Appellate Mechanism

Every online game service provider must establish and maintain a functional grievance redressal system.

Users may approach the Authority within 30 days if dissatisfied with provider's resolution or if grievances remain unresolved.

The Authority endeavours to dispose of appeals within a further 30 days.

A second appeal lies before the Appellate Authority i.e., the Secretary, MeitY. The Authority should dispose of appeals within 30 days, as far as possible.

Penalties and Enforcement

Proceedings are to be conducted in digital mode unless physical presence is considered necessary.

Cases are to be concluded within 90 days from receipt of a complaint.

Penalties are proportionate and consider gain from non-compliance, loss to users, recurrence and gravity.

Mitigation efforts by the service provider are also to be taken into account while determining penalties.

All penalties imposed under the Act shall be credited to the Consolidated Fund of India.

Together, these pillars create a clear and enforceable framework that ensures effective regulation while safeguarding users and supporting responsible growth of the sector.

Wider Impact on Citizens and Economy

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 is now supported by Rules coming into force on 1 May 2026. Together, they are expected to deliver wide-ranging benefits for society and the economy. The Act sets the legal foundation, while the Rules ensure that its provisions are implemented in a clear and time bound manner. Together, they create a balanced framework that promotes growth while safeguarding users.

Key positive impacts are:

Boost to the Creative Economy: The Act supports India's emergence as a hub for digital creativity and innovation. By encouraging e-sports and safe online games, it expands opportunities for exports and investment. It also creates new jobs across design, technology and content creation. This strengthens India's position in the global digital economy.

Empowering Youth: Young people gain access to safe and constructive digital spaces. E-sports and skill-based games help build confidence, discipline and teamwork. These platforms also open up new career pathways for talented players. Over time, this can nurture a new generation of professionals in the gaming sector.

A Safer Digital Environment: Families are protected from predatory online money gaming platforms. Such platforms often rely on misleading claims of easy financial gains and can lead to user safety concerns including psychological risks like addiction and distress. The Act prohibits these practices, while the Rules ensure effective enforcement. This creates a healthier and more secure digital ecosystem.

Strengthening Global Leadership: India is positioned as a leader in responsible gaming and digital regulation. The framework shows how innovation can be balanced with strong social safeguards. It offers a model for other countries dealing with similar challenges. This enhances India's credibility in global digital governance.

In combination, the Act and the Rules balance innovation with strong safeguards, ensuring sustainable growth of the sector.

The Road Ahead for Online Gaming in India

The coming into force of the Rules on 1 May 2026 marks a new phase in the governance of online gaming in India. It brings clarity to a sector that has grown rapidly but lacked a unified framework. By aligning legal provisions with clear procedures, the framework ensures that regulation is both effective and predictable.

The Act and Rules strike a careful balance between innovation and protection. They enable growth of e-sports and online social games. They also firmly address risks posed by online money gaming. This strengthens user trust and provides certainty to industry stakeholders.

Over time, this framework is expected to support responsible expansion of the gaming ecosystem. It also reinforces India's position as a credible voice in global digital policy. Strong safeguards and clear rules are now in place. The sector is better equipped to grow in a safe and sustainable manner.

Tech integration into judicial processes dismantles geographical barriers, helps litigants: CJI

PTI

Gangtok, May 01: Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Friday said integrating technology into judicial processes dismantles geographical barriers to help litigants overcome problems of terrain, finance and distance.

Addressing the inaugural session of the two-day National Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education here, the CJI also said the Indian legal landscape has moved away from the era of the paper trail, where vital records languished in physical storage, to a vibrant digital ecosystem.

He also declared Sikkim to be the first paperless state judiciary in the nation.

"When we speak of integrating technology into judicial processes across the country, we are, in effect, addressing the dismantling of geographical constraints, whether they arise from difficult terrain, financial barriers, or sheer distance," he said.

The journey to a courtroom was often measured as a test of endurance, the Chief Justice of India said.

"The mighty Himalayas, magnificent as they are, make movement slow and uncertain. If we look at the scenario just a decade or so ago, for a Sikkimese litigant seeking justice, distance was not measured in kilometres but in days of travel across narrow paths and unpredictable weather," he said.

The CJI said digital reform is not a matter of theory, but a



practical necessity for sustaining the rule of law.

"We have moved away from the era of the paper trail, where vital records languished in physical storage, to a vibrant digital ecosystem. The e-Courts project has rewritten the relationship between the litigant and the law," he said.

What once required physical presence and toilsome inquiry is now available through a simple digital interface, CJI Kant said, adding that in consonance with this advancement, the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) stands as the "beating heart" of this endeavour, offering a window into the pulse of our judicial performance.

"Beyond basic data collection, we have witnessed the advent of intelligent assistance within our chambers," he said, mentioning translation tool SUVAS and SUPACE, an AI-driven tool designed to assist judges.

"These innovations act as force multipliers, aiding in the swift translation of judgments

and providing rapid, comprehensive research to the bench. They relieve the judge of the mechanical burden of routine inquiry, allowing for a deeper immersion in the complexities of the law," the CJI said.

He also discussed another aspect of technological advancements.

"When a litigant in the most distant corner of the country can track the progress of a case or view an order without intermediaries; if he can engage counsel from across the country and view proceedings in real time through video conferencing and live proceedings, the power dynamics of the courtroom undergo a healthy calibration," he said.

Yet, it would be premature to assume that the task is complete, said the Chief Justice of India.

He suggested that the large-scale digitisation achieved in trial courts through the National Core Case Information Systems (NC CIS) must now find a clear

and consistent reflection in the higher judiciary through stronger standardisation.

"It enables High Courts to align with a common national standard while still accommodating state-specific requirements, whether in terms of nomenclature, local language needs, or procedural workflows," he said.

The CJI said this standardisation exercise must also be accompanied by an expansion of e-Seva Kendras, one-stop digital service centres established in high courts and district courts to help litigants and lawyers access electronic court services such as assistance with case status, e-filing, obtaining certified copies, e-payments, and video conference hearings.

"These centres must grow beyond being simple access points and develop into effective hubs of digital support. In a country marked by varying levels of literacy, they serve as the crucial link between the complexity of the law and the immediacy of a citizen's need," he said.

Noting that currently, there are 48 functioning e-Seva Kendras in high courts and 2,283 operational units across district courts, he said that strengthening their technical capacity is essential to ensure that the digital divide does not become a new line of exclusion.

CJI Kant also said there is a clear scope for the careful infusion and granular application of Artificial Intelligence at the trial court level.

In the context of recovery

suits, for instance, predictive and analytical tools can be deployed at the very threshold of litigation, he said.

"Instead of allowing valuable judicial time to be spent at the execution stage, on tasks such as verification of assets or tracing encumbrances, these systems can undertake such foundational checks with a degree of speed and accuracy that manual processes often cannot match," he said.

Similarly, AI systems can be deployed to identify patterns in sentencing and bail practices, to promote greater consistency and predictability, the CJI said.

"This Conclave recognises that the adoption of technology is not only about implementation, but also about a necessary shift in legal education. It is no longer sufficient to be well versed in the statutes of the past. The modern judge must also engage with the logic that underpins emerging technologies," the CJI said.

Judicial academies also must move beyond basic digital literacy, encouraging a deeper understanding of how algorithmic systems operate, and how they intersect with longstanding principles such as natural justice, he said.

The CJI congratulated the Chief Justice of the High Court of Sikkim and the state government for achieving the milestone of a paperless high court and for placing Sikkim on the national map of judicial innovation.

Sakeena Itoo felicitates top performers of ALOHA GAT-2025 at Srinagar

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 01: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo on Friday felicitated the top performers and achievers of ALOHA GAT-2025 at SCERT Bemina here, organized to recognize and celebrate academic excellence and competitive spirit among students.

Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani; Director, Centre for Good Governance, IUST, Dr. G.N Itoo; Joint Director School Education (Central), CEO Srinagar, senior management of ALOHA Srinagar, large number of students and parents were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister said that this unique test is not only about intelligence but it also depicts various instincts of a student's life. "This exam does not only show your capabilities, but it sheds light on various extents of a child or student. It strengthens mental arithmetic, analytical thinking, concentration and overall cognitive development among students," the Minister stated.

The Minister further said that there is a lot of talent in Jammu and Kashmir among children. "For one and a half years, I am looking after education department and I would not hesitate to say that the level of talent in our children is unprecedented. They need to be given a chance

and way to move forward, they will create opportunities", she said.

Congratulating the achievers, the Minister emphasized on the importance of such competitive platforms in nurturing talent at an early stage and preparing students for future academic challenges. "Activities like ALOHA GAT not only enhance numerical ability but also instil confidence, speed and accuracy, which are prime qualities essential for success in modern education systems," she said.

The Minister further said that students who in one way or other remain little behind in these kind of exams need to be equally felicitated like toppers, as it is also an achievement to be able to attend an exam and be part of it.

Sakeena Itoo reiterated the government's commitment to promoting innovative learning methods and co-curricular activities that complement formal education. She noted that the integration of skill-based assessments aligned with national and international competitive standards plays a crucial role in shaping well-rounded individuals.

The Minister further said that Government is working to make better future for our students. "There is a lot of effort from government level so that the way in which the children move forward, we can make it easier for them", she stated.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

PM Modi inspired

genius. I view both states as engines propelling India's development trajectory forward," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that Gujarat's history brims with countless sons of Bharat Mata, who elevated the nation's honor. Revered Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi transformed India's destiny through unyielding resolve, selfless dedication, and profound self-belief.

He said Mahatma Gandhi gifted the nation the philosophy of truth, non-violence, selfless service, sacrifice, love, and tolerance, turning the freedom struggle into a mass movement. Lieutenant Governor also observed that Gandhiji's life inspires us to stand firm by our principles amid any adversity.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that India's pride as the world's largest democracy is deeply rooted in the vision and ideals of Sardar Patel.

"His unwavering belief in unity amidst diversity stands as our greatest achievement, a testament to his resolute commitment to 'Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat.' The strength we draw from weaving together our traditions, cultures, and heritage into the fabric of progress is a living reflection of Sardar Patel's steadfast determination and enduring legacy," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said Maharashtra is the land of industries, spirituality, selfless-service and sacrifice. He said icons like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Peshwa Bajirao, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar devoted themselves to Mother India and for the cause of national unity.

"At every sacred pilgrimage across India, the name of Ahilyabai Holkar resounds. Her vision and devotion breathed new life into the nation's spiritual traditions and carried them forward with renewed strength," the Lieutenant Governor said. (KNO)

Ladakh's development

increased from 145 to 184, while distribution transformers have gone up from 1,182 to 3,153."

"I am giving these figures on this scale because after becoming a Union Territory, it (Ladakh) has remained the focus of the Narendra Modi government, the focus of the prime minister of the country, and so many development works have taken place together," the minister said.

He said the impact of better infrastructure was visible in road connectivity, with the Zojila Pass, which earlier remained shut for 127 days, remaining closed for only 19 days this year. "The Kargil-Leh road, which earlier remained closed for nearly 175 days, was shut for only 11 days."

Shah said work on the Zojila tunnel is in progress, construction of the Shinkun La tunnel has started and a new civil airport is also coming up.

He said that VSAT connectivity has been extended to all panchayats and major work has been undertaken to upgrade telecom towers.

In the education sector, Shah said Sindh Central University has been established, 174 ICT labs set up, 130 smart classrooms created, 40 science laboratories built and 24 Atal Tinkering Labs established.

He said Ladakh became a fully literate administrative unit in 2024 and claimed there was no illiterate person left in the region.

"Nearly 98 per cent households have been provided tap water connections under the Har

Ghar Jal scheme, while substantial work has also been carried out in agriculture and horticulture," he said.

Shah said Ladakh's budget has risen from Rs 1,000 crore when it was part of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state to Rs 6,000 crore now.

He also announced the formation of the Sindh Infrastructure Development Corporation, saying it would play an important role in promoting industrial growth in the coming years. "We want this border region to become self-reliant," Shah said. He asserted that development in the UT is because of the vision of the prime minister.

TODAY'S BUDDHA PURNIMA TRULY GOLDEN OCCASION FOR PEOPLE OF LADAKH

Termining today's Buddha Purnima as "truly golden" occasion for the people of Ladakh said, "On this auspicious occasion, after 75 years, the arrival of the sacred relics of Lord Buddha here will inspire followers of Buddhism as well as other faiths."

Shah said that much like in the life of Lord Buddha, it is rare for anyone to experience their birth, enlightenment, and Mahaparinirvana all occurring on the very same day; for this reason, today is a highly auspicious and inspiring day for all of us.

He said that today is not only a religious event but also a historic reunion. After so many years, Tathagata Buddha has returned to this sacred land, his most beloved land, which is a matter of great fortune.

He said that Ladakh has been a living land of Dharma for centuries. When the Dalai Lama comes here, he says that this land is not merely geographical but a living laboratory of Buddhist culture and compassion.

The Union Home Minister said that knowledge has been preserved and nurtured on this land. "Whenever Buddhism faced challenges, this land worked to preserve Lord Buddha's message. When peaceful times came, it also worked to further propagate that preserved and enriched knowledge," he said, adding, "This path became the medium through which the teachings of Tathagata spread from India to China and many other countries."

The Union Home Minister said that Ladakh's spiritual identity has been shaped by four major traditions Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya, and Gelug. First, see things as they are. Second, the grace of the Guru and continuous self-reflection is the gateway to liberation. Third, knowledge is incomplete without practice, and practice is blind without knowledge; therefore, the union of knowledge and practice is the right path. Fourth, without moral discipline, a wise life cannot be formed.

He said that this message emerging from the land of Ladakh has become a guiding force for the world today. "Presence of these sacred relics in Ladakh reminds us that India's civilization has been giving the message of peace and coexistence for thousands of years."

He said that in places full of diversity like Ladakh and Kargil, this message becomes even more relevant. This heritage still tells us that amidst conflict and unrest, the path of peace and compassion alone can provide solutions.

Union Home Minister said that for centuries, Buddhism reached Ladakh in different ways and at different times, flourished here, and later spread beyond Ladakh.

He said that Ladakh was an ancient center of Kashmir's Buddhist studies, Mahayana philosophy, and Buddhist art, and from there Ladakh first received contact, association, and spiritual engagement with Buddhism. The

envoys of Emperor Ashoka laid the foundation of Buddhist influence in Ladakh.

Shah said that during the Kushan period, approximately between the 1st and 3rd centuries, the rise and development of Mahayana Buddhism reached Ladakh. Many ancient stupas, Buddhist idols, Kharosthi-Brahmi inscriptions are evidence that Buddhism progressed here during that period as well.

The Union Home Minister said that due to the Silk Route, the routes connecting Kashmir, Leh, Yarkand, Khotan, and Tibet became important not only for trade but also for the exchange of ideas.

He said that from 7th to 10th centuries, Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions reached Ladakh from Tibet, enriching the message of Tathagata here. After this, a decisive contribution came in the 10th and 11th centuries when Sanskrit texts were translated into Tibetan. 108 monasteries were established, including the Alchi Monastery, and Buddhism was given an institutional and permanent form.

Shah said that even today, wherever there is a Buddhist tradition across the world, the knowledge enriched from Ladakh is considered very important. He said that Mahayana Buddhist literature states that having the opportunity to see the sacred relics is equivalent to having the darshan of Lord Buddha himself. Today, after such a long time, the people of Ladakh are getting the fortune of having darshan of Lord Buddha himself. The Home Minister urged the Ladakh administration to make full arrangements for followers of all faiths, especially Buddhism, to visit and have darshan.

He said that when Lord Buddha attained enlightenment and spread his teachings through monks, his knowledge was highly relevant, and today, after 2,500 years, it is even more relevant for the world.

Shah said that the entire world should understand and accept India's knowledge and the great message of Lord Buddha, and move on the middle path and the path of solutions—(KNO)

Join Centre's

virtual mode, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "In a high-altitude region like Kargil, the foundation stone has been laid for a dairy plant with a capacity of 10 TLPD (10,000 litres per day). Women of Kargil can bring prosperity into their lives through this dairy plant, support their families, and become self-reliant."

Shah said that he comes from a region where women, through similar small dairy initiatives, have achieved a turnover of 1,25,000 crore. He expressed confidence that women here too have the potential to contribute to their families and children's education.

He said that the new 25 crore project will prove to be a blessing for the mothers and sisters of Kargil. "Daily production has begun at the milk plant already operating in Leh," Shah added.

He said that ITBP and the Army are major buyers in Ladakh, with around 18,000 soldiers stationed at the borders. He expressed confidence that their requirements of milk, curd, and paneer will be met by this plant.

He further stated that a mobile laboratory costing 45 lakh has also been launched, which will greatly help in maintaining milk quality. He said that the Android-based AMCS app has also been launched, enabling dairy farmers to transparently monitor their milk accounts on a single platform. This will also boost their confidence. He added that the five livestock farmers who were honoured today are

an inspiration for all livestock farmers of Kargil and Leh.

Shah said that Ladakh Milk Federation and Mother Dairy have signed an agreement, which will connect Ladakh to national markets. He said that Ladakh's organic products should get access to the large market of Delhi. He urged the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) to facilitate a tripartite MoU with the National Cooperative Organic Limited. He added that while Mother Dairy products should be sold here, arrangements should also be made for marketing Ladakh's products across the country through Mother Dairy and other cooperatives.

The Union Cooperation and Home Minister said that dairy infrastructure in Ladakh will be expanded further. A new plant with a capacity of 50,000 litres per day will be established in Leh at a cost of 70 crore. "This will tap the growing potential in Leh and will also complement the Kargil plant as milk production increases," he said, adding, "Efforts will be made to provide high-yield breeds of cows and buffaloes suited to the region's climate. Approximately 500 such animals will be provided annually to boost milk production."

He noted that Ladakh has extreme cold conditions and low oxygen levels, so research-based animal breeds suited to these conditions will be introduced. He said there is a plan to nearly triple the livestock population over the next 10 years and expressed confidence that people will respond positively.

He added that after the agreement between Ladakh Milk Federation and NDDB, the network has reached 28 villages with about 1700 milk producers connected. He urged NDDB to expand its reach to as many villages as possible where animal husbandry is feasible and improve the livelihoods of livestock farmers.

Shah said that daily milk procurement has reached around 7000 kilolitres and should be increased to 21,000 kilolitres in the next four years to enhance farmers' prosperity. He also mentioned that an existing dairy plant has been upgraded and its capacity doubled from 5 TLPD to 10 TLPD. The MoU with the Army will further benefit it.

He said that since 2014, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, there has been a major transformation in India's livestock and dairy sector, with several revolutionary reforms in the animal husbandry sector.

He stated that India's milk production was 146 million tonnes in 2014-15. From independence till 2014-15, it reached 146 million tonnes in 70 years, but from 2014-15 to 2024-25, it increased to 248 million tonnes. This means a 70% increase in just 10 years, with 50% of that growth in the last 5 years. He added that per capita milk availability has increased from 307 grams in 2013-14 to 485 grams now.

He said that India has achieved this through 2,36,000 cooperative societies and nearly 2 crore milk producers. A target has been set to establish 75,000 new milk societies in five years, and efforts are being made to modernize 46,000 existing ones. Out of the 75,000, 21,000 new societies have already been formed.

The Union Cooperation Minister urged the Ladakh administration to tap the potential of every village where dairy and animal husbandry are feasible.

He said that cooperative societies related to pashmina, organic products, and honey will also be established in the coming days. (KNO)

Lt Gen Balbir Singh

characterised by meticulous execution of

OP SINDOOR & OP MAHADEV, which brought the perpetrators of the dastardly 'Pahalgam Attack' to justice, incident-free conduct of the Amarnath Yatra 2025 and multiple initiatives in nation building," the statement said.

In a post on X, the Chinar Corps said that on relinquishing the command, Lt Gen Srivastava paid homage at the Chinar War Memorial, honouring the bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice in service of the nation.

"In his farewell message, he thanked all ranks of Chinar Corps, @JmuKmrPolice, Central Armed Police Forces, Civil Administration and the Awaam of #Kashmir for their steadfast support in fostering peace and harmony," the post said. Chinar Corps is responsible for guarding the Line of Control with Pakistan, besides countering terrorism in the Kashmir valley. (KNO)

PDP aided BJP

"Today, the concern is not EVMs. It is the deletion of voters from the voter list," he said, calling it a serious threat to democratic processes. The Chief Minister said rising fuel prices were driving inflation and transport fares, adding that global conflicts were worsening the economic situation. "We were forced to increase fares. When oil prices rise, everything increases," he said.

He added that the solution lies in ending global conflicts. "This war should not have started. There is no justification for it. When tensions ease, oil prices will come down," he said. (KNO)

MeT forecasts

and 9.6°C. Bhandarwah saw temperatures of 25.0°C and 6.8°C, the data showed.

Rainfall remained negligible at most stations during the day, with some areas like Pahalgam receiving light precipitation in the past 24 hours. (KNO)

Committed to employee

securing suitable accommodation for their families over the years. The availability of these units is expected to reduce dependence on private housing and improve overall working conditions by ensuring stability and convenience.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister reiterated his government's commitment to providing suitable family accommodation to employees. He said that strengthening employee welfare remains a key governance priority, and that efforts are underway to further augment residential infrastructure in a phased manner across Jammu and Kashmir.

He emphasized that residential accommodation plays a crucial role in enhancing productivity and morale among government employees, adding that the government will continue to invest in infrastructure that directly impacts their well-being.

Highlighting the importance of efficient project management, the Chief Minister stressed the need for timely execution of public infrastructure works. He directed the concerned departments to ensure optimal utilization and proper maintenance of the newly created facilities so that they continue to serve employees effectively in years to come.

CM directs

adopting robust flood management measures to safeguard vulnerable areas and protect public infrastructure.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Pampore Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi and other concerned officers.

Modi empowered ED to cleanse cancer of financial crimes; not to target anyone: MoS Chaudhary

PTI

New Delhi, May 1: Union Minister Pankaj Chaudhary said on Friday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi "strengthened" and gave more powers to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to cure the "cancer" of money laundering, corporate fraud and corruption, not to target any entity as alleged by a certain "ecosystem" in the country.

Chaudhary, the Minister of State for Finance, called the central agency the "nation's shield against financial crimes", stating that it has not only "lived up" to the trust successive governments reposed in it but has also set "new standards".

He said the ED's name is "respected" not only in India but also at various global forums including the FATF which praised its investigative skills.

The minister spoke during the 70th "ED Day" event held here. The agency was established on this day in 1956.

A host of opposition parties have alleged that the ED is "a tool of the BJP-led central government" and being used to "target" them.

"In the last few years ED has been in the news the most. In its formative years, ED implemented the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (now repealed)



and the Foreign Exchange Management Act. Since then, there has been an unprecedented enhancement in its capabilities and work efficiency."

"Because the Indian government trusted the ED, it was tasked with implementing the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (in 2005)," Chaudhary said in his speech delivered in Hindi.

He said there was an "ecosystem" in the country that found "problems" in every solution.

"Whatever you do, such people start getting troubled. Respected PM Modi ji took the reins of the country in 2014 and began taking tough decisions in the national interest; since then, the foundations of this ecosystem have been shaken," he said.

He said "such people" keep "crying" that Modi has given "too much" power to the ED but these

are "half-truths".

"The truth is that these powers were given to the ED to crush financial crimes and not to target someone. The question is: why were these powers essential?" Chaudhary asked.

He said this was essential because crimes like money laundering, hawala, possession of benami assets, corporate fraud and terror funding were "increasing" in the country. This was due to black money being sent to foreign shores, scams occurring through banks, and the common person's money ending up in the pockets of a few.

"Such crimes are no less than cancer for the nation, society and the common man and we know cancer cannot be treated with a sweet pill. Respected PM Modi ji wants results and therefore the

ED was strengthened more than it was earlier," the MoS said. "I want to ask some people if it's wrong to dream of a corruption-free India, if bringing back money looted in bank frauds is wrong, and if stopping the funding of terrorism is wrong? "ED is the nation's shield against financial crime. This law (PMLA) belongs not to one government but to the entire country," he said.

The minister added that PM Modi has "zero tolerance" for corruption, irrespective of how powerful someone is.

"If someone has looted the country's money, then all are equal before the law," he said, adding all "fugitives" would be brought back to the country.

ED, he said, was given the power to "save" the country, to "save" the common man's money and to ensure India's economic security.

"Respected Pradhan Mantri ji takes decisions in the country's interest without caring for criticism," Chaudhary said.

Chaudhary recalled a recent "historic" comment made by the Supreme Court, which stated that ensuring justice for crime victims should be given equal importance in current jurisprudence.

The apex court also called the two-decades-old judicial

thought, which prioritized an accused's unbiased and fast hearing coupled with safety from long incarceration, "old thinking," he said.

The minister greeted the ED officers on their special day and lauded their "dedication," "courage" and "devotion" to duty.

Chaudhary cited the action undertaken by the ED under the anti-money laundering law as he said that by the close of the last financial year (March 31, 2026), the agency had attached assets worth Rs 2.36 lakh crore.

One-fourth of this attachment, which is Rs 63,000 crore, has been "restored" to its legitimate owners, such as banks, investors and home buyers.

The ED deserves applause for this work, he said.

"Modiji is sensitive towards people's rights and strongly holds his thoughts on this issue. "All probe agencies have the primary duty to ensure prompt and complete justice," Chaudhary said, adding that the ED has "realised" this vision of the PM by restoring assets worth thousands of crores of rupees to those who were cheated.

He asked the ED and other investigative agencies to do their job "without bias," telling them that filing chargesheets in court on time was "important".

Govt plans to make India a global hub for live events by 2030



PTI

New Delhi, May 1: The government plans to position the concert economy, under which live events like music shows, concerts are hosted, as one of the key drivers of national growth and make India a global hub for such events by 2030.

The issue was discussed at the 4th meeting of the Live Events Development Cell (LEDC), under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, held on Thursday, an official release said. The meeting was chaired by Chanchal Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB).

It was attended by representatives from nine central ministries, six states, and 12 industry members.

The LEDC aims to position the concert economy as one of the key drivers of national growth and make India a global hub for live

events by 2030 and generate 15-20 additional million jobs in this sector, the official release said.

India's organised live events sector has emerged as the highest growth segment in the media and entertainment sector.

During the meeting, the secretary of the ministry of information and broadcasting highlighted the role of LEDC in creating a coordinated roadmap for the growth of India's live events industry.

He noted that the live events sector is one of the fastest-growing segments of the media and entertainment industry, contributing significantly to employment generation, tourism promotion and economic multiplier across allied sectors, the release said.

The progress of various initiatives taken by LEDC was presented by Prithul Kumar, Joint Secretary (Broadcasting), MIB.

Commercial LPG price hiked by Rs 993 per 19-kg cylinder



PTI

New Delhi, May 1: The price of commercial LPG was hiked by the steepest ever Rs 993 per 19-kg cylinder on Friday, marking the third straight monthly increase due to rising global energy prices linked to the West Asia conflict.

A 19-kg commercial LPG - used by establishments such as hotels and restaurants - now costs a record Rs 3,071.5 in Delhi as against Rs 2,078.50 previously.

Rates were last increased by 195.50 per cylinder on April 1. Prior to that, prices had gone up by Rs 114.5 per 19-kg cylinder on March 1.

In three increases, commercial LPG rates have gone up by Rs 1,303.

Prices of domestic cooking gas LPG - the one used in household kitchens - remained unchanged. Domestic LPG rates were last hiked by Rs 60 per 14.2-kg cylinder on March 7. It costs Rs 913 per 14.2-kg cylinder in Delhi.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum, and Hindustan Petroleum revise ATF and LPG prices on the first day of every month based on international benchmarks and the exchange rate.

Global oil prices have shot up almost 50 per cent after the war in West Asia disrupted energy supply chains.

Major narcotics ring busted, cocaine worth Rs 1,745 cr seized by NCB in Mumbai: Amit Shah

PTI

New Delhi, May 1: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has busted a major international narcotics ring, seizing 349 kg of high-grade cocaine worth Rs 1,745 crore in Mumbai.

Announcing the drug haul on X, Shah asserted, "We are resolved to ruthlessly crush the narcotics cartel."

"The @narcoticsbureau has cracked down on a major international narcotics ring, seizing 349 kg of high-grade cocaine worth Rs 1,745 crore in Mumbai. This is a trailblazing example of a bottom-to-top approach where the agency traced back a smaller consignment to net a massive network. Congratulations to Team NCB for this monumental success," he wrote. The major chunk of the seized contraband was found concealed in the cavity of machinery imported from abroad. The NCB busted the network after the driver of a van in which the first lot was seized spilled the beans during sustained interrogation.

"The seizure is significant because about 200-300 kg cocaine is usually seized in India every year on an average," it said.

The NCB conducted Operation White Strike in which



it uncovered a large transnational cocaine trafficking syndicate, culmination of more than six months of sustained intelligence development and surveillance by NCB.

"Acting on specific and credible inputs, multiple teams launched coordinated strikes in the Kalamboli-Bhiwandi corridor (Navi Mumbai-Thane region), exposing a highly organised transnational drug supply network using warehouse infrastructure and concealed transport mechanisms," the Union home

ministry said in a statement.

In the two-stage operation, NCB officers initially intercepted a Maruti Suzuki Super Carry vehicle bearing registration number MH-03-DV-3803 near the KWC Warehousing Complex, Sector KWC, Kalamboli, Navi Mumbai.

"Search of the vehicle led to the recovery of 136 packets of cocaine, each weighing approximately 1 kg. The packets were found in cartons wherein cocaine was concealed using cricket pads and gloves," it said.

One accused was

apprehended on the spot, it said.

During sustained interrogation, the accused revealed the existence of another concealed consignment stored in Bhiwandi, a major warehouse hub.

"Acting swiftly, NCB team conducted second operation at a warehouse located at Laxman Compound, near Rehnal Bus Stand, Rehnal Gaon, Bhiwandi (District Thane), resulting in the recovery of an additional 213 packets (1 kg each) of cocaine," the ministry said.

During the investigation, it surfaced that the cocaine had been concealed inside the cavity of machinery imported to India.

"Each packet was packed in 9 layers of the different types of polythene including one layer of black greasy substance," it said.

The NCB said the use of Bhiwandi's warehouse ecosystem points to a structured logistics chain involving import of machinery with concealed cocaine, storage and retrieval of cocaine packets in warehouses and downstream supply of narcotics. The agency is on the hunt for the mastermind and an intensive investigation is underway to apprehend the handlers, financiers, and intended receivers of the consignment.

NCERT printing Class 9 books on war-footing Supply being normalised

PTI

New Delhi, May 1: The NCERT on Friday said it is printing the newly-introduced Class 9 textbooks on war-footing, and supplies are being normalised following a temporary demand-supply gap after the rollout of the NEP 2020-aligned curriculum.

In a statement issued here, the NCERT said it has brought out a new set of Grade 9 textbooks based on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It has already released digital versions of the new Grade 9 textbooks for free access on its website a fortnight ago.

"These books are being printed on a war-footing manner and being distributed across the country. Due to very large number of textbooks required, there is some temporary gap in the supply and demand," the statement

read. "NCERT is closely monitoring the situation and working to bridge this gap. The supply of textbooks is being normalised," it added.

To ensure wider access, the NCERT said its textbooks are being made available through multiple channels, including a nationwide vendor network and sales counters at its regional centres. The sales counter at its headquarters in New Delhi is also open on weekends to facilitate students and parents.

The books are also accessible online through NCERT's official portal as well as on e-commerce platforms. Free downloadable versions are available on NCERT's website, DIKSHA and ePathshala portals, the statement said.

The NCERT added that it is directly supplying textbooks to schools and institutions that are placing bulk orders.

'Rich nations might eliminate cervical cancer by 2048, progress slow in poor countries'

PTI

New Delhi, May 1: High-income countries are on track to eliminate cervical cancer -- preventable through vaccination and screening -- by 2048, while low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) will see only slight reductions over the next century, according to a study published in The Lancet journal.

As a result, the gap between regions will widen dramatically, with women in LMICs facing much higher rates of this preventable disease, researchers, including those from CHU de Québec-Université Laval Research Center in Canada, said.

Almost all cervical cancer cases (99 per cent) are linked to infection with high-risk human papillomaviruses (HPV), an extremely common virus transmitted through sexual contact, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Cervical cancer is largely preventable through HPV vaccination and regular screening, it says.

The United Nations' health



agency has set an elimination target of an incidence rate of under four cases per one lakh women.

Each country should meet '90-70-90' targets by 2030 -- 90 per cent human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine coverage among girls by age 15, 70 per cent of women screened by age 35 and then 45, and 90 per cent of women with pre-cancer and cancer treated -- to be on track to eliminate cervical cancer within the next century, the WHO says.

The researchers said that reaching WHO vaccination and

screening elimination targets for HPV or introducing universal vaccination with high coverage is necessary to eliminate cervical cancer in LMICs, which would substantially attenuate worldwide inequalities.

Achieving the WHO's 90-70-90 goals could avert 37 million cervical cancer cases over the next century and accelerate progress toward elimination, they said.

However, the models suggest that many LMICs are unlikely to reach these targets without increased investment in elimination efforts, the team said.

EC dismisses scope for wrongdoing at strongrooms

Prohibitory orders around Kolkata counting centres



PTI

Kolkata, May 1: A day after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee spent hours at the EVM strongroom of her Bhabanipur constituency alleging possibilities of malpractices, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Agarwal on Friday asserted there is no scope for wrongdoing at the counting centres.

Following tensions around two counting centres in Kolkata late on Thursday, police clamped prohibitory orders on gatherings outside all seven strongrooms in the city.

Stating that round-the-clock CCTV monitoring of strongrooms was in place, Agarwal dismissed the allegations as "baseless".

TMC spokesperson and Belegata constituency candidate Kunal Ghosh said that party workers and poll aspirants were keeping a strict vigil at the counting centres, where the EVMs are stored in strongrooms, upon directions of party supremo Mamata Banerjee.

"There is no scope for any wrongdoing given the arrangements made to secure the EVMs. The Centres have been kept under thorough CCTV coverage and their live-streamed footage can be seen from outside," Agarwal told reporters.

"One should have reason and evidence for making allegations," he said, maintaining that there were no

grounds for levelling charges of EVM tampering or pre-counting malpractice.

Two counting centres in Kolkata witnessed high drama late on Thursday evening after TMC leaders alleged a lack of transparency and possible malpractice at the strongrooms housing sealed EVMs of the assembly polls, which concluded on April 29.

Mamata Banerjee herself landed up at the Sakhawati Memorial School counting centre and stayed put there for about four hours. She emerged from the premises past midnight and warned against any attempts to tamper with the counting process, demanding greater transparency.

TMC leaders and candidates Sashi Panja and Kunal Ghosh held a sit-in outside the Khudiram Anushilan Kendra counting centre on Thursday evening, alleging unauthorised activities inside the strongroom amid the absence of TMC agents. Matters came to a head after a large number of supporters from both TMC and BJP camps gathered outside the venue, shouting slogans till they were dispersed by security forces.

The EC, however, dismissed the claim, clarifying that poll officials were engaged in the task of segregating postal ballots as per due process and the strongrooms remained secure, asserting all political parties for the mandatory segregation activity were duly notified.

SpaceX invests over \$15 billion in Starship in push for airline-like rocketry

REUTERS

Hawthorne CA, May 1: SpaceX has spent more than \$15 billion developing its next-generation Starship rocket, according to the company's IPO registration reviewed by Reuters, a sum that dwarfs the cost of its workhorse Falcon rocket as Elon Musk's space company nears a decade trying to perfect a fully reusable launch system.

The future of SpaceX's most lucrative businesses as it sprints toward public markets at a \$1.75 trillion valuation rests largely on Starship, a towering two-stage rocket system central to Musk's ambitions to launch larger batches of Starlink satellites, carry humans to the moon and Mars, and eventually deploy thousands of artificial intelligence computing satellites as an alternative to power-hungry data centers on Earth.

The \$15 billion figure, which has not been previously reported, eclipses the roughly \$400 million SpaceX spent developing Falcon 9, the world's most frequently flown rocket. Falcon 9 has underpinned SpaceX's commercial dominance, enabling rapid Starlink deployments and giving the company a wide lead over launch rivals.

"We have continued to invest significantly in further increasing our lead by pursuing full and rapid reusability at scale, including investing over \$15 billion in our next-generation rocket, Starship," SpaceX said in its confidential IPO registration. The company aims to begin launching its latest generation of Starlink satellites, known as V3, in the second half of 2026, according to the filing. That is likely to be on Starship, whose payload bay was tailored for the upgraded satellites and can fit up to 60 of them in a single flight, SpaceX said in the filing. That is a dramatic



increase from the two dozen smaller Starlinks typically launched on Falcon, underscoring how tightly Starship's success is woven into the economics of Starlink.

Starship now consumes the bulk of the company's development spending.

SpaceX devoted \$3 billion to research and development in 2025 for its space segment, the entirety of which went to the Starship program, the filing shows, a sharp jump from the \$1.8 billion spent in that segment the prior year. The surge highlights how fundamentally different Starship is from Falcon and from any rocket that has come before it.

Starship suffers explosive failures since 2023, SpaceX has conducted 11

Starship test flights, producing both spectacular failures and eye-catching advances. Among the milestones was catching the rocket's towering Super Heavy booster on its return to Earth using massive mechanical arms, a maneuver designed to dramatically accelerate reusability.

Even with those gains, SpaceX acknowledged in its filing that several unprecedented hurdles remain before Starship can reach Musk's goal of "thousands of launches per year." That launch rate, the company said, would be required to deploy 100 gigawatts of solar powered AI satellites annually, roughly a quarter of the energy consumed by the United States in a year. "They're getting

really close," said Chris Quilty, president of Quilty Space, a space and satellite industry research firm. "But what we still don't know, and won't know for a while is, can they do it repeatedly?"

Among the most significant challenges facing Starship is building the vast ground infrastructure needed to support Musk's desired flight cadence, including fuel supplies, water systems and, for the core ship, a heat-shield capable of surviving repeated atmospheric re-entries.

A single Starship launch requires the equivalent of 244 tanker trucks of natural gas, according to a Federal Aviation Administration analysis. About one million gallons of water are used to suppress the rocket's intense acoustic vibrations during liftoff. "There is not enough water in the water system to support the launch of Starship" at such a scale, Quilty said.

Another formidable obstacle is in-orbit refueling, a risky and unproven process in which Starships dock with tanker versions of the vehicle to transfer fuel. The maneuver would be essential for deep space missions and would itself require multiple Starship launches.

"That's probably the last big challenge," said Hans Koenigsmann, former SpaceX Vice President of Flight Reliability and one of the company's earliest employees. "If that happens, then I think from then on it should be more or less, success."

The challenge is compounded by the propellant itself. Liquid oxygen must be kept at extremely low temperatures and tightly sealed to prevent it from seeping out into space.

"In-orbit refueling is complex, and we have not yet demonstrated or attempted it,"

SpaceX said in its filing.

"We may not be able to develop, commercialize, scale, or successfully implement these or other strategic initiatives on the timelines we currently anticipate, or at all," it added.

City of stars

Over the past decade, SpaceX has built an extensive development site in South Texas, Starbase, dedicated to Starship. The facility supports a manufacturing push designed to produce rockets at a pace more akin to commercial aircraft than traditional space vehicles.

"When you build up your production before you actually have the product, you obviously run the risk that if you change your mind... every change on the rocket has a change on the factory now too," Koenigsmann said.

Testing failures have driven hundreds of design changes to the vehicle. Koenigsmann described Starship as "a totally different animal" from Falcon 9.

SpaceX is now preparing for its first Starship test launch since October, the program's longest pause between flights. The mission will debut the Starship V3 prototype.

"Version 3 is basically a clean-sheet design of the ship," Charlie Cox, Director of Starship Engineering, said in a video SpaceX posted on X on Friday.

V3 Starship, with dozens of key upgrades, is tailored for orbital flight, longer-duration tests in space and crewed lunar landings, the rocket's most challenging type of mission for which NASA has paid SpaceX at least \$3 billion under its Artemis moon program.

"That Version 3 is what HLS is going to be based on," said Kent Chojnacki, Deputy Manager of NASA's Human Landing System program. "A lot's gonna be dependent on this first flight."

Iran war redraws sea routes with Africa as the pivot

AFP

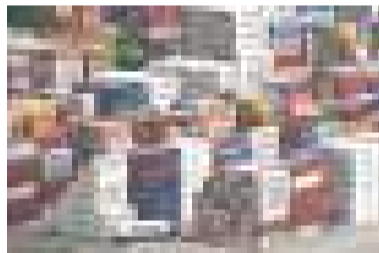
Paris, May 1: The closure of the Strait of Hormuz as well as tensions in the Red Sea are reshaping trade routes, with Africa becoming a hub of global container ship traffic, according to logistics and maritime sources.

Over the past two months, the blockade has also pushed shipowners to find alternative land corridors to deliver foodstuffs and manufactured goods by truck, as they can no longer reach the Gulf's coastal countries by sea.

What are the alternative routes for delivering to Gulf countries?

The Saudi port of Jeddah on the Red Sea is becoming a new regional "hub," where ships from maritime giants MSC, CMA CGM, Maersk and Cosco arrive via the Suez Canal.

Cargo then leaves by truck along a



desert highway to deliver to places such as Sharjah, Bahrain and Kuwait, which have not been served by sea for the past two months.

"The port of Jeddah is not at all sized to handle such import volumes and a port congestion situation is emerging," Arthur Barillas de The, cofounder of freight forwarder Ovrsea, told AFP.

According to data from Kpler Marine

Traffic, 11 container ships were docked in Jeddah on Thursday, with nine waiting, and an average wait of 36 hours before unloading compared to 17 hours the previous week.

Shipowners have said they will use three ports outside the Strait of Hormuz — Oman's Sohar, and the UAE ports of Khorfakkan and Fujairah, which are connected by land from the United Arab Emirates.

The port of Aqaba in Jordan serves as a base for sending goods to Baghdad and Basra in Iraq, while a Turkish corridor is also allowing goods into northern Iraq.

— On international routes, why are Asia-Europe container ships avoiding the Suez Canal? —

The situation started well before the war in Iran but is very much connected to the conflict.

Iran crisis hampering aid to refugees as supply chain costs soar, UN warns

REUTERS

Geneva, May 1: The cost of sending some aid to Sudan — the world's largest displacement crisis — has more than doubled due to the Iran war, as shipping disruption pushes up costs and delays the delivery of relief, the UN refugee agency said on Friday.

Heightened insecurity around key Gulf shipping routes, including the Strait of Hormuz, as well as congestion at ports, rising fuel prices and higher insurance premiums have all hampered the delivery of aid, particularly in



Africa, the agency said. Ships with aid that previously passed from Dubai through the Strait

of Hormuz are being replaced by ships coming from Europe around the Cape of Good Hope, adding up to 25 days to delivery times, UNHCR spokesperson Carlotta Wolf told reporters in Geneva.

"People in dire need are receiving things that are ready later than what's needed," she said.

Transport costs for moving shipments of relief items from Dubai to Sudan and to neighboring Chad have more than doubled, rising from \$927,000 to \$1.87 million, Wolf said. The UN routinely refers to the humanitarian crisis caused by the war in Sudan as the world's largest.

Mumbai to witness cricket match between GST, customs officers & actors

PTI

Mumbai, May 1: Mumbai is set to witness a celebration of fitness and sportsmanship as the regional unit of Sports Authority of India (SAI) organises a friendly cricket match between GST, Customs officers and actors on Sunday, officials said.

The match will feature public servants taking on the Mumbai Heroes team, comprising actors such as Suniel Shetty, Sohail Khan, and Sharad Kelkar, among others, SAI said in a statement.

Several actors, singers, and fitness influencers are also expected to attend the event to promote awareness on physical and mental health, it said.

The match between the GST & Customs Amateur Team and Mumbai Heroes will be held at Air India Ground, Vakola, from 6 pm onwards on May 3.

The event will be graced by Prachi Saroop, Principal Chief Commissioner (CGST), Mumbai, as the chief guest and B B Gupta, Chief Commissioner of Customs Mumbai Zone-III, as the guest of honour, the statement said.

This initiative aims to promote fitness, active living, and community participation under the Government of India's 'Fit India Movement', it said.

The event will be live streamed on social media platforms, it added.

Rugby Premier League in Hyderabad from June 16-28



PTI

New Delhi, May 1: GMR Sports, in partnership with Rugby India, the national governing body for the sport, announced that the second edition of the Rugby Premier League (RPL) will be held at the Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad from June 16 to 28.

Following a successful inaugural edition last year in Mumbai, the Rugby Premier League returns in the fast-paced Rugby 7s format, aligning with the league's long-term vision of accelerating the growth and global competitiveness of rugby in India.

The second season will feature the six franchises from the first edition.

Outlining the league's continued evolution, Rahul Bose, President of Rugby India, said: "With everything one

does in life, the quest is to always do better, be better, deliver better. That will continue to be the cornerstone of the RPL."

Elaborating how this philosophy translates into the league's execution, he added: "Building a world-class property will never be enough. We will always strive to deliver a better product for our fans, do better by our sponsors and last but not the least, be better partners for our franchisees, their owners and their support staff."

Speaking about their decision to host the second edition in Hyderabad, Satyam Trivedi, CEO, GMR Sports, said: "Hyderabad's premier sports infrastructure, excellent connectivity, and passionate fan base make it the perfect home for the league.

Movies Schedule

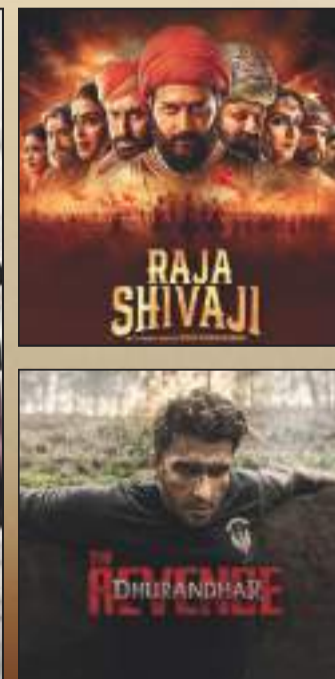
Saturday, 2 May



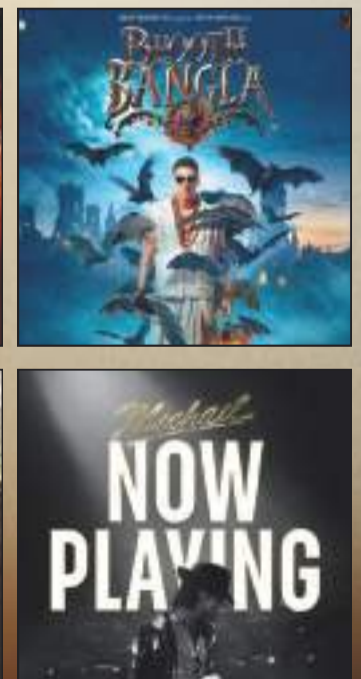
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BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+)
Hindi - 03:00 PM



Ek Din (U/A13+)
Hindi - 01:35 PM, 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
11:05 AM, 02:30 PM, 07:40 PM

Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A)
Hindi - 10:35 AM

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