



Money generated through drug trade fuels terrorism, radicalisation: LG Sinha

Lt Governor to lead Padyatra in Srinagar today

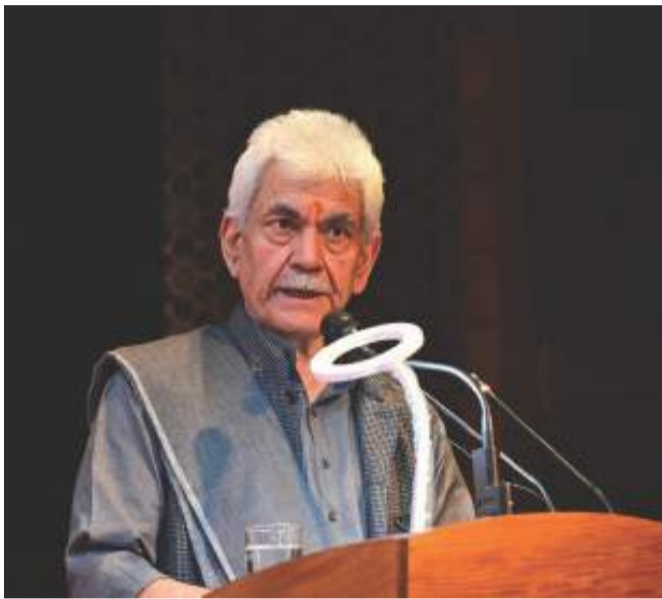
Outlines 3-pronged strategy to dismantle supply chains

Warns traffickers of property attachment, passport cancellation

Says 100-day campaign saw massive public participation

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, May 02: Asserting that some drug traffickers might be building narco-palaces and becoming economically prosperous, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday reiterated that most of the money generated through this trade ends up fuelling terrorism and radicalisation in Jammu and Kashmir.



Talking to selected group of reporters at Lok Bhavan here ahead of a mega 'padyatra' on Sunday as part of the 'Nasha Mukh J-K Abhiyaan', LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Narcotics trade in Jammu and Kashmir has a direct link with terrorism. The

administration is stepping up efforts to dismantle drug networks and curb rising addiction among youth."

"Narcotics proceeds are often channelled into terror activities. Drug traffickers may appear to prosper, but that money ultimately fuels terrorism, violence and radicalization," he said.

LG Sinha said, "We need to build more rehabilitation centres. But those cannot be built immediately, so, in the rehabilitation centres that exist, arrangements are being made for their (victims) treatment. The Health Department has been instructed that both OPD and IPD facilities should be sufficiently available for such people in our hospitals."

He said the administration is working on a three-year monitoring programme for the rehabilitation of victims. "We are also creating a detailed rehabilitation plan, so that if someone gets into drug addiction and then gets out, we can track them for three years and make complete arrangements for their rehabilitation," he added.

LG Sinha said, "Despite sustained efforts since 2021 under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, the scale of drug abuse particularly among young men and women remains a serious concern."

"We have achieved some success, but not to the extent we had hoped. The increasing addiction among youth is worrying and | More on P6

Srinagar decked up, security beefed for LG-led mega anti-drug Padyatra

QRTs, emergency units deployed strategically

Health, fire, disaster response teams on standby

Edu institutions, sports bodies, youth clubs mobilised

Administration appeals citizens to participate

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 02: With the Padyatra led by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha set to take place on Sunday (tomorrow), Srinagar has been fully decked up, while security has been significantly



beefed up, with a coordinated effort ensuring fool-proof arrangements across the city.

The march, part of the nationwide 'Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan', is expected to witness unprecedented participation, particularly from youth, students, civil society groups, and government officials.

Officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a comprehensive security grid has been activated by

the Jammu and Kashmir Police in coordination with paramilitary forces. Anti-sabotage checks, area domination, frisking, and heightened surveillance have been put in place, especially along vulnerable stretches and gathering points.

Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs) and emergency units have been deployed strategically to respond to any contingency. The entire route has undergone sanitisation and security clearance. | More on P6

Leh Buddha relics offer chance to pay respects: PM

PTI

New Delhi, May 02: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday hailed the inauguration of the 'Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of the Tathagata' in Leh, and said it offers a valuable opportunity for people from across Ladakh to pay their respects.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday inaugurated a sacred holy relics exposition of Tathagata Buddha and the 2569th Buddha Purnima celebrations in Leh during his two-day visit to Ladakh.

"It is a matter of immense delight that yesterday, on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, the 'Sacred Exposition of the Holy

Relics of the Tathagata' was inaugurated in Leh," PM Modi said in a post on 'X'.

The prime minister said these revered relics are linked to the Piprahwa Stupa in Kapilavastu and were excavated in the closing years of the nineteenth century. They embody the enduring teachings of Lord Buddha, he said.

PM Modi said this exposition will continue until May 14 and in the coming days, it will also travel to Zaskar.

"It offers a valuable opportunity for people from across Ladakh to pay their respects. It will also boost spiritual and cultural tourism in Ladakh," he said.

The revered Piprahwa relics of Tathagata | More on P6

Nasha Mukh Abhiyaan

First 15 days: Police come hard at smugglers, peddlers

Properties worth crores attached; nearly 400 FIRs registered; over 400 booked

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 02: Jammu & Kashmir Police have intensified its multi-pronged crackdown on drug trafficking and substance abuse under the Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyaan, registering significant achievements across the Union Territory.

Pertinently, the ongoing campaign launched and spearheaded by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to target drug peddlers, dismantle financial networks linked to narcotics, and strengthen public awareness is going on in full vigour.



Sources told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the accelerated action under the abhiyaan is on the top

of agenda of the Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat who chaired a number of review meetings and made visits to districts for

achieving maximum results.

The campaign, started on April 11, 2026, and up to April 26, 2026, 378 cases were registered under the NDPS Act and related laws, with 431 drug peddlers booked.

"Police seized 478 kg of narcotic drugs, 13,427 tablets, capsules and bottles of psychotropic substances, with a total estimated value about Rs. seven crore. The authorities disposed of 4,776 kg of narcotic drugs and 6,493 tablets, capsules and bottles of psychotropic substances.

Efforts to curb illicit cultivation leading to the destruction of | More on P6

Bantalab bridge tragedy

CM Omar condoles, orders probe

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 02: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss of three workers in a bridge collapse incident at Bantalab on the outskirts of Jammu city.

In a message of condolence, Abdullah extended heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved families and prayed for eternal peace to the departed souls. He also wished a speedy recovery to those injured in the incident.

The Chief Minister has directed that a thorough inquiry be conducted to ascertain the cause of the collapse and to fix responsibility for any lapses.

According to reports, a portion of a small bridge collapsed on Friday in the Bantalab area, trapping the labourers under the debris. The incident occurred when workers | More on P6

HM Shah discussed key dev issues with political leaders: LG Ladakh

Raja Syed Rather

Leh, May 02: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday said that Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his recent visit to Leh assured the key political leaders that the Centre is working hard to ensure equitable development of the region.

LG Saxena, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that Amit Shah chaired a meeting with key political leaders of Ladakh on April 30, stressing sustainable development and environmental resilience in the region.

According to Saxena, the Home Minister, while highlighting the spiritual significance of his visit to Leh on the occasion of Buddha Purnima,



called for a focused approach towards large-scale plantation and strengthening water security as core pillars of Ladakh's development.

The Lieutenant Governor said the ongoing efforts under Project Him Sarovar, including the creation of 50 water bodies across villages, along with recent plantation drives,

were shared with the Home Minister, who appreciated the initiatives as positive steps.

During the meeting, Thupstan Chewang emphasized the need to harness water from the Shyok river for drinking and irrigation purposes, while Sonam Wangchuk pointed out that only a fraction of glacial melt in Ladakh is currently being utilized, underscoring the need for innovative conservation measures.

Saxena said the UT administration has launched a massive programme to boost plantation and water conservation, aiming to ensure climate-resilient development in Ladakh.

He said that over 4,500 native trees have been planted across Leh and Kargil in the past 40 days.

Additionally | More on P6

J&K braces for rain, storms

Valley records above normal temps

MeT forecasts erratic weather till May 5

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 02: The Meteorological Department (MeT) on Saturday said that Jammu and Kashmir will witness erratic weather conditions over the next few days, with rain, thunderstorms, hailstorms and strong gusty winds likely in several areas.

MeT Director Mukhtar Ahmad told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the weather is expected to remain generally cloudy on Sunday and Monday, with intermittent rain, strong winds and the possibility of hailstorms at some places.

Similar conditions are likely

on May 5, while improvement is expected between May 6 and 9. From May 10 onwards, the weather is expected to remain largely dry, with brief spells of light rain at isolated places during afternoon hours, he added.

Authorities have advised people to avoid weak structures, electric poles and overhead wires during gusty winds. Farmers have been asked to suspend agricultural activities from May 3 to May 5.

According to MeT data, most places in the Valley recorded above-normal maximum temperatures. Srinagar recorded a maximum of 26.0°C, 3.3°C above normal, while Qazigund settled at 25.2°C, 3.5°C above normal. Kupwara recorded 24.6°C (1.1°C above normal) and Kokernag 24.8°C (3.7°C above normal). Gulmarg, however, recorded 17.2°C.

In the | More on P6

Hailstorms damage orchards, crops across Kashmir parts

Farmers seek compensation, SKUAST-K issues advisory

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 02: A severe hailstorm accompanied by heavy rainfall damaged orchards and standing crops across several parts of Kashmir, including southern Kulgam and northern Kupwara and Baramulla districts, on Saturday, officials and locals said.

Farmers told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the sudden spell, marked by large hailstones and intense showers, struck during the afternoon, damaging apple blossoms and tender fruit at a crucial stage of the growing season. The losses are feared to impact overall yield this year, they said.

Residents have urged the administration to carry out

an immediate assessment and provide compensation to affected growers.

Meanwhile, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir) issued a detailed advisory to help farmers minimise losses and prevent secondary infections in orchards and crops following the hailstorm.

The advisory, issued by its Directorate of Extension, stressed the need for immediate drainage of excess water to prevent waterlogging, which can cause root suffocation and increase the risk of fungal diseases.

Farmers have been asked to gently remove hail deposits and debris from trees to avoid bark | More on P6

Operation Sindoor golden chapter in India's military history: Rajnath Singh

'Reflects Modi govt's unwavering resolve to eliminate terrorism through decisive action'

PTI

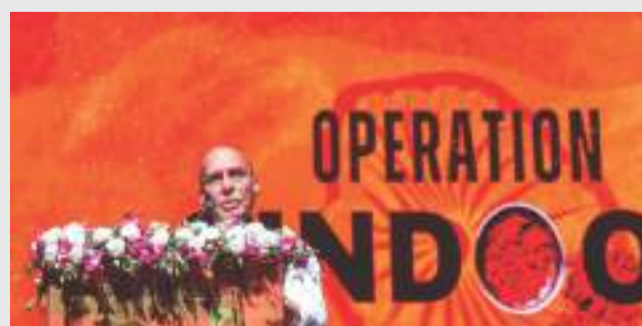
New Delhi, May 02: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday described Operation Sindoor as a reflection of the Modi government's "unwavering resolve" to eliminate terrorism through "decisive action".

Singh also said the "unmatched valour" of the armed forces during the operation has marked it as a "golden

chapter" in India's military history.

The defence minister made the remarks while addressing an event named "Shaurya" organised in New Delhi in the run-up to the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor.

India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7 last year in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack. The operation targeted terror infrastructure in territories



controlled by Pakistan.

The strikes triggered four

days of intense clashes that ended with an understanding on stopping the military actions on May 10.

In his remarks, Singh commended the valour, dedication and patriotism of the soldiers, and said their ethos of "nation first and service before self" have defined India's military traditions from ancient times to contemporary operations, such as Operation Sindoor, according to the defence

ministry.

The valour of the defence forces extends beyond the battlefield as they provide humanitarian assistance as first responders during natural disasters within the country and abroad, Singh said.

"Our soldiers use weapons to protect their people, and deliver food and medicines to those in need during the times of crises. This is the defining characteristic of our defence

forces," he said.

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal A P Singh, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh and Vice Chief of the Army Staff Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth attended the event.

The event was a confluence of art and valour, with top defence officials, hundreds of military | More on P6

Strengthening infrastructure, addressing public needs remains top priority: Deputy CM

Inspects infrastructure works in Jammu, calls for speedy completion New Assembly Complex Jammu

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MAY 02: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary conducted inspections of the New Assembly Complex and other important ongoing infrastructure works in Jammu on Saturday.

During inspection the Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, called for speedy and quality work completion of New Assembly Complex and timely execution of development projects and strengthening public infrastructure in Jammu.

Taking stock of the pace and quality of construction, he directed the concerned officials to ensure adherence to set deadlines and high construction standards, given the significance of the Assembly Complex. Taking stock of the pace and quality of construction, he directed the concerned officials to



ensure timely completion of this vital project. He stressed adherence to set deadlines and high construction standards, given the significance of the Assembly Complex.

He reviewed the progress on the ground and emphasized the need to maintain quality standards while expediting the work to

minimize inconvenience to the public.

Reiterating the Government's focus on development, the Deputy Chief Minister said that strengthening infrastructure and addressing public needs remains a top priority, and all executing agencies must work with dedication and accountability to deliver results efficiently. Later, Deputy Chief Minister also conducted surprise inspections at the Chief Engineer's Office, PWD Jammu, as well as the offices of the Deputy Labour Commissioner and Assistant Labour Commissioner Jammu.

Reviewed functioning, the Deputy Chief Minister stressed accountability, and directed officials to ensure efficient service delivery and responsiveness to public grievances.

Senior officers of several departments were also present.

Govt committed to responsive governance: Javed Rana

Assures action on public issues in Durga Nagar

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MAY 2: The Durga Nagar Welfare Co-ordination Committee Saturday called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, at his official residence to highlight the pressing problems faced by the locals there.

The Minister, as per an official statement, was apprised of the difficulties being faced by the residents due to irregular water supply, dependence on private water tankers and gaps in sanitation services.

The committee also requested that the Power Development Department (PDD) be directed to classify the MU-9 Feeder at CPS Muthi as an essential services feeder.

The delegation also informed Javed Rana that a survey for construction of a one lakh



gallon water reservoir at Durga Nagar had already been conducted as per earlier directions and an estimate amounting ₹32 lakh had been prepared. However, they informed that the required funds have not been released so far and sought Minister's intervention for expediting the same.

Javed Rana acknowledged the hardships faced by the public and emphasised that ensuring easy access to essential facilities, particularly safe

drinking water, power and other essentials remains a top priority of the government.

Taking a serious view of the matter, the Minister directed the concerned departments, particularly Jal Shakti, to take immediate steps to streamline and augment the water supply in the area. He also called for assessment and upgradation of the existing pipeline infrastructure to prevent leakages and ensure equitable distribution.

The Minister further instructed the authorities to strengthen sanitation and waste management mechanisms in Durga Nagar to safeguard the public health and maintain hygiene standards.

Reiterating the government's commitment to responsive governance, Javed Rana assured that all genuine public grievances will be addressed on priority and directed the officials to ensure visible improvement.

Census 2027: 3-day training programme for Field Trainers begins in Shopian



KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, MAY 02: District Administration Shopian Saturday commenced a three-day training programme for Field Trainers (FTs) in connection with the forthcoming Census 2027 operations.

The training programme, as per an official statement, is being organized under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Shopian (Principal Census Officer), Shishir Gupta, to strengthen preparedness for Phase I, House Listing and Housing Census (HLO).

As many as 14 Field Trainers drawn from different departments are participating in the programme.

These Field Trainers will further impart training to Supervisors and Enumerators at their respective charge levels to ensure the smooth and efficient conduct of census activities across the district.

The training sessions are being conducted by Master Trainers from the Directorate of Census Operations, J&K and Ladakh, Rohini Pokhryal and Rais Ahmad Dar, along with Naveen Raghav, District Coordinator, Shopian who are providing detailed guidance on the procedures and operational framework of Census 2027.

The participants are being sensitized about house listing and Housing Census schedules, House-listing block definitions, use of Mobile HLO application, Data quality and confidentiality, and practical field exposures.

During the sessions, emphasis is being laid on maintaining data accuracy, adherence to prescribed guidelines, and timely completion of census activities.

Interactive discussions are also being held to address participants' queries regarding technical and field-level aspects of the census process.

ADDC Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone, while speaking, emphasized the crucial role of Field Trainers in ensuring accurate and smooth Census 2027 operations and urged them to carry out their responsibilities with dedication and professionalism.

Among others, the training programme was attended by ADC Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, and DSEO Shopian, Bilkeesa Zahoor.

Mission YUVA: DC Shopian reviews progress

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, MAY 02: A review meeting of Mission YUVA was Saturday held under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (Chairman, DLIC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta at Mini Secretariat Shopian to assess progress under the scheme and streamline its effective implementation. Reviewing bank wise performance, it was informed that 2883 cases have been sponsored, of which 1318 have been sanctioned and 1178 disbursed, while 1057 cases are under process at various stages, underscoring the need for faster credit linkage and timely disbursal.

On capacity building, six internal trainers have been taken on board, conducting 48 training batches and benefiting 787 entrepreneurs. It was also informed that four batches involving 120 candidates are



currently ongoing.

Under enterprise mentorship, 15 mentors have been verified, of which 14 have initiated batches, while 70 candidates are undergoing mentorship training. Speaking on the occasion, the DC, as per an official statement, stated that Mission YUVA is a transformative initiative aimed at enabling youth to become self-reliant entrepreneurs through financial assistance, skill development, and sustained mentorship.

AMRUT Mission

DC chairs meeting on GIS-Based Master Plan for Kulgam Town



KT NEWS DESK

KULGAM, MAY 02: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Saturday chaired a meeting to review and discuss the GIS-based Master Plan for Kulgam town under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), with a focus on sustainable and planned urban development.

During the meeting, a detailed deliberations were held on key components of the Master Plan, with special emphasis on solid and liquid waste management systems to ensure efficient sanitation and environmental sustainability across the town.

A comprehensive transport plan was also discussed, aimed at improving road connectivity, easing traffic congestion, and promoting safe and efficient mobility. The economic development framework also formed a major area of focus, with discussions centered on identifying growth sectors and enhancing

livelihood opportunities.

The meeting further reviewed proposed land use patterns, strengthening of public infrastructure, and strategies for optimal utilization of state land. Future planning aspects were also deliberated upon to ensure balanced urban expansion in line with projected population growth.

Special attention was given to the development and preservation of green zones to maintain ecological balance, alongside planned industrial activities to boost local economic growth.

The GIS-based Master Plan is expected to provide a structured roadmap for the sustainable and integrated development of Kulgam town, aligning with the broader objectives of the AMRUT Mission.

The DC emphasized the need for coordinated efforts among departments to ensure effective plan and implementation to transform Kulgam into a well-planned, resilient, and citizen-friendly urban center.

Javed Rana reviews annual action plan 2026-27 for Poonch

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MAY 02: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Saturday chaired a meeting to review the annual action plan for the financial year 2026-27 for Poonch district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by senior officers from various departments including tourism, planning, public works, forest, Jal Shakti, health, education, rural development and power.

During the meeting, detailed discussion was held on sector-wise priorities, ongoing projects and proposed new works under the plan.

The Minister stressed the need for realistic planning, timely execution and optimal utilization of resources. He directed the officers to ensure that the plan reflects the actual needs of

the people, with a focus on improving the basic infrastructure, drinking water supply, road connectivity, healthcare facilities and education services.

Emphasising transparency and accountability, Javed Rana asked the departments to maintain close coordination and adhere strictly to the set timelines for projects completion. He also underscored the importance of involving the elected representatives in the planning process to ensure inclusive and need-based development.

The Minister called for prioritising the works that have maximum public impact, particularly in remote and under served areas of the district. He further directed the officers to closely monitor the progress on key projects and resolve the existing bottlenecks in a time-bound manner.

GOVERNMENT OF UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GANDERBAL Competent Authority For Land Acquisition Cala Mini Secretariat Duderhama

In the case of : Competent Authority for Land Acquisition (Deputy Commissioner) Ganderbal

V/S

Mushtaq Ahmad Son of Mohammad Ramzan Rather R/O Nuner Ganderbal, and others

CNR No. JKGB020001932026 Filing No. 292/2026

Date of Institution: 11-04-2026 Date of hearing: 11-05-2026

In the matter of:- Reference under section 311(4) of the Nil Act, 1956.

NOTICE TO GENERAL PUBLIC

It is hereby informed to the general public and all interested parties/landowners of the following Khasra numbers involved in the acquisition of the Project Srinagar Ring Road Phase-IIA in the District Ganderbal, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, wherein proceedings under the said Act have been referred to the Hon'ble Court of Principal District & Sessions Judge Ganderbal for appropriate adjudication, in pursuance to the Section 3H(4) of the National Highways Act, 1956, due to disputes regarding title and/or multiple claims. The case is listed for hearing before the Hon'ble Court of Principal District & Sessions Judge Ganderbal on 11-05-2026;

Tehsil	Village	Khasra No.
Ganderbal	Nuner	1383/1071/352, 1998/331, 2001/1072/352, 2165/206, 1145/707, 1594/710, 161, 163, 167, 1899/1139/348, 2023/165, 2069/172, 340, 689, 2185/207
	Beehama	1073/865/496, 1390/453, 468/2, 851/497, 867/496, 991/469, 1115/184, 1386/185, 1387/185, 975/187, 976/187, 1290/399, 368, 1008/157, 1121/468/1, 1126/468/1, 1126/468/1, 1214/189, 1260/375, 1672/372, 370

Ganderbal	1041/115, 1933/1537/79, 2193/249, 239, 251, 2490/581, 1936/1537/79, 2194/250, 1892/65, 1042/115, 547, 1931/1537/79, 1181/564, 1229/62, 1563/1223/109, 1889/64/1, 2002/1562/1223/109, 2004/109/1, 238 Min, 2446/1344/544, 2492/587,
Manigam	493 Min,
Seh Pora	393/93, 527/96,
Wail (CT)	202/1, 366 Min, 986/200,
Nagbal	103, 189/104, 118, 138,
Pandach	4510/574, 4516/574,
Darend	342/29, 373/84,
Serch Choudary Bagh	268

The interested parties having any claim or objection in respect of the said land parcels may appear before the Hon'ble Court on the above scheduled date. Such parties may submit their objections personally or through their authorized counsel. Failure to appear or submit objections within the stipulated time may result in the matter being decided ex parte.

DCG/LAG/26/RR-PH-II A/1261
30/04/2026

DIPK-971/26
DATED: 02-05-2026

Competent Authority for Land Acquisition
Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal

CAG flags Rs 250 crore irregularities in JTFRP

RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, May 02: The World Bank-aided Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP) in Jammu & Kashmir has come under scrutiny, with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) flagging "unfruitful expenditure," idle infrastructure worth crores, and violations of contractual provisions in its report for the period ending March 2023.

The audit noted that several key assets—including flood rescue boats, oxygen generator plants and search and rescue kits—have remained unused for years, raising concerns over preparedness in a disaster-prone Union Territory still vulnerable to floods like the 2014 deluge.

It further pointed to procurement irregularities, stating that the Project Management Unit (PMU) in August 2017 procured 30 emergency fibre and rubber boats from M/s Gee Pee Reinforced Products Pvt Ltd at inflated rates, despite a clause mandating refund of excess amount if subsequent tenders were finalised at lower rates.

However, the audit noted that when tenders for 28 additional boats were opened in 2018—with the same firm emerging as LI—the Project CEO in August 2025 termed the earlier contract as "expired." The auditors rejected the claim, observing that the agreement carried no expiry clause and the firm remained liable to refund the excess amount.

It also flagged that over 500



high-value Search and Rescue kits, procured at a cost of ₹2.35 crore, have been lying unused for more than two years in government stores in Kathua and Anantnag, defeating the objective of strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for disaster response.

The report further revealed that out of 530 kits supplied between October 2021 and June 2022, as many as 505 were not distributed, citing a lack of SDRF training. It added that key safety components, such as Karabiners in 230 kits, were found defective and remained unreplaced as of January 2024, while no provision existed in the contract for replenishment of

perishable items.

A joint physical inspection of 16 Oxygen Generator Plants (OGPs) pointed to systemic lapses, with the audit noting that no manpower was provided by the Health Department for their operation. At CHC Akhnoor, the plant was handed over only after the withdrawal of contractor staff, leaving it non-functional.

At CHC Hiranagar, defects such as burnt circuit breakers and leaking valves remained unattended for months, while a plant at PHC Zakura was found inaccessible due to the occupation of the premises by security forces. In the absence of any maintenance provision, the audit termed

the COVID-era assets a "dead loss."

The report also flagged the state-owned JKPC, stating that out of 13 sub-projects worth ₹266 crore, 10 remain incomplete and seven have been abandoned since 2020-21, resulting in unfruitful expenditure of ₹50.52 crore.

It further noted that bridges at Wagoor, Trenz Sheikhpura and Rohmo are delayed by over four years. In violation of contract terms, JKPC sub-contracted two major bridge projects worth ₹55.75 crore up to 61 per cent, exceeding the permissible limit of 25 per cent, while work was also halted over the use of sub-standard E-250 grade steel.

The audit also pulled up the Jammu and Kashmir Medical Supplies Corporation (JKMSC) for procuring 500 modular monitors at inflated rates, leading to an avoidable expenditure of ₹31.6 lakh. It added that medical equipment worth ₹5.39 crore remains idle in hospitals across Poonch, Samba and Baramulla due to a lack of supporting infrastructure.

Besides, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) was flagged for spending ₹102.89 crore on the upgradation of dewatering stations handling mixed discharge. The audit noted that despite World Bank directions, the corporation pumped large quantities of household wastewater into the Jhelum and Dhooth Ganga, attracting a penalty of ₹35 crore from the National Green Tribunal—(KNO)

GoC 15 Corps, others call on LG Sinha



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 02: Lieutenant General Balbir Singh, General Officer Commanding (GoC), 15 Corps, called on Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Saturday.

Farooq Ahmad Mir, former Vice Chairman District Development Council, Kupwara also called on the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

Meanwhile, a delegation of Kashmir Road Safety Foundation led by its

Chairman, Nasir Ali Khan called on LG Sinha.

Subsequently, Saima Jan, former DDC Member BK Pora, Budgam; Sheikh Inayat Ullah, CEO Reform and Rehabilitation Foundation (RRF) and Saba Zulfurnain, Social Activist also called on the LG.

In the meantime, a delegation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development Forum led by its Founder Chairman Rajnish Goenka, called on LG Sinha.

Highway movement slow, several routes closed or partially operational

SAJID RAINA

Jammu, May 02: Traffic movement remained slow on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway and several other routes across Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday due to breakdowns, heavy vehicle load and ongoing road work, officials said.

According to the Traffic Police Headquarters, slow movement was observed on NH-44 owing to single-lane conditions between Marog and Kishtwar Pather and the breakdown of an HMV near Kishtwar Pather. Movement of nomadic herds between Nagrota and Banihal also affected traffic flow.

Officials said that traffic on the highway is likely to remain slow on Sunday as well, and commuters have been advised to follow lane

discipline and avoid overtaking.

No movement of fresh vehicles was allowed on the Jammu-Srinagar highway on Saturday, though stranded vehicles were cleared towards Ramban and Banihal, an official said, adding that traffic on the Srinagar-Jammu stretch was allowed from Qazigund towards Banihal, Ramban and Udhampur, while vehicles also moved from Jammu towards Srinagar after regulation.

The highway remained closed for most of the day on Friday due to shooting stones and landslides, while movement was also affected by construction work between Ramban and Banihal.

Subject to fair weather and road conditions, passenger vehicles and LMVs are expected to ply on Sunday from both sides of the highway, the official said. However, HMVs

will be allowed only after assessing road conditions. Commuters have been advised to travel during the daytime and avoid overloading.

Meanwhile, traffic on the Kishtwar-Sinthan-Anantnag road will remain suspended as the stretch is still closed due to snow accumulation and road damage. On the SSG Road, LMVs followed by HMVs will be allowed from Srinagar towards Kargil after assessment of road conditions.

Traffic on the Mughal Road will operate on a regulated basis, with LMVs allowed from Shopian towards Poonch between 5 am and 10 am, subject to weather conditions.

Authorities have advised commuters to confirm the status of roads before travel and follow official advisories to avoid inconvenience—(KNO)

No fresh hepatitis cases in Khimber: ZMO

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, May 02: Health authorities in Srinagar on Saturday said all children affected in the recent hepatitis cluster in the Reshipora locality of Khimber in Zadibal zone are steadily recovering, with no fresh cases reported since the initial detection.

Zonal Medical Officer (ZMO) Dr Rubina Aziz said the situation is firmly under control, attributing the improvement to swift intervention, coordinated efforts by multiple departments, and sustained ground-level surveillance. "All affected individuals are recovering well, and importantly, no new cases have emerged after the initial cluster," she said.

The health scare surfaced on April 30 when around 18 cases—mostly among school-going children—were

reported with symptoms suggestive of acute viral hepatitis, including jaundice, fever, fatigue, and vomiting. The cluster had initially triggered concern among residents, with suspicion pointing towards a possible waterborne source.

Acting promptly, authorities sealed a suspected community spring in coordination with the local Masjid Committee to prevent further consumption. Water samples from multiple sites, including households and a local school, were collected for laboratory testing, while blood samples of affected patients were sent for serological analysis to determine the exact viral strain, likely Hepatitis A or E.

However, officials said that preliminary water quality monitoring has brought relief. According to a report issued under the Integrated Disease

Surveillance Programme (IDSP), the tested water samples from Khimber—including those from a school and nearby households—were found to be within "satisfactory" limits based on the Most Probable Number (MPN) coliform count.

The samples were classified as fit for human consumption as per bacteriological standards, ruling out any major contamination in the tested supply. Health officials said that continuous field monitoring, door-to-door surveys, and early case identification played a decisive role in containing the spread. "Our teams remain on the ground, actively monitoring the situation while also educating residents about preventive measures," Dr Aziz said.

An intensified awareness campaign has been launched in the area, with health workers urging residents to

strictly follow hygiene practices. People have been advised to consume boiled or properly treated water, maintain hand hygiene, and ensure sanitation to prevent any recurrence.

The District Surveillance Unit (DSU) noted that the absence of new cases is a positive indicator that containment strategies have worked effectively. However, officials emphasised that vigilance will continue until all laboratory reports are finalised and any residual risk is ruled out.

Meanwhile, the Jal Shakti Department has also been engaged to further assess water safety and ensure the availability of clean and reliable drinking water in the area. Measures are underway to strengthen supply systems and m

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Tral's vet hospital project stuck for 15 years

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pulwama, May 02: More than 15 years after it was approved, the construction of a dedicated veterinary hospital in Tral area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district continues to remain incomplete, forcing locals and livestock owners to manage with inadequate and unsafe facilities.

The project was sanctioned around 15 years ago with an estimated cost of Rs 28 lakh. While construction work had initially commenced, it was discontinued midway under unclear circumstances, locals said. Since then, the project has seen no revival, with the half-built structure now standing as a stark reminder of official indifference, they added.

An official aware of the matter said, "People had high expectations when the project was approved. There was visible progress in the beginning, but suddenly the work stopped and never resumed."

In the absence of a proper hospital building, veterinary services in Tral are currently being provided from an old and deteriorating structure, which residents say lacks even the most basic facilities.

"The existing setup is in a deplorable condition. It is

neither safe nor equipped to handle the growing number of cases. Both veterinary staff and livestock owners face serious inconvenience," said a local resident.

Another resident said the neglect comes at a time when animal husbandry has become a key source of livelihood for many families in the area.

"Over the years, more people have taken up sheep rearing and dairy farming. But without proper veterinary care, we are left struggling. The authorities have failed to address this pressing issue," he said.

Locals said the lack of adequate veterinary infrastructure is directly affecting their income, as delays in treatment often lead to the loss of livestock.

"For us, livestock is our main source of sustenance. When animals fall ill, we are forced to travel to far-off places for treatment, which not only delays care but also increases the risk of losses," another resident said.

The residents have appealed to MLA Tral Rafiq Ahmad Naik and the concerned departments to intervene and ensure that the long-pending project is restarted and completed at the earliest—(KNO)

Ramban youth found dead after 20 days

■ 4 held, SIT formed

KNO

Ramban, May 02: A 22-year-old youth from Ramban, who had gone missing 20 days ago after allegedly jumping into a stream while fleeing suspected 'cow vigilantes', was found dead on Saturday, officials said. An official said that the body was recovered from Nallah Bishlari near Kraalna Digidool in Ramban district.

He said the youth had gone missing on April 12 near Makarkoot along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway while travelling from Jammu to his native village, when he was allegedly intercepted and assaulted. He subsequently jumped into the stream and remained untraced.

"Today, the body was spotted in the stream near Digidool and retrieved by rescue teams," an official said, adding that the body, in a decomposed condition, has been shifted to a hospital for medico-legal formalities. The deceased was identified as Tanveer Ahmad Chopan (22), son of Abdul Salam Chopan of Mundkhal Pogal.

Police have registered a case under FIR No. 26/2026 at Ramsop Police Station and arrested four persons in connection with the incident. The accused have been identified as Surjeet Singh, Sandeep Singh, Digvijay Singh and Keval Singh.

SSP Ramban Arun Gupta has constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by SDPO Banihal Surinder Singh Bitoria to probe the case.

The family has alleged that the chase and assault led to his death and has demanded a fair probe and strict action against those involved—(KNO)

Police foil drug smuggling attempts

KNO

Srinagar, May 02: Continuing its sustained drive against drug trafficking, police in Baramulla achieved success during naka checking operations, leading to the arrest of three drug peddlers and recovery of contraband substances. Besides, police in Anantnag achieved major breakthrough by arresting second accused in case FIR No. 39/2026.

According to a statement, police station Sheeri during naka checking at Nowpora intercepted an auto-rickshaw bearing registration No. JK05P-4047. During search, approximately 42 grams of charas-like substance was recovered from the driver's possession. He has been identified as Nasir Ahmad Dar son of Mohd Amin Dar resident of Shalteng Sheeri. Similarly, during naka checking at Nowpora, a vehicle (Mahindra Thar) bearing registration No. JK01AX-2828 was intercepted by Police post Wagoora, with two persons on board. During search, approximately 56 grams of charas-like substance was recovered from their possession. They have been identified as Faizan Farooq Rather son of Farooq Ahmad

Rather resident of Wagoora and Mohd Yaseen Khanday son of Ali Mohammad Khanday resident of Warpora Tangmarg.

In Handwara, a police team from Police Post Zachaldara intercepted a suspicious person at Sultanpora Crossing, Zachaldara. During search, officers recovered Spasmo-Proxyvon Plus capsules from his possession. He has been identified as Mudasir Ahmad Dar son of Ab Majed Dar resident of Badkoot.

All the accused have been arrested and, accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and further investigation have been initiated.

Moreover, during investigation of case FIR No. 39/2026 registered under relevant sections of the NDPS Act at Police Station Srigufwara, Police in Anantnag has achieved another significant breakthrough by apprehending the second accused identified as Abdul Rashid Bhat son of Asadullah Bhat resident of Shitipura, involved in the transportation of a huge quantity of narcotic substance.

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3 workers dead, 1 rescued in Jammu

UMAISAR GULL GANIE

Jammu, May 02: Three workers died after an under-construction bridge collapsed in Bantalab's Thathar area of Jammu, officials said, adding that the rescue operation has been concluded after all trapped labourers were recovered.

An official said that four labourers were working beneath the bridge when a section of the structure suddenly gave way, trapping them under debris.

Soon after the incident, teams of Police, Army, SDRF, NDRF and civil administration rushed to the spot and launched a joint rescue operation. "JCBs and other machinery were pressed into service to locate the trapped workers at the earliest," the official said.

He said one injured labourer was rescued alive and shifted to hospital for treatment, while three others were recovered dead during the overnight operation.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADC) Jammu, Thakur Sher Singh, told KNO that three workers had died while one was rescued alive. "The rescue operation concluded at around 1:00 am and the injured labourer is undergoing treatment at the hospital and is stated to be stable," he said—(KNO)

Terrorist associate arrested in Pulwama

■ Arms, explosives seized

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pulwama, May 02: Security forces in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Saturday arrested a terrorist associate and recovered arms and explosives during a joint operation in Rajpora. An official that the operation was conducted by Pulwama Police in coordination with the Army's 44 Rashtriya Rifles and the CRPF's 183 Battalion, based on specific intelligence inputs.

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Revolutionizing Global Aerospace Transportation

With targeted investment and regulatory reform, the United States has the opportunity to catalyze a new global transportation capability – delivering transformative economic and strategic benefits within a decade. Now is the time for action!

George Nield and Oscar Garcia
SpaceX's Starship just before splashdown on Flight 10. The vehicle's discoloration is due in part to testing of its thermal protection system. Credit: SpaceX



SpaceX's Starship just before splashdown on Flight 10. The vehicle's discoloration is due in part to testing of its thermal protection system. Credit: SpaceX

Less than 50 years after the Wright brothers took to the air in 1903, the De Havilland Comet became the world's first commercial jet airliner, with the British Overseas Airways Corporation conducting a flight from London to Johannesburg, South Africa, on May 2, 1952. Later that decade, the Boeing 707, the Douglas DC-8, and similar aircraft were put into service. Although there have certainly been significant advancements since that time in aircraft safety, noise levels and fuel economy, the cruising speed of commercial airliners today, roughly 70 years later, has basically remained about the same, or even slightly decreased.

Given the recent advent of reusable launch vehicles, breakthrough developments in propulsion and additive manufacturing, rapid advances in artificial intelligence and continuing innovation by industry, we now have the opportunity to bring about dramatic changes in long-distance, high-speed aerospace transportation, both for people and for cargo. Surprisingly, that mission, sometimes referred to as suborbital point-to-point transportation through space, does not appear to be getting much attention from government or industry leaders. But having the ability to fly from one point on Earth to the opposite side of the planet in just an hour or two will be a major game changer for both national security and economic competitiveness. And U.S. leadership in developing and implementing such a capability will be imperative.

One example of the kind of vehicle that may make a difference is the SpaceX Starship. Even though SpaceX CEO Elon Musk originally envisioned the Starship as a way to travel to Mars and enable humanity to become a multi-planetary species, or to take NASA astronauts down to the lunar surface and back as part of the Artemis program, that same system would also have the ability to carry several hundred passengers or more than 100 metric tons of cargo on point-to-point missions, with flight times ranging from 30 minutes to an hour.

Potential customers could include:
Military and other national security organizations

Businesses needing rapid delivery of their products

Shipping, package delivery, and logistics companies

Government agencies and other groups involved in disaster relief, humanitarian crisis response and medical emergencies

Business travelers
Long-distance travelers from the general public

Because Starship is such a large vehicle, it may not be practical for operations near densely populated areas. But there are at

least a dozen other companies, both in the U.S. and in other countries, that are designing, developing and testing smaller systems that are intended to meet the need for long-distance, high-speed transportation. Some of those systems are designed to take off and land horizontally, and could use runways at existing spaceports, airports or military bases. Others are designed for vertical launch and landing, operating either from coastal or inland facilities, or from offshore platforms.

Successful systems will need to address three challenges:

The technical and logistical risks related to reusability and rapid-turnaround operations

The regulatory uncertainty caused by differences between how aircraft and launch vehicles are approved for flight

The lack of demonstrated market demand (as opposed to data from market surveys)

To overcome these challenges and position the U.S. to become the leader in suborbital point-to-point transportation through space will require bold decisions and timely action across government, industry, academia and the venture capital community. Specifically:

The U.S. should develop and implement a comprehensive, multi-faceted, "whole of nation" initiative focused on Global Rapid Transport. The overall objective would be to enable commercial suborbital and/or hypersonic cargo operations within five years and passenger operations within 10 years.

Executive Branch actions

An excellent way to communicate the importance and urgency of this initiative would be for the White House to issue an Executive Order declaring "Global Rapid Transport" as a national priority. He could also establish an Interagency Task Force, led by the Office of Science and Technology Policy, to oversee the effort. Members would include the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Department of Transportation, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and NASA. Finally, he could call for updates of the National Space Policy and the National Space Transportation Policy so that they reflect the importance of U.S. leadership in long-distance, high-speed aerospace transportation.

Congressional actions

Congress would be responsible for passing the necessary legislation, specially what we refer to as "The Global Rapid Transport Acceleration Act," and to provide the funding to implement the act's provisions. Key hardware provisions include a National X-Plane Program, a Global Rapid Transport Prize, and a Point-to-Point Commercial Services Program. The act would also implement a number of policy and regulatory actions.

In collaboration with NASA and the Space Force, DARPA would stand up a National X-Plane Program for reusable hypersonic and suborbital vehicles. The objective would be to demonstrate rapid turnaround, high-speed operations and reliability and maintainability. The Department of Transportation would create a Global

Rapid Transport Prize for repeatable, long-distance, high-speed cargo delivery. The prize would be administered through an experienced nonprofit entity like the XPRIZE Foundation. The goal would be to attract new entrants and accelerate innovation and flight demonstrations. Building on its recent successes in creating commercial markets, NASA would establish a high-speed Point-to-Point Commercial Services Program using public-private partnerships and modeled on the Commercial Orbital Transportation Services, Commercial Resupply Services, and Commercial Crew Program efforts. The goal would be to de-risk private investment and enable a viable commercial market.

On the regulatory front, the FAA would be tasked with modernizing the current framework by creating a new "High-Speed Global Transport Vehicle" category. This would simplify the existing regulatory structure and minimize confusion over whether high-speed, high-altitude vehicles are aircraft or launch vehicles. The FAA would also establish pre-approved flight corridors for vehicles involved in high-speed point-to-point transportation and outline a pathway towards passenger certification, consistent with public safety. Finally, the FAA would define a process to apply for funding in support of dual-use Airport/Spaceport infrastructure projects.

To facilitate the needed economic development, the Department of Commerce would oversee the National Institute of Standards and Technology in working with industry and standards development organizations

to develop widely accepted industry consensus standards that would minimize the regulatory burden on the high-speed aerospace transportation industry during global operations. The Department would also direct the U.S. Economic Development Administration to encourage private capital investment in the high-speed global transport industry through federal tax incentives and loan guarantees.

Because successful commercial operations will require enhanced international engagement and coordination, the Department of State would be directed to negotiate bilateral agreements that would facilitate licensing reciprocity and support the timely approval of international flights involving high-speed global transport vehicles. The Department would also engage with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs, and the International Civil Aviation Organization to harmonize standards and enable global routes for the high-speed global transport industry.

Implementation Timeline: With the adoption of the steps described here, the overall schedule could be significantly shorter than typical aerospace projects. The first two years would consist of program initiation, rulemaking, early ground and flight tests and demonstrations, and potentially even some prize awards. Years 3 to 5 could see the first commercial cargo operations. Passenger operations and global network expansion would take place during years 6 to 10.

Cost and Impact: Although the overall cost of this initiative could be on the order of \$100 billion over 10 years, the U.S. government share would be approximately \$20-30 billion over the same period. That would leave industry with the need to raise \$70-80 billion over a 10-year time frame. If successful, the end result would be the creation of a \$20-50 billion per year industry. There would also be a major strategic benefit: ensuring U.S. leadership in high-speed aerospace transportation operations and delivering a transformational capability in global supply chains and logistics.

With targeted investment and regulatory reform, the United States has the opportunity to catalyze a new global transportation capability – delivering transformative economic and strategic benefits within a decade. Now is the time for action!

George C. Nield is the president of Commercial Space Technologies, LLC, and chairman of the Global Spaceport Alliance. He served as the FAA Associate Administrator for commercial space transportation from 2008-2018.

Oscar S. Garcia is the executive chairman and CEO of Interflight Global Corporation and chairman of the High-Speed Flight (HSF) Group, focused on enabling high-speed aerospace transportation and spaceport-to-spaceport transportation.

From Smoking To Stigma: How Screen Stories Influence Health

Films are shaped by the societies that produce them, but they shape society in return. The next blockbuster may aim only to entertain. Even so, the story it tells may subtly influence how audiences think about their bodies, their habits and their health.

Vikram Niranjan

What people see on screen can shape what they do off it. When actors such as James Dean and Marlon Brando lit cigarettes in 1950s rebel films, smoking came to signify cool, defiance and desire for an entire generation.

Among 12- to 17-year-olds in the US, smoking initiation rose from about 20% in the early 1950s to roughly 35% to 40% by the mid-1960s, according to retrospective data from national surveys. Screen media do not simply reflect society. They can also influence how people think about health, risk and behaviour.

Film and television reach vast audiences, embedding health-related behaviours in dramatic storylines. Medical dramas such as Grey's Anatomy and ER have brought hospital life into living rooms around the world, shaping public ideas about medicine and, for some viewers, even inspiring careers in healthcare.

Sometimes films become accidental public health educators. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2011 film Contagion surged in popularity as viewers returned to it for insight into viral spread, quarantine and contact tracing. Its depiction of outbreak control closely mirrored real public health responses, reinforcing messages about handwashing

and physical distancing, as described in this report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the leading US national public health agency. When storytelling aligns with science, entertainment can improve public understanding of health risks.

But screen influence can also be harmful. Bollywood has long shaped popular culture across south Asia, and iconic films in the 1990s and early 2000s often presented smoking and drinking as stylish, casual and glamorous. These portrayals are not trivial. Research suggests that adolescents heavily exposed to tobacco imagery in Indian films are roughly twice as likely to experiment with tobacco as those with lower exposure.

Global evidence shows similar patterns. A systematic review found that adolescents who frequently see smoking in movies are significantly more likely to start smoking themselves. Despite growing awareness of the issue, tobacco imagery remains common: more than half of major box-office films released in 2024 included some form of tobacco depiction. Anti-smoking warnings shown before films can reduce pro-smoking attitudes slightly, but repeated on-screen smoking scenes often have a stronger effect.

Alcohol follows a similar pattern. Teen films

often frame drinking as harmless fun while downplaying addiction, injury and long-term health consequences. Studies link heavy exposure to these portrayals with earlier and riskier alcohol use among adolescents. More recently, streaming series have helped make casual vaping seem socially routine, reinforcing the idea that e-cigarettes are acceptable and relatively harmless.

Screen storytelling shapes more than substance use. Hollywood's beauty ideals, centred on thin bodies, flawless skin and effortless glamour, can distort body image, especially among teenage girls. A striking example occurred in Fiji after western television arrived in the mid-1990s. Within three years, self-induced vomiting to control weight had risen from 0% to 11.3% among adolescent girls, while the proportion showing high levels of disordered eating attitudes rose from 12.7% to 29.2%. In interviews, some girls explicitly linked their interest in weight loss to television characters.

Some portrayals carry even greater risks. Research shows that graphic depictions of suicide in films and television dramas can trigger short-term increases in similar behaviour among vulnerable viewers. These concerns have prompted growing collaboration between mental health experts and

entertainment producers to encourage safer storytelling.

Yet screen media can also improve health understanding. The World Health Organization has long supported entertainment-education, in which health messages are woven into dramas and soap operas. In parts of Africa and Asia, television narratives addressing HIV prevention, maternal health and malaria have increased clinic visits, testing uptake and awareness. In Ghana, culturally relevant health films have encouraged women to attend cervical cancer screening and antenatal care.

Some films have also helped shift public attitudes. In 1993, Philadelphia humanised the AIDS epidemic, helping reduce stigma and foster empathy towards people living with HIV. In India, the 2007 film Taare Zameen Par helped destigmatise dyslexia and encouraged schools to take learning difficulties more seriously. Hollywood blockbusters such as Outbreak have heightened awareness about infectious disease threats and preparedness.

Young audiences may be especially responsive to these messages. Children and teenagers spend hours consuming films and streaming content, often absorbing fictional lifestyles as cues about what is normal,

attractive or desirable.

Creative media can also support wellbeing in less obvious ways. In my own research exploring online dance sessions for people with pulmonary fibrosis, a chronic lung disease, participants exercised to familiar Hollywood songs and simple choreography. The programme improved mood and engagement while offering modest health benefits, showing that film, music and movement can be harnessed positively.

Film-makers may not think of themselves as health educators, yet their work can shape real-world people's beliefs and behaviours. A single scene can glamorise smoking or reckless drinking. It can also reduce stigma, encourage people to seek help, or make complex health information easier to understand.

Films are shaped by the societies that produce them, but they shape society in return. The next blockbuster may aim only to entertain. Even so, the story it tells may subtly influence how audiences think about their bodies, their habits and their health.

Vikram Niranjan is Assistant Professor in Public Health, School of Medicine, Health Research Institute, University of Limerick

Source: The Conversation

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

Govt committed to bridge developmental gaps: Sakeena Itoo

Inaugurates new primary school building at Zambalnard Kulgam

KT News Desk

KULGAM, MAY 02: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Saturday inaugurated a newly constructed primary school building at Zambalnard in DH Pora area of Kulgam district.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister, as per an official statement, emphasized that education remains a top priority for the government and efforts are being intensified to upgrade infrastructure, ensure quality teaching and improve overall learning outcomes in educational institutions across Jammu and Kashmir.

"Access to quality education is the cornerstone of a progressive society. This new school building will not only strengthen the educational framework in the area but also encourage higher enrolment and retention of students," the Minister said.

The Minister emphasized the government's commitment towards improving educational facilities and ensuring a conducive learning environment for students, especially in rural and far-flung areas. She highlighted that strengthening primary education remains a top priority for the administration.

The Minister also interacted



with locals, teachers and students, and assured that all necessary steps will be taken to further enhance educational standards and infrastructure in the district. She highlighted that this newly inaugurated school building, equipped with modern facilities, will provide a conducive learning environment for young students.

Later, the Minister also laid the foundation stone for the Zambalnard-Baidjahalan road, reaffirming the government's

commitment to holistic development and improved connectivity in rural areas.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister reiterated the government's focus on inclusive and equitable development. "We are committed to bridge developmental gaps and ensure that no area remains underserved. Projects like these reflect our resolve to bring governance closer to the people," she added.

She highlighted that this project is expected to significantly

improve connectivity, ease transportation challenges and boost local economic activities. She underlined that improved road infrastructure is essential for ensuring access to essential services like education, healthcare and others.

During the visit, the Minister also held a Public Darbar at Baidjahalan and interacted directly with local residents.

She listened to various public grievances and other issues on various aspects like education, healthcare, and infrastructure, assuring them timely redressal of genuine concerns.

The Minister directed the concerned officers to take prompt action on the issues highlighted by Public, highlighting on the importance of responsive and accountable governance. She reiterated that public outreach programs like these are vital for strengthening trust between the government and citizens.

"The government is firmly committed to citizen-centric governance. Public Darbars provide an important platform for people to voice their concerns and for the administration to respond effectively," she said.

Director School Education Kashmir, senior officers of district administration Kulgam, other officers and large number of locals were also present on the occasion.

District Admin Bandipora appeals public to participate in Census 2027



KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, MAY 02: District Administration Bandipora has appealed to the general public to actively participate in Census 2027 and make use of the Self-Enumeration facility for smooth and successful conduct of the nationwide census exercise.

It was informed that the House Listing and Housing Census Operations (HLO), constituting the first phase of Census 2027, shall be conducted across District Bandipora from June 1 to June 30, 2026.

Prior to this, a Self-Enumeration facility shall remain available from May 17 to May 31, 2026 through the official portal <https://se.census.gov.in>.

The Administration, as per an official statement, has urged the people of all villages, towns, and tehsils of the

district to ensure maximum participation in the census process and extend full co-operation to the designated census officials during the exercise.

The District Administration stated that Census 2027 is an important national exercise which serves as the foundation for planning and implementation of developmental programmes, welfare schemes, infrastructure development, and policy formulation.

Citizens have been advised to provide accurate information during the census and encourage family members, relatives, and neighbours to actively participate in the self-enumeration process.

The Administration has further appealed to support the awareness campaign and motivate people to participate positively in the census exercise.

DC Baramulla visits Uri, reviews Vibrant Village Programme

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, MAY 02: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, S.F Hamid Saturday visited Uri and chaired a comprehensive review meeting at Officers Club Uri regarding the implementation of the Vibrant Village Programme.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Uri, Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Baramulla, Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on the formulation and execution of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) under the programme. The DC stressed the importance of timely preparation and submission of DPRs, ensuring that all proposals are need-based, sustainable, and aligned with the objectives of holistic development in the area. He directed officers to maintain close coordination and adhere strictly to timelines for effective on-ground implementation.

The DC also reviewed the progress of various developmental works being undertaken in the area and emphasized expediting projects to ensure timely completion and maximum public benefit.

NASHA UKT J&K ABHIYAN

Anti-drug campaign intensified in Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, MAY 02: As part of the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan and the district-wide campaign spearheaded by Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, the Sub-Divisional Administration Zainapora, in coordination with Zainapora Police, intensified its IEC outreach through a large-scale vehicle sticker campaign across the sub-division.

The drive was conducted under the supervision of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate Zainapora, Bilal Ahmad with active participation from local police units.

Anti-drug awareness stickers, as per an official statement, were pasted on hundreds of passenger vehicles, commercial transport, and private cars across Zainapora market and adjoining areas.

The initiative aims to transform every vehicle into a mobile awareness platform, ensuring sustained visibility of the anti drug message at the grassroots level.

This effort aligns with the broader vision of taking the message of a drug-free society to every household.

The administration has emphasized that awareness, enforcement, and rehabilitation will continue simultaneously to dismantle the narcotics ecosystem.

As part of strict enforcement measures, illegal structures and assets linked to drug peddlers have been demolished and attached in previous

actions. Authorities reiterated a zero-tolerance policy, stating that action against illegal assets and encroachments connected to drug activities will continue without exception.

Over the past two years, more than 800 kanals of land previously under illicit cultivation have been reclaimed and converted into productive agricultural use, including oilseeds and paddy. This shift has significantly improved farmers' income and reduced dependence on narcotics-linked activities.

Enforcement efforts remain consistent, with nearly 60 FIRs registered under the NDPS Act in the last six months. Multiple properties of drug peddlers have been attached, and illegal constructions, including shops and encroachments on state land, have been removed.

Community participation continues to be a key pillar of the campaign. Ex PRI Members, religious leaders, teachers, and youth volunteers are actively contributing to awareness generation and behavioural change.

Victims of substance abuse are being connected with de-addiction services, counselling, and skill development programs to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration.

Complementary initiatives such as the "Promote Books, Not Drugs" donation drive and intensified inspections of medical shops by the Drug Control Department are also underway to reinforce preventive measures.

NMBA: DC Bandipora chairs 'Maa se Guftagu' at Bankoot

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, MAY 02: Continuing its sustained outreach under the 100-Day Mission Mode Campaign of the Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, the District Administration Bandipora Saturday organised another edition of "Maa se Guftagu" at Bankoot, Bandipora aimed at strengthening community participation in the fight against drug abuse.

The programme, as per an official statement, was attended by District Programme Officer, ICDS Bandipora, Yaar Ali Khan and witnessed active participation of women, members of Panchayat Samitis, Anganwadi workers, Self Help Groups (SHGs), NRLM representatives, teachers, and local residents, who also interacted with the Deputy Commissioner during the awareness programme.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, stressed the need for collective vigilance and community counselling to curb the growing menace of smoking and substance abuse.

The DC informed that strict directions had already been issued for banning the sale of cigarettes and tobacco products around schools and directed Principal High School Bankoot to ensure proper implementation of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA).



Highlighting the harmful effects of smoking, the DC urged participants to counsel their family members and neighbours about the dangers associated with smoking and passive smoking. She said that addiction not only destroys the health and future of an individual but also affects the entire family and society.

The DC further noted that women too are increasingly becoming victims of substance abuse and, in some instances, are found involved in peddling activities. She called upon women to play a proactive role in safeguarding families and communities from the drug menace.

Emphasising parental responsibility, the DC advised

parents to remain vigilant about behavioural changes in their children and identify early symptoms of substance abuse. She urged families not to remain silent spectators and instead act as well-wishers by guiding and supporting affected individuals.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC also cautioned youth against falling prey to addiction, and appealed to the youth not to waste their lives and potential in substance abuse.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge by participants to strengthen awareness efforts and continue community-based interventions for a drug-free society under the Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan

15 illegal structures on state land linked to NDPS Act violators demolished at Waghama

District Admin Anantnag intensifies crackdown on drug peddlers



KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, MAY 02: Intensifying the crackdown and punitive action against Drug Peddlers and NDPS Act violators under the 100 Day intensified Nasha Mukta J&K Campaign, the District Administration Anantnag, in coordination with the Police department, Saturday carried out a significant demolition drive at Waghama, Bijbehara.

During the joint operation, revenue authorities, as per an official statement, supported by a police team demolished illegal structures including 15 shops raised on State and Kahcharai land falling under Khasra No. 2494 (min) and 2495 (min) in Estate Waghama.

The demolished structures were found to be linked with persons involved in cases under the NDPS Act. The revenue

department also ensured the retrieval of the encroached State and Kahcharai land through this joint action.

Meanwhile, the District Administration has reiterated its firm commitment to maintaining a zero-tolerance policy against drug peddlers, narcotics networks, and unlawful encroachments. Officials stated that such sustained actions will continue under the 100 Day Campaign with the focus to break supply chain of drugs in the district.

Dismantling the illegal structures raised by the drug peddlers and persons involved in narcotics trade and taking strict punitive action against them is an important facet of this campaign, they emphasized.

The administration has also warned that strict action will be taken against anyone found involved in similar illegal activities in the future.

Awareness activities, poster exhibitions, Yoga sessions held across Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, MAY 02: As part of the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, multiple awareness and engagement activities were organized across district Shopian Saturday, to sensitize youth and the general public against drug abuse and promote a healthy lifestyle.

A series of poster exhibitions were conducted in various schools and Anganwadi Centres of the district.

Students actively participated by showcasing creative posters highlighting the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of making positive life choices.

These exhibitions, as per an official statement, served as



an effective medium to spread awareness and encourage community participation in the anti-drug movement.

In continuation of the campaign, a yoga session was organized at PS School Wachi, Shopian, aimed at promoting

physical fitness, mental well-being, and discipline among youth. Around 50 participants took part in the session.

The session emphasized the role of yoga in reducing stress, enhancing concentration, and building self-confidence. The

activity was conducted by Yoga Instructor, Qulsooma Akbar.

Students expressed enthusiasm and committed to adopting yoga in their daily routine.

Meanwhile, the Horticulture Department Shopian conducted a series of awareness activities under



Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan. These included pledge taking ceremonies in different nurseries across the district, awareness campaigns at multiple locations, and distribution of posters carrying the message "Say No to Drugs, Invest Your Energy in Horticulture

Sector" in village Aglar Chirat.

Sports activities under the campaign included organisation of multiple cricket matches under the ongoing cosco tournament.

The events served as a platform to engage youth in positive pursuits while spreading

awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse and reinforcing the message of a healthy, disciplined, and drug free society.

Posters were also pasted at many villages as part of the ongoing awareness drive, reinforcing the message of a drug free society.

Adoption of technologies like Cell Broadcast, CAP to strengthen disaster preparedness: Shah



PTI

New Delhi, May 02: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said adoption of technologies like Cell Broadcast and CAP will significantly strengthen disaster preparedness, improve governance, and ensure timely and effective outreach to every citizen. Shah said this while conveying his best wishes on the launch of the cell broadcast alert system that would warn citizens about emergency and natural disasters in their areas, according to a statement issued by the government.

Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the system on Saturday. "The adoption of advanced communication technologies like Cell Broadcast and CAP will significantly strengthen disaster preparedness, improve governance and ensure timely, effective outreach to every citizen," Shah was quoted as saying in the statement.

The "swadeshi" system has been designed to ensure rapid and effective dissemination of alerts to large populations during time-critical situations, such as tsunamis, earthquakes, lightning strikes and man-made

emergencies including gas leaks and chemical hazards, the statement said.

"This system has been successfully deployed by NDMA across 36 states/UTs and connected to all 5 telecom operators providing mobile services in the country," it added.

The alert system was sent across the network of all telecom operators in the country, except in poll-bound states.

"Union Minister for Communications and Development of North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya Scindia, today launched the Cell Broadcast Alert System, developed indigenously by C-DOT in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), under the guidance of Home Minister Amit Shah," the statement said.

The system is based on the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) as recommended by the International Telecommunication Union, a United Nations agency.

It is currently operational across all 36 states and Union territories of India and delivers disaster- and emergency-related alerts via text messages to mobile-phone users within the geo-targeted areas.

Spirit Airlines goes out of business after 34 years, ending operations immediately

AP

West Pam Beach (US), May 02: Spirit Airlines, an impish upstart that shook the industry with its irreverent ads and deep discount fares, announced Saturday that it has gone out of business after 34 years.

The ultralow cost airline that once operated hundreds of daily flights on its bright yellow planes and employed about 17,000 people said it had "started an orderly wind-down of our operations, effective immediately."

The airline said on its website that all flights have been canceled and customer service is no longer available. Some passengers arrived Saturday for flights and were stunned to find them canceled, while workers learned overnight they were out of a job.

"We are proud of the impact of our ultra-low-cost model on the industry over the last 34 years and had hoped to serve our guests for many years to come," Spirit's announcement said.

US Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said Saturday that Spirit had a reserve fund set up for customers who bought directly from the airline to get refunds. People who bought from third-party vendors like travel agents would have to seek refunds from them. He had a stark message for people flying with Spirit.

"If you have a flight scheduled with Spirit Airlines, don't show up at the airport.



There will be no one here to assist you," Duffy said.

He said United, Delta, JetBlue and Southwest were offering \$200 one-way flights for people who had Spirit confirmation numbers and proof of purchase for a limited time. Other airlines would also help Spirit employees who might be stranded, as well as offering them a preferential application process as they look for work.

Spirit said in a statement it was working to get more than 1,300 crew to their home bases and that the final Spirit flight landed at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport from Detroit Metropolitan Airport.

The company advised customers that they could expect refunds but there would be no help in booking travel on other airlines.

The Trump administration had considered a government bailout for the cash-strapped business to keep it from going under, but a deal was not reached. Of the potential

bailout, Duffy said Saturday "we often times don't have half a billion dollars laying around."

President Donald Trump had floated the idea of a bailout last week after the airline found itself in bankruptcy proceedings for the second time in less than two years with jet fuel prices soaring because of the Iran war.

"They got you there" Five Spirit flights were still showing as "on time" on Saturday morning on the departure board in Atlanta. A trickle of passengers who hadn't heard the news were still showing up.

"What!?" exclaimed Taylor Nantang as she, her husband and four children arrived for a Saturday afternoon Spirit flight from Atlanta to Miami for a spur-of-the-moment vacation. The family had driven down from Tennessee to the Atlanta airport.

"So the whole airline at every airport is out of business?" asked Nantang. "Oh my, that's crazy."

Govt appoints R Balasubramaniam, Joram Aniya as full-time members of NITI Aayog

PTI

New Delhi, May 02: The Centre on Saturday appointed academician Joram Aniya and scholar-author R Balasubramaniam as full-time members of the Niti Aayog, taking the total number of such members in the government think tank to seven, along with a vice-chairman. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the chairman of the Niti Aayog.

"In continuation of the Cabinet Secretariat's notification dated 24.04.2026, the prime minister has approved the appointment of the following persons as full-time members of the NITI Aayog with effect from the date of assumption of charge and until further orders, on the same terms and conditions as are applicable to full-time members: (i) Dr R Balasubramaniam; (ii) Dr Joram Aniya," a notification issued by the Cabinet Secretariat said.

On April 24, while reconstituting the Niti Aayog, the government appointed Ashok Kumar Lahiri as its vice-chairman and economist K V Raju, AIIMS Director M Srinivas, Secretary in the Department of Science and Technology, Abhay Karandikar, scientist Gobardhan Das and former Cabinet secretary Rajiv Gauba as full-time members.

Wishing the new appointees, Prime Minister Modi said in a post on X, "Congratulations to Dr R. Balasubramaniam Ji and Dr Joram Aniya Ji on being appointed as full-time members of NITI Aayog. Their

rich experience and deep understanding of various issues will greatly strengthen policy making.

"I am confident their contributions will help drive innovation and growth across sectors. Wishing them a very productive and impactful tenure ahead."

Sources said Aniya's inclusion in the government think tank marked a historic moment, bringing an eminent intellectual voice from Arunachal Pradesh to the highest level of national policymaking.

An accomplished academician, associate professor, and member of the Arunachal Pradesh Private Educational Regulatory Commission, Aniya has more than 18 years of experience in teaching, research, and public policy engagement.

Notably, she is the first woman from the Nyishi community to earn a PhD, and the first in Hindi language in the state, with significant contributions to literature, culture and indigenous knowledge systems.

She has authored and edited many books on Nyishi literature and culture, along with numerous research publications.

Scholar-author Balasubramaniam is a public policy expert and development activist. A qualified physician, he is the founder of the Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM) and the Grassroots Research and Advocacy Movement (GRAAM).

Balasubramaniam has a master's degree in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University.

Firing at Salman Khan's house was attempt to kill him: Actor's bodyguard tells court

PTI

Mumbai, May 02: The personal bodyguard of Bollywood actor Salman Khan has told a special court here that the April 2024 shooting incident at the superstar's residence in Mumbai was an attempt to kill him.

The trial in the case began last month with the deposition of the bodyguard as the first witness.

On April 14, 2024, two motorcycle-borne men opened fire outside Khan's Bandra residence, Galaxy Apartments.

Recounting the incident, the bodyguard, also the complainant in the case, last month testified that he reported for his regular night shift at 7 pm on April 13, 2024.

He told the court that the actor's security at that time had been heightened due to threats from gangster Lawrence Bishnoi.

As per his deposition, at around 4 am on April 14, the security team heard sounds resembling firecrackers.

"I looked at the CCTV screen. I saw that there were two persons on a bike, wearing helmets and firing towards the building," the witness stated.

He further told the court the assailants fired four to five times.

"Therefore, I and other guards present there, immediately went outside from the main gate," the witness said.

He added that both the motorcyclists fled to the right side towards "I Love Bandra" point and from there they went towards Mehboob Studios Road.

The prosecution, represented by special public prosecutor Mahesh Mule, presented CCTV footage in the court, which showed a motorcycle arriving in front of the gate.

The witness identified the details from the video.

The bodyguard clarified that at the time of the attack, Khan was in his bedroom on the first floor.

He asserted that "the firing was an attempt to kill the actor".

During his cross-examination, the witness, while

responding to a question of defence advocate Viral Babar, confirmed that he was in the security cabin when he heard the noise.

He, however, had no "personal knowledge" of the specific threats issued to the actor, the bodyguard said, while responding to another query.

Another witness, a police guard, testified before the court on Saturday. He said he was sitting in the lobby and did not see the incident and only saw the bullet shells near the spot.

Bike-borne individuals-Vicky Gupta and Sagar Pal had carried out the firing incident outside Salman's Galaxy Apartment.

As per police, Mohammed Rafiq Sardar Chaudhari had reced Galaxy Apartments two days before the firing, had shot a video of the area and sent it to Anmol Bishnoi, a wanted accused in the case.

Gupta and Pal, along with other accused Sonukumar Bishnoi, Mohd Rafiq Choudhary and Harpal Singh are currently in judicial custody.

India's new envoy to China arrives in Shanghai

PTI

Beijing/Shanghai, May 02: India's new Ambassador to China Vikram Doraiswami arrived in Shanghai on Saturday to take up his posting amid expectations that his appointment will add momentum to the current normalisation process of Sino-India relations.

He was received at the airport by the Indian Consul General in Shanghai Pratik Mathur and other officials.

Doraiswami, a 1992-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, is due to arrive in Beijing on Sunday.

In Beijing, the 56-year-old diplomat succeeds Pradeep Kumar Rawat.

Before his posting to Beijing, Doraiswami served as India's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

His appointment in March this year evoked considerable interest in the Chinese official media and the Chinese strategic community.

Welcoming Doraiswami's appointment, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian



told a media briefing on March 20 that the new Indian envoy has chosen a Chinese name for himself: Wei Jiameng. "China welcomes India's new ambassador to China Wei Jiameng, and stands ready to provide every convenience for him to take up his post in China," Lin said.

According to Chinese scholars, the loose translation of the name in Mandarin is Wei, a common Chinese surname

that phonetically matches "Vi" in Vikram. Long ago, Wei was a powerful state during the Warring States period in Chinese history.

Jia means auspicious or praiseworthy, and Meng means alliance, broadly meaning an auspicious or praiseworthy ally, according to Chinese scholars.

All put together, it can mean "one who forms an excellent alliance", which carries diplomatic significance in the present

context of India-China relations, one Chinese scholar said.

Lin said China hopes that after assuming his duties, Doraiswami will make positive contributions to the sustained improvement and development of China-India ties.

Doraiswami, a Mandarin speaker, had served at both the Hong Kong and Beijing diplomatic missions early in his career.

He was posted as Third Secretary in Hong Kong, where he earned an elective diploma in Chinese from the New Asia Yale-in-Asia Language School before moving to Beijing in September 1996 for a four-year tenure.

Doraiswami's appointment comes amid efforts by India and China to rebuild relations that came under severe strain following the military standoff in eastern Ladakh in April 2020, which stretched on for four years.

The two countries are currently in the process of normalising relations on all fronts, including the resumption of visas and direct flight services.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Money generated

demands collective action," he said.

The LG said the administration has adopted a three-pronged strategy targeting supply chains, expanding awareness at the grassroots and ensuring treatment and rehabilitation of addicts.

LG Sinha said a 100-day intensified campaign launched across J&K has witnessed large-scale public participation, with lakhs of people, including youth, women, religious leaders, civil society members and political groups, joining the movement.

On enforcement, he said strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been put in place, warning that those involved in drug trafficking will face stringent action under the NDPS Act. Measures include cancellation of driving licences, seizure of vehicles, freezing of bank accounts, attachment of properties and recommendations for passport cancellation.

"Lookout notices are being issued against absconders and the entire network is being targeted to break the supply chain," he added.

The LG also said authorities are monitoring de-addiction and rehabilitation centres to ensure proper facilities, warning that non-compliant centres will face closure. He added that hospitals have been directed to strengthen OPD and IPD services for addiction treatment.

Pertinently, LG Sinha launched a 100-day campaign in J&K on April 11 this year from MA Stadium in Jammu. So far, foot marches have taken place in eight districts of Jammu division. "I feel that in 21 days, its widespread impact is visible. Roughly, more than 50-60 lakh people have participated in various campaigns so far. There has also been a significant increase in the registration of cases in both Jammu and

Kashmir divisions, and these actions are also being carried out very effectively," he said.

Stressing awareness, LG Sinha said the campaign is being taken to every district, village and household, encouraging families to come forward and seek help without stigma.

As part of the campaign, the LG would lead a foot march to Lal Chowk on Sunday from the astroturf football stadium at TRC Chowk in Srinagar. "I urge people from all sections of society to participate in large numbers and make this campaign a success," he said.

Calling it a "people's movement," the LG urged media, community leaders and citizens to actively contribute. "When the strength of society, enforcement of law and administrative resolve come together, we can decisively defeat this menace," he said. (KNO)

Srinagar decked up,

The traffic department has rolled out a detailed mobility plan, including diversions, designated parking zones, and restricted entry for heavy vehicles in certain areas. Commuters have been advised to plan their travel in advance and adhere to official advisories to avoid inconvenience.

Health services have been put on high alert, with ambulances, mobile medical units, and healthcare personnel stationed at regular intervals. Fire and emergency services, along with disaster response teams, will remain on standby throughout the duration of the march.

Municipal teams have carried out extensive cleanliness drives, road repairs, and installation of public facilities such as drinking water stations and mobile toilets. Volunteers and local organisations have been engaged to assist authorities in crowd facilitation and awareness

efforts.

Prominent locations, including Lal Chowk and adjoining routes, have been adorned with banners and hoardings carrying anti-drug messages, giving the city a campaign-like atmosphere ahead of the event.

Officials added that educational institutions, sports bodies, and youth clubs have been mobilised to ensure wide participation, turning the Padyatra into a people's movement against the drug menace.

"The administration has urged citizens to actively take part in the march and contribute towards building a drug-free society. Come, join and walk with us in tomorrow's Padyatra," an official appealed, describing the initiative as a united step towards safeguarding the future of Kashmir's youth. (KNO)

First 15 days:

poppy crops is also in full swing. Financial investigations resulted in the attachment of 16 movable properties worth 78,32,736 and 17 immovable properties valued at 9,13,83,039. Surveillance remains active on 52 kingpins and 2,898 drug peddlers across the UT," sources said.

"Public outreach has been a key pillar of the campaign, with 994 awareness programmes conducted, reaching thousands of participants. Under the capacity-building initiatives police has trained about 1500 Investigating Officers and 15 Prosecutors to strengthen enforcement and prosecution.

Regulatory enforcement included inspections of 2,274 establishments, leading to corrective actions. 88 driving licences of those involved in drug trade were cancelled, while 19 vehicle registrations were also cancelled. Legal

actions included challenging 21 bail orders and 1 acquittal order," sources added. (KNO)

CM Omar condoles,

were carrying out repair work on a retaining wall near the bridge.

Leh Buddha relics

Buddha -- ancient sacred remains and associated objects linked to the lord discovered at Piprahwa, near the Nepal border in the present-day Uttar Pradesh -- arrived in Leh on Wednesday.

Hailstorms damage

injury and branch breakage. It also recommended pruning of damaged branches using clean tools, followed by application of protective pastes on cut surfaces to prevent pathogen entry. Partially uprooted trees should be repositioned and supported, it said.

Highlighting the risk of disease after hail injury, SKUAST-Kashmir advised growers to apply protective fungicide sprays once weather conditions improve. Specific formulations were suggested for apple at the fruitlet stage, as well as for other fruit crops such as cherry, peach, plum, apricot, grapes and pear, and for vegetables.

The advisory also recommended a follow-up nutritional spray, including urea solution after a few days, to promote recovery and new growth, along with micronutrient sprays later to aid tissue repair.

Farmers were advised to carry out spraying during cool and dry periods, avoid water stagnation, and maintain orchard sanitation

by removing fallen leaves, fruits and twigs to reduce disease spread. (KNO)

J&K braces

Jammu division, Jammu city recorded 36.0°C, close to normal, while Katra registered 33.0°C and Banihal 25.8°C. Minimum temperatures also stayed slightly above normal at most stations.

Meanwhile, traffic on the Doda-Kishtwar road was suspended following a landslide at Gatsoo near Pul Doda early Saturday, blocking the route completely, officials said. (KNO)

HM Shah discussed

, around 500 saplings, including Bamboo, Amaltas, Gulmohar, Jacaranda, Bougainvillea, Bargad, Pipal and Imli, have been planted in Leh on an experimental basis.

He stated that, as directed by the Home Minister, these efforts will be intensified, with a target to create at least 100 large water bodies in the next year and increase forest cover in Ladakh from less than 1 percent to 5 percent within two years. (KNO)

Operation Sindoor

personnel and noted artists joining it. Singh highlighted that valour and art are often viewed as opposites, but they, in fact, complement each other.

The defence minister underlined that the marching songs by military bands unify soldiers, with music transforming individual identity into collective strength.

This sentiment, he said, is deeply embedded in the ethos of the defence forces.

India should create strategic buffers to navigate 'most difficult' energy shock: CEA Nageswaran

PTI

New Delhi, May 2: Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran on Saturday said India needs to create strategic buffers in the face of the "most difficult" energy shock that the country is facing amid the West Asia crisis.

Nageswaran also said the rising prices of fertiliser and petroleum products globally due to the crisis will make it challenging to achieve the 4.3 per cent fiscal deficit target for the current fiscal, while below normal monsoon and pass-through of higher energy prices could lead to "potential inflation spike".

He also said India has employment challenge emanating from AI, and there is a need to ensure that IT sector becomes more competitive and not lose jobs to AI, and instead create jobs that use AI within the IT sector or in other services.

Speaking at the ICPP Growth Conference organised by the Ashoka University, Nageswaran said the current account deficit (CAD) in the current fiscal could rise to over 2 per cent of GDP, from less than 1 per cent in FY'26.



"The... priority for us is to create strategic buffers. This energy shock is the most difficult one compared to any other previous energy shock in terms of energy lost as a percentage of total global energy supply, not just oil, including gas.

"And we also need to use this occasion to think about other areas where we are vulnerable in terms of import dependence, nickel, tin, and copper. We need to build strategic buffers if we have to make a shot at manufacturing and becoming indispensable," Nageswaran said.

Since the beginning of the war in West Asia on February 28, crude oil prices soared to a four-year high of USD 126 per barrel on Thursday, from about

USD 73 level before the war. Stating that geopolitics will compel policymakers to be nimble and flexible and shed old model of thinking, Nageswaran said India is better prepared than many other countries to deal with the crisis because of the fiscal leeway that the country has due to lowering of fiscal deficit ratio to 4.4 per cent of GDP in FY'26.

Nageswaran said the West Asia conflict is more of a price shock than supply shock for India as the government is managing the supply side deftly.

"This particular conflict, which is going to be on a low simmer or a high flame situation, whatever it is, it is going to be there with us in some form or

the other because the military conflict may be over, but the strategic conflict is well and truly alive. It will be so for some time," Nageswaran said.

He said the conflict has four channels of shock: price and supply shock, trade impact, sticky logistics costs and remittance shock.

India imports 60 per cent of its LPG usage and of that, 90 per cent flows through the now closed Strait of Hormuz.

Nageswaran said the pass-through of high global energy prices would have to be a "balancing act". He said some pass-through is already happening in commercial LPG, and the levy of export duty on diesel and ATF.

The government has cut excise duty on petrol and diesel to shield customers from the impact of the rise in petroleum prices. "We are coming around to arriving at a certain modus vivendi with respect to burden-sharing between the fiscal policy side, inflation, households and the oil marketing companies. So it has to be a balancing act," Nageswaran said.

Finance Ministry notifies 100 pc FDI in insurance sector, amends FEMA Rules

PTI

New Delhi, May 2: The Finance Ministry on Saturday notified 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the insurance sector under the automatic route.

While 100 per cent foreign investment will be allowed in insurance companies and intermediaries, including brokers, under the automatic route, the cap is 20 per cent for Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), said the Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) (Second Amendment) Rules, 2026.

The Parliament had passed the Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (amendment of insurance laws) Bill, 2025, in December, 2025, paving the way for hiking the FDI cap in the insurance sector to 100 per cent under the automatic route, from 74 per cent earlier.

Subsequently, after the President's assent, the Bill became law.

Inauguration of holy relics of Buddha in Leh offers opportunity to pay respects: PM

PTI

New Delhi, May 2: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the 'Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of the Tathagata' in Leh, and said it offers a valuable opportunity for people from across Ladakh to pay their respects.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday inaugurated a sacred holy relics exposition of Tathagata Buddha and the 2569th Buddha Purnima celebrations in Leh during his two-day visit to Ladakh.

"It is a matter of immense delight that yesterday, on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, the 'Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of the Tathagata' was inaugurated in Leh," PM Modi



said in a post on 'X'. The prime minister said these revered relics are linked to the Piprahwa Stupa in Kapilavastu and were excavated in the closing years of the nineteenth century. They embody the enduring teachings of Lord Buddha, he said.

PM Modi said this exposition will continue until May 14 and in the coming days, it will also travel to Zanskar.

"It offers a valuable

opportunity for people from across Ladakh to pay their respects. It will also boost spiritual and cultural tourism in Ladakh," he said.

The revered Piprahwa relics of Tathagata Buddha -- ancient sacred remains and associated objects linked to the lord discovered at Piprahwa, near the Nepal border in the present-day Uttar Pradesh -- arrived in Leh on Wednesday.

EC can choose counting personnel, no further order needed: SC on TMC plea

PTI

New Delhi, May 2: The Supreme Court on Saturday said no further order was necessary on the TMC's plea challenging the Calcutta High Court's dismissal of its petition against an Election Commission circular on the deployment of central government personnel for vote counting in West Bengal.

A special bench of Justices P S Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi said the Election Commission can choose the counting personnel, and its April 13 circular, which provides for deployment of state government employees as well, cannot be said to be incorrect. The poll body said the apprehensions of Trinamool Congress (TMC) of any wrongdoing is misplaced, as the circular very clearly states that there will be a mix of central and state government employees.

The Election Commission assured the court that the circular would be implemented in letter and spirit, and there would be state government employees also during the counting of votes on May 4.

At the outset, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the TMC, said the circular was dated April 13, but they came to know about it on April 29. He said there are four issues: One, the circular appointing Central employees was issued to DEOs on April 13, but came to their knowledge only on April 29;



Two, the Election Commission says it has apprehensions of irregularity, despite having a Central nominee in the counting process; Three, the poll body already has a Central government officer at each counting table in the form of a micro observer, and four, the commission has not appointed state nominees even though the circular provides so. Sibal submitted that the Chief Electoral Officer's communication states that there are apprehensions expressed from various quarters regarding possible irregularities in counting.

"That is like pointing a finger at the state government..." Sibal said, adding, "There must be some data. Where is (the proof of) the apprehension (raised) from each booth? They have not disclosed this. And why not tell us that they are going to have a Central government nominee?"

SC refusal to intervene message against bid to cast doubt on poll process: BJP

PTI

Kolkata, May 2: Senior BJP leader Amit Malviya on Saturday said the Supreme Court's refusal to intervene into the EC's order on deployment of central government personnel for vote counting in West Bengal is a "clear message" against attempts to cast doubt on the electoral process.

The apex court on Saturday said no further order was necessary on the TMC's plea challenging the Calcutta High Court's dismissal of its petition against an Election Commission circular on the deployment of central government personnel for vote counting in West Bengal. The BJP leader, in a social media post, said, "In yet another legal setback, the Supreme Court has refused to intervene. The Trinamool Congress had approached the court challenging the exclusion of state government employees from vote-counting supervisor duties, and had sought an urgent hearing." "The refusal to entertain this plea underscores a clear message -- attempts to influence or cast doubt over the integrity of the counting process will not find easy validation.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
IRRIGATION DIVISION ANANTNAG

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
Notice Inviting short term E-Tenders-NIT No.03 of 2026-27

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K U.T, e-tenders on percentage basis are invited in Single cover system from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K.U.T Govt. for the following works:-

S. NO.	NAME OF WORK	Estt Cost (Rs in lacs)	Earnest Money (EMD) Rs	Time for completion	Class of Contract	Cost of Tender document (Rs)	Major Head of Account	Tender opening authority
1	Providing of men, Machinery, materials for execution of emergent works at site as per requirement due to breaches/ floods / calamities/ encroachment removal etc of Irrigation sub Division Anantnag (Minor Irrigation) M&R 2702 for the F.Y 2026-27 Phase 2nd.	5.00	15000/=	FY 2026-27	DEE	300/-	2702 M&R	Ex. Engineer

The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (BOQ) set to terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from :-

S. NO.	Event	Date	Time
1	Publishing date	02.05.2027	06.00 PM
2	Download Date Starts	02.05.2027	06.00 PM
3	BID Submission Date Starts	02.05.2027	06.00 PM
4	BID Submission Date Ends	08.05.2027	06.00 PM
5	Date of opening of tenders	09.05.2027	10:00 AM

The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website www.jktenders.gov.in and The bids uploaded shall be opened online on above mentioned date by the Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Anantnag in presence of the bidders who may wish to be present. In case of holiday or office happening to be closed on the basis of opening of the bid, the same will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies (on 100dpi) of all necessary documents like Cost of Tender document in the form of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Anantnag / latest GST clearance certificate (GSTR-3B and GSTR-1)/Registration card duly renewed with Verification/BID Security in the form of EMD as per above. And Additional performance security as per below (2). (EMD CDR and Additional Performance Security CDR shall be deposited separately for each item of work). The date of CDR/FDR/BG should be between the date of start of bid and bid submission end date. After opening of tenders online, the 1st lowest bidder shall be asked to deposit the CDR/FDR/additional performance security pledged to tender receiving authority and other documents in original. The CDR/ FDR / additional performance security and other documents in original shall be deposited within two days positively after opening of tenders. The EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR of the successful bidder will be retained as performance security deposit till expiry of defect liability period, whereas the EMD of unsuccessful bidders will be returned latest by 30 days after award of the contract. The check list of documents for cover 1st is attached with the NIT & bidders are advised to recheck the uploaded documents as per the Check list.
- Additional Performance Security is to be uploaded by the bidder at the time of bid submission in the shape of CDR/FDR/ BG as per the Circular issued by the Finance Department vide No.FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 dated 08-08-2025 if the bid percentage is below 10%. The additional performance guarantee/security shall be treated as a part of performance security.
- The CDR/APS/FDR/Security Deposit uploaded during tendering shall be properly verified from the issuing bank before awarding the contract. Furthermore if at any stage the CDR/APS/FDR/Security Deposit are found to be false/ forged/fraudulent, action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against the contractor as laid down in Procurement of Manual of works GFR 2017 besides blacklisting the contractor from tendering process.
- If the successful bidder is seriously unbalanced or front loaded in the opinion of the Tender Opening Committee. The Tender opening Committee may in such cases seek written clarifications from the bidder, including detailed price analyses of its bid price in relation to scope, schedule, resources mobilization, allocation of risks and responsibilities and any other requirements of the bid's documents besides Additional Performance Security as per above breakup. If, after evaluating the price analyses, procuring entity determines that the bidder has substantially failed to demonstrate its capability to deliver the contract at the offered price, the Tender Opening Committee may reject the bid/proposal. A bid which contains several items in Bill of Quantities which are unrealistically priced low and which cannot be substantiated satisfactorily by the bidder may be rejected as non-responsive.
- Contractor / Bidder who fails to submit the CDR/FDR / Treasury Challan as required, their EMD will be forfeited besides they will be barred/prohibited from participating in the Tendering process for a period of Six Months (06 Months) in the first instance. Their online uploaded tenders will not be considered for the said period.
- Contractor who shall be allotted the work has to start the work within the stipulated time period after the date of allotment as the work is of very important nature.
- The department shall not be responsible for delay in online submission of bids due to any reason what so ever.
- The tenders shall remain valid for 90 days. (Ninety Days)
- As soon as the contract is fixed with the successful bidder, he has to enter into an agreement with the department.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-
 - Any bidder withdraws his bid during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in terms & condition of the bid.
 - The successful bidder fails to execute an agreement with the department within 10 days after fixation of contract.
- The tender opening authority reserves the right to accept/reject the bid without assigning any reason thereof.
- The work is to be completed within the time limit specified in the NIT. In case of delay in completion of work due to contractors fault beyond stipulated time of completion the contractor shall be liable to pay liquidated damages at the rate of 0.5 % of the contract value (half percent) per week of delay. However, such liquidated damages shall not exceed 10% of the total contract value of the item, or a part thereof, delayed.
- No price escalation will be paid for completion of the work within stipulated time or extended date of completion due to any reason whatsoever.
- Retention money/Security deposit shall be 10% of the contract value. The Security Deposit is to be recovered at the rate of 10% of bill amount from Running Account Bills and shall be released after completion of the defect liability period i.e.; 06 months after the issuance of completion certificate by the Engineer-in-Charge.
- All items of works shall conform to Specifications as per Relevant IS codes and as directed by the Engineer-in-Charge.
- The contractor shall be solely responsible for carrying out the mandatory tests required or as decided by Engineer-in-charge for the quality control at his own costs. The cost of conducting all tests shall be borne by the contractor and shall be deemed to have been included in the quoted percentage rate tendered. Nothing extra shall be payable on this account.
- In case of tie for the position of 1st lowest bidder the bids should be out rightly rejected and the work shall be put to fresh tenders 18. The date of start of work shall be reckoned within one week from the date of issuance of LOI/Contract allotment as the case may be.
- The Contract shall be terminated in case contractor fails to start /complete the work, within the stipulated time period, his Earnest Money/Performance Security/Additional performance deposit shall be forfeited after termination of the contract. Besides, defaulting contractor shall be barred/ Prohibited from taking part in future tendering process in Irrigation Department at least for Six Months
- The employer may terminate the contract if the contractor causes a fundamental breach of the contract. The fundamental breach of contract will include:-
 - Continuous stoppage of Work for a period of 07 days without authorization of Engineer in-charge.
 - The contractor fails to start /complete the work, within the stipulated time period.

Pursuant to the process of termination of defaulted contract, the employer reserves the right to invite fresh tender for the balance work at the risk and cost of defaulter contractor. Besides, his Performance Security/Retention Money shall be forfeited after termination of the contract and defaulting contractor shall be debarred from taking works in Irrigation Department at least for one year.

- Any kind of damage which may occur to any work during the course of execution due to torrential rains/heavy snow fall/cyclone/ floods etc. shall be the responsibility of the bidder till the work is finally handed-over to the Department.
- The taxes viz. Income tax, GST & Cess shall be deducted from the bidders' claims as admissible under rules.
- The bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities). In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually. The BOQ downloaded should be used for filling percentage rate inclusive of all taxes & it should be saved with the same name as it contains.
- Any typographical error in respect of units mismatch with the SSR, if any, may be taken as what is recorded in SSR and is binding upon the Contractor.
- Bidders shall give undertaking towards the submission of authentic information/documents. All the participating bidders should be fully cognizant that if the documents uploaded/submitted with the bid are found to be fake/not genuine/forged/tempered, they will be blacklisted from participating in this division/department for a period as decided by higher authorities and the bidder to whom the contract is awarded on the basis of uploaded/submitted documents, are later discovered to be fake/not genuine/forged/tempered, the contract will be cancelled and the performance security deposit and work done claim for the said work being forfeited. Furthermore no clarification/ claim shall be entertained after opening the tender.
- Instructions to Bidders:-
 - Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual" on website www.jktenders.gov.in in acquait bid submission process.
 - To participate in bidding process bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per information Technology Act 2000
 - Bidders can get Digital Signature certificate from approved vendors.
 - The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No financial bids will be accepted in Physical form.
 - Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents like PAN/TIN/ E-Chalan/ Tenderers Address Format / Registration Card fully renewed.
 - The unit rates & prices quoted by the bidder shall be entirely in Indian Rupees and the rates quoted shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of work unless otherwise specified.
 - The payment shall be made only after the funds are received on this account from higher authorities under Major Head of Account as shown against each.
 - That every participating supplier/contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payment shall be released by the government department/agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. This is with reference to the Circular No. 01 (Adm) FD of 2025 dated 08-07-2025 issued by Finance Department Srinagar vide No. FD-ST/75/2025-03 dated 08/07/2025.
 - Photographic evidence during, before and after the execution of work is a must and shall be the sole responsibility of the contractor.
 - No Regular deslitting work shall be included and charged in stage contract. Furthermore any item involved at site during execution due to emergency shall be paid as per SSR 2022.
 - Before the deadline for submission of bids the employer may modify the bidding documents by issuing corrigendum/addendum/ errata. Any corrigendum/addendum/errata in respect of the above tender shall be made available only at our official website www.jktenders.gov.in. No further press advertisement will be given. Hence prospective bidders are advised to visit website regularly for above purpose.
 - Other terms & conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD Form-25.

Remittance Head:-0702
Position of AAA: -(1)Accorded
Position of TS:-(1). Accorded
Position of Funds: -Budgetary Provision 2026-27
No.IDA/702-24 Dated: 02/05/2026

DIPK-980/26
DATED: 02-05-2026
Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Anantnag

Trump says US Navy acting 'like pirates' to carry out naval blockade of Iranian ports



REUTERS

Washington, May 2: President Donald Trump has said the US Navy was acting "like pirates" in carrying out Washington's naval blockade of Iranian ports during the US and Israel's war against Iran.

Trump made the comments while describing the seizure by US forces of a ship a few days ago.

"We took over the ship, we took over the cargo, we took over the oil. It's a very profitable business," Trump said in remarks on Friday evening. "We're like pirates. We're sort of like pirates but we are not playing games."

Some of Tehran's vessels have been seized by the US after leaving Iranian ports, along with sanctioned container ships and Iranian tankers in Asian waters.

Iran has blocked nearly all ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz apart from its own since the start of the war. Trump has imposed a separate blockade of Iranian ports.

The US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28. Iran responded with its own strikes on Israel and Gulf states that host US bases. US-Israeli strikes on Iran and Israeli attacks in Lebanon have killed thousands and displaced millions.

The war has raised oil prices and led to the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint for about 20 percent of global oil and liquefied natural gas shipments.

Trump, who has offered shifting timelines and goals for the war that remains unpopular in the US, has faced widespread condemnation over his comments on the conflict, including when he threatened to destroy Iran's entire civilization last month.

Many US experts said last month that American strikes on Iran may amount to war crimes after Trump threatened to target civilian infrastructure.

US warns shipping firms over paying Iran to transit Strait of Hormuz

AP

Beirut, May 2: The United States is warning shipping companies they could face sanctions for making payments to Iran to safely pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

The US Office of Foreign Assets Control alert posted Friday adds pressure in the standoff between the US and Iran over control of the strait at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, where about a fifth of the world's trade in oil and natural

gas typically passes.

Iran effectively closed the strait by attacking and threatening ships after the US and Israel launched a war on Feb 28. It later began offering some ships safe passage by detouring them through routes closer to its shore, charging fees at times.

That "tollbooth" effort is the focus of the US sanctions warning, which said payment demands could include transfers not only in cash but also "digital assets, offsets, informal

swaps, or other in-kind payments," including charitable donations and payments at Iranian embassies.

The US responded to Iran's closure of the strait with a naval blockade of Iranian ports on April 13, preventing Iranian tankers from leaving and depriving Tehran of oil revenue it needs to shore up its ailing economy.

The US Central Command has said 45 commercial ships have been told to turn around since the blockade began.

Iran military official says renewed war with US 'likely'

AFP

Tehran, May 2: A senior Iranian military official said on Saturday that renewed fighting between the US and Iran was "likely," hours after President Donald Trump said he was "not satisfied" with a new Iranian negotiating proposal.

Iran delivered the draft to mediator Pakistan on Thursday evening, state media reported without detailing its contents.

The war, launched by the United States and Israel in late February, has been on hold since April 8, with one failed round of peace talks having taken place in Pakistan since then.

"At this moment I'm not satisfied with what they're offering," Trump



told reporters, blaming stalled talks on "tremendous discord" within Iran's leadership.

"Do we want to go and just blast the hell out of them and finish them forever — or do we want to try and make a deal?" he

added, saying he would "prefer not" to take the first option "on a human basis."

On Saturday morning, Mohammad Jafar Asadi, a senior figure in the Iranian military's central command, said "a renewed conflict

between Iran and the United States is likely," in quotes published by Iran's Fars news agency.

"Evidence has shown that the United States is not committed to any promises or agreements," he added.

Teams have to maintain decorum so that IPL's image is not adversely affected: BCCI secretary Saikia



PTI

Mumbai, May 2: BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia on Saturday maintained that the players and officials should adhere to the stipulated decorum to keep up the image of Indian Premier League, and said the governing body is exploring further stringent measures to "rein in" the violating parties.

Saikia's comments came close on the heels of Rajasthan Royals skipper Riyan Parag and team manager Romi Bhinder getting fined for two separate incidents during the ongoing IPL.

"In the press release we have very clearly said that we are exploring some other options on how to rein in the teams which are violating the norms," Saikia told the reporters at the BCCI headquarters.

"We will be taking some action

and we are looking at various terms and conditions and protocols of the IPL on how the teams should behave..." he added.

Parag was fined Rs 25 lakh after getting caught on camera while vaping and Bhinder was slapped with a Rs 1 lakh fine for PMOA protocol breach after he used a mobile phone in the dug-out.

"It is not only their players or an official, as a team they have to maintain certain decorum so that the image of IPL is never adversely affected. To ensure that we have to take a call and we'll be taking some action," Saikia said.

In their email that announced the action against Parag, the board had said, "The BCCI is also exploring other options to initiate proceedings for stringent action against the erring team, its officials and player/s to ensure that the reputation of IPL remains intact."

Jacobs powers New Zealand to 6-wicket win over Bangladesh to level T20 series

PTI

Mirpur, May 2: Bevon Jacobs hit his maiden half-century as New Zealand recovered from a shaky start to beat Bangladesh by six wickets in the rain-hit third T20 on Saturday, concluding the three-match series at 1-1.

Jacobs' 31-ball 62 not out, including five fours and three sixes, helped his side reach 104-4 in 11.4 overs, chasing down Bangladesh's 102 all out in 14.2 overs.

Bangladesh had won the first match by six wickets. The second match was rained out.

On Saturday, pacer Shoriful Islam gave Bangladesh a glimmer

of hope by claiming three wickets for just four runs in his first two overs as New Zealand was at struggling 25-3 in fourth over.

Offspinner Mahedi Hasan further put the visitors in trouble when he dismissed stand-in skipper Nick Kelly, leaving New Zealand 33-4.

Bangladesh skipper Litton Das continued with Shoriful, but Jacobs struck him for consecutive boundaries to ease the pressure. The pacer eventually finished with 3-19.

Jacobs brought up his fifty off 29 balls. He sealed the win with a boundary and a six in quick succession.

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Movies Schedule

Sunday, 3rd May

 RAJA SHIVAJI II Raja Shivaji (U/A16+) Hindi - 10:45 AM	 EK DIN (U/A13+) Hindi - 01:35 PM, 04:10 PM	 Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A) Hindi - 10:35 AM, 06:15 PM
 Michael (U/A 13+) English with English Subtitles 05:00 PM	 BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+) Hindi - 03:00 PM, 06:45 PM	 The Devil Wears Prada 2 (A) English with English Subtitles 11:05 AM, 02:30 PM, 07:40 PM

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