



All India Inter-University Wushu Championship

Athletes role models for India's gen-next: LG Sinha

Urges them to inspire youth to shun drugs, embrace sports

Says they must act as ambassadors of Nasha Mukt J&K Abhiyaan

'Make short video, share on social media to spread awareness'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 04: Describing athletes as role models for India's generation next, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday called upon them to act as the ambassadors of Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan and inspire the youth to shun drugs and embrace sports.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of All India Inter-University Wushu Championship at University of Kashmir here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) while addressing the athletes said, "You are the role models for India's new generation. Your



appeal will inspire the youth to walk on the right path."

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated that the administration is committed to building a robust sporting culture across

Higher Educational Institutions, ensuring equal opportunities for every student to lead an active and healthy lifestyle.

He said that the All-India Inter-University Wushu

Championship is more than a sporting contest; it is a vibrant celebration of Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat and serves as a powerful platform to promote unity in diversity. | More on P6

LG Sinha directs safeguarding J&K's biodiversity

Chairs 7th J&K UT Wildlife Board Meeting

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 04: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday chaired the 7th meeting of the Wildlife Board for the Union Territory of J&K, at Lok Bhavan, Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment, and Tribal Affairs Departments; Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal and Mian Mehar Ali, Members of the Legislative Assembly; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Sheetal Nanda, Commissioner Secretary, Forest, Ecology & Environment Department; Sarvesh Rai, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force;



Chaturbhujia Behera, PCCF & Chief Wildlife Warden, J&K, along with eminent conservationists, ecologists, environmentalists, representatives of the Army, NGOs working in the wildlife sector, and other members of the Board.

The Board deliberated on key conservation and development matters and accorded approval for the construction of the Asha-Cheema-Gurdaligali-Aphrawat-Sarson-Anita Road at Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary, Baramulla. Now,

the proposal will be recommended to the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL) for grant of wildlife clearance.

During the meeting, the Lieutenant Governor underscored the importance of balancing developmental needs with ecological sustainability. He emphasized the need to safeguard and strengthen the unique biodiversity of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Board was also apprised of various initiatives undertaken by the Department | More on P6

Census- 2027: J&K citizens can file household details online from May 17

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, May 04: People in Jammu & Kashmir will be able to submit their household details online from May 17 to May 31 before enumerators arrive at their homes as part of the of the Census-2027.

Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Amit Sharma, Director of Census Operations and Chief Principal Census Officer, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, said that people can fill in their household details online themselves between May 17 and May 31 for Phase I of the Census.

"The people can fill in these details themselves before the arrival of enumerators," he said, adding that enumerators will still visit the house.

As part of Census 2027, the

Houselisting Operations will be carried out in Jammu & Kashmir between June 1 and June 30.

The second phase of the Census- enumeration- will be carried out in snow-bound areas of the Union Territory in September 2026 and in non-snow areas in February 2027. Got it — keeping your version exactly as you wrote it, no changes to anyone:

The 2027 Census is significant for Jammu and Kashmir for two reasons — political and quota-related. While it will become the basis of the next electoral delimitation, it will also reveal the population of all reserved categories for the first time in J&K's history.

This is important given that reservation has become a major issue in Kashmir, with non-reserved | More on P6

Darbar move resumes, CM Omar takes charge in Srinagar

Charts 6-month roadmap, receives Guard of Honour, inspects Civil Secretariat

Stresses coordinated execution of dev works, smooth tourism season, Amarnath Yatra

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 04: Marking the formal resumption of the bi-annual Darbar Move, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday took charge at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar, receiving a ceremonial Guard of Honour and outlining an ambitious governance roadmap for the next six months.

With the conclusion of the winter session in Jammu, government offices have now shifted to Srinagar, the summer capital, where administrative functioning officially resumed this morning.

As per the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), on his arrival at the Civil Secretariat Srinagar, the



Chief Minister was accorded a Guard of Honour and he inspected the parade.

He was received by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, cabinet colleagues

and senior civil and police officials.

Later, CM Omar conducted a detailed inspection of various sections of the Secretariat, including ministerial chambers, administrative | More on P6

Kashmir upper reaches receive fresh snowfall, rains lash plains

Temps plummet; Gurez-Bandipora, Mughal Road, SSG route closed; 200 vehicles stranded

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 04: Fresh snowfall in upper reaches, coupled with rain and gusty winds in the plains led to temperatures plummeting across Kashmir on Monday and disrupted traffic on several key routes.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) upper reaches including Gurez, Gulmarg and Sonamarg received light to moderate snowfall, leading to fall in temperatures.

The Gurez-Bandipora Road was closed due to accumulation of snow, while the Mughal Road was shut after fresh snowfall at

Peer Ki Gali, leaving around 200 vehicles stranded at different locations.

Officials said stranded passengers, including women, children and some patients, have sought assistance, while the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is mobilising men and machinery to clear the road and launch a rescue operation.

Meanwhile, BRO rescued around 20 vehicles at Razdan Pass after fresh snowfall and moved them to safer locations, officials said.

Traffic authorities said the Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri (SSG) road has also been closed due to fresh snowfall, while only one-way | More on P6

'Insult to Democracy': LoP Sharma slams CM's 'Bloody Hell' remark

Seeks apology, terms it disrespect to voters' mandate across states

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Jammu, May 04: Calling Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's "bloody hell" remark an "insult to democracy" and a reflection of disregard for the people's mandate, Leader of Opposition and BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Monday demanded a public apology from him.

He said the remark undermines democratic values and insults voters' choices across states, accusing the Chief Minister of questioning electoral verdicts and urging him to withdraw his statement immediately.



Talking to reporters in Jammu, LoP Sharma as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the remark reflects a disregard for the democratic will of the people.

"In any election, in any state, whichever party wins, we congratulate it. It is the mandate of the people. Who are we to say 'bloody hell' to that mandate?" he said.

LoP Sharma alleged that the statement amounted to disrespecting voters across multiple states. "Somewhere, the people of these states have been abused. They exercised their franchise with their intellect and their rights. Such language is an insult to democracy and democratic values. He must apologise," Sharma said.

Stressing that citizens are free to support | More on P6

'Op Sindoor' reflects India's technological edge in modern warfare: Rajnath Singh

Defence Minister points to drones, AI, sensors

Urges research focus, industry support, readiness for future conflicts

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, May 04: Asserting that the country is prepared to deal with rapidly evolving security challenges, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said 'Operation Sindoor' demonstrated India's growing capability to integrate advanced technology into modern warfare.

Addressing a defence symposium in Prayagraj, Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The operation showcased



the effectiveness of indigenous systems and reflected

the armed forces' readiness to adapt to new forms of combat."

He said modern conflicts are undergoing rapid transformation, with technologies such as drones, sensors and artificial intelligence increasingly shaping battlefield outcomes.

Referring to recent global conflicts, Singh noted that warfare has shifted significantly in a short span of time, underlining the need for constant adaptation.

The Minister said India must maintain a proactive approach and build capabilities that ensure preparedness for any future scenario, | More on P6

Railway push set to boost Kashmir cherry trade; 10,000 MT likely to be shipped this season

Growers say improved logistics will help fetch better prices

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, May 04: With the cherry harvest season around the corner, fruit growers across Kashmir are looking forward to a significant shift in how their produce reaches markets outside the Valley. Improved railway logistics and expanded parcel services are expected to enable the transportation of an estimated 10,000 metric tonnes of cherries this year—marking a notable rise compared to previous seasons.

Officials associated with the



horticulture and railway sectors told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the enhanced availability of parcel trains, along with plans to introduce air-conditioned cargo facilities, could streamline the supply chain for one of Kashmir's most delicate and high-value fruits.

The initiative is aimed at ensuring faster delivery while minimising spoilage during transit.

A railway official involved in freight operations said that last year's response to cherry transport | More on P6

Over 1,000 athletes from 150 universities participate in Wushu championship at KU

Participants highlight discipline, competition, sportsmanship

Say such events build confidence

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 04: With energy, focus and fierce competition on display, young athletes from across the country are making their mark at the on-going Inter-University Wushu Championship in Srinagar, showcasing not just skill but the spirit of discipline and sportsmanship, which kick-started on Monday.

At the University of Kashmir, where the championship is being held, participants told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that such



platforms are crucial in shaping careers and building confidence among youth.

"Playing at this level gives us exposure and motivation

to improve," said a participant from the University of Kashmir. "It is not just about winning, but it is about learning, competing and growing | More on P6

Govt focused on accelerated development, seamless service delivery to public: Deputy CM

Visits Shopian, reviews development works, stresses expeditious completion

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, MAY 04: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary on Monday conducted an extensive tour of Zainapora Constituency in Shopian district to assess the progress of ongoing development projects across Chitragam, Zainapora and adjoining areas.

During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected the ongoing construction of a vital 45-meter span bridge on the Sujan-Chitragam-Zainapora road. The Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, was accompanied by Chief Engineer PMGSY Ashwani Kumar, Additional District Development Commissioner Dr. Nasir Lone, SDM Zainapora, Tehsildar, DMO and senior officers from PWD, PMGSY and Mechanical Engineering departments.

Emphasizing strict adherence to quality standards, he directed the concerned authorities to ensure timely completion of the bridge to enhance connectivity and facilitate smooth movement for the



local population.

"Ensure use of quality material including cement and iron and dedicate the bridge to the public at the earliest," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister also assessed the progress on the under-construction Health Care Centre at Chitragam.

Stressing the importance of strengthening healthcare infrastructure, he directed for expeditious completion of ground levelling works and called for immediate initiation of construction activities. He reiterated the government's commitment towards ensuring seamless delivery of essential healthcare services to the people. "This government is

He further directed the Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) Shopian to ensure strict adherence to SOPs by workers during project execution for safety of life.

The Deputy Chief Minister reviewed ongoing road and bridge projects across Shopian district and underscored the need for timely and quality execution. He also directed that the local representatives be actively involved in project implementation to ensure smooth and effective execution on the ground.

Taking stock of mining operations in the district, he instructed the officials to ensure uninterrupted supply of construction material while strictly adhering to mining regulations.

Earlier, the Deputy Chief Minister visited the residence of MLA Zainapora, Showkat Hussain Ganai, at Chitragam and expressed heartfelt condolences on the demise of his mother. He prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family in this hour of grief.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao SWD Bandipora organises series of activities at HSS Mantrigram

KT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, MAY 04: A series of activities including a girls' volleyball match, plantation drive and sports kit distribution were organised at Higher Secondary School Mantrigram under the aegis of Social Welfare Department (SWD), SANKALP HEW, Mission Shakti Bandipora under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative.

The programme aimed at promoting holistic development, awareness and empowerment among girl students through sports and community participation. The girls' volleyball match witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and promoted teamwork, discipline and physical fitness. A plantation drive was also carried out within the school premises with active involvement of staff and students to spread awareness about environmental conservation and sustainability.

Mission YUVA: DC Kulgam inaugurates grocery mart at Yaripora

KT NEWS DESK

KULGAM, MAY 04: Promoting entrepreneurship and strengthening grassroots economic development, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam inaugurated a Grocery Mart at Yaripora on Monday.

The unit, as per an official statement, has been established by beneficiary, Asif Amin Bhat with an investment of Rs 35 lakh, under the ambitious Mission YUVA (MSME), aimed at fostering self-employment and empowering local youth.

Further enhancing its market outreach, the business has also been registered on the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform, enabling digital access and wider customer connectivity. The

Deputy Commissioner appreciated the entrepreneurial initiative of the beneficiary and emphasized the importance of integrating traditional businesses with digital platforms like ONDC to expand market opportunities and ensure sustainable growth. Speaking on the occasion, he added that the administration's commitment to providing continuous handholding support to entrepreneurs under Mission YUVA and other government initiatives.

He encouraged youth to avail such schemes and actively contribute towards building a self-reliant economy.

The event was attended by officers from the district administration, officials associated with Mission YUVA, and members of the local community.

Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyaan

Maa se Guftagu: DC Bandipora interacts with 'Mahila Samitis'

KT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, MAY 04: As part of the ongoing 100-Day Mission Mode Campaign under the Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyaan, District Administration Bandipora on Sunday organised an interaction and awareness programme with Panchayat-level Mahila Samitis under the "Maa se Guftagu" initiative, aimed at strengthening grassroots efforts against drug abuse.

The programme, as per an official statement, witnessed participation from District Programme Officer ICDS Bandipora, Yaar Ali Khan; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Shabir Ahmad Wani; CDPOs, Mahila Samitis, ICDS Supervisors, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs), NRLM representatives and other stakeholders.

During the programme, the functioning of Mahila Samitis across all 151 Panchayats and 43 Municipal Wards of the district was reviewed, with special focus on their role in strengthening grassroots implementation of the anti-drug campaign.

District Programme Officer ICDS Bandipora, presented a detailed strategy and action plan outlining the responsibilities of Panchayat Mahila Samitis. The presentation highlighted six core mandates, including awareness generation, counselling support, community vigilance, convergence, rehabilitation, and reporting mechanisms at the Panchayat level.

A comprehensive 100-day action plan focusing on training programmes,



awareness drives, identification of addicts, home visits, and follow-up assessments was also shared.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, underscored the vital role of women in building a drug-free society and called upon Mahila Samitis to serve as "change agents" at the village and ward levels.

She stressed the need for intensified door-to-door awareness campaigns, mohalla meetings, community vigilance, and timely identification of vulnerable youth.

The Deputy Commissioner observed that parents have a crucial role in safeguarding children from addiction and noted that substance abuse often contributes to domestic violence cases. She urged participants to counsel affected individuals while strengthening preventive awareness at the grassroots.

The meeting also deliberated on a multi-pronged strategy involving ASHA

workers, Anganwadi workers, Self Help Groups (SHGs), and PRI institutions. Directions were issued to organise awareness drives, school rallies, and nukkad natak, besides facilitating counselling and rehabilitation support through the District De-addiction Centre. Representatives of Mahila Samitis also shared challenges related to social stigma and increasing peer pressure among adolescents.

Emphasising a compassionate approach, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to support rehabilitation and reintegration of drug addicts into society to help them lead dignified lives. The programme concluded with a pledge administered by the Deputy Commissioner, wherein participants resolved to continue collective efforts toward building a drug-free society under the Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyaan, reaffirming that "change begins at home".

Counselling sessions, awareness drives held across Shopian

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, MAY 04: Continuing the ongoing Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan, a series of awareness and outreach activities were organized across district Shopian to discourage substance abuse and promote a healthy lifestyle among youth.

Counselling sessions on mental well-being were conducted in various schools and institutions, including Govt Polytechnic College Shopian and several higher secondary

schools. The sessions focused on stress management, building self-confidence, and adopting positive life choices. Students actively participated and interacted with resource persons. Awareness events were held at multiple locations, including Fantaliz Educational Institute Alishapora and High School Gatipora, where participants carried placards and raised slogans advocating a drug-free society.

In Zone Harman, Poshan Project Shopian organized awareness activities at AWC Gagra, involving community interaction and poster displays to sensitize the public.

GOVERNMENT OF THE JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD R&B DIVISION, VAILOO.
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NIT No.08/911-20 of R&B/Vailoo /2026-2027/e-tendering/ DATED:04/05/2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT, Percentage rate basis. E-tenders (In Single cover system) from Regd. Transporters/ Tour & Travel Agencies / Taxi Stand Unions/ Individuals for hiring of One No. Commercial Vehicle of following types/description (upto March 2027) for official use by Technical officer to the Chief Engineer PWD R&B South Kashmir

S. No	Service Description	Estimated cost	Cost of document In Rs	Earnest Money In Rs	Time Period of Contract	Date of opening of tenders online
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Service Level Agreement on monthly basis for vehicle hiring services for the Official use of Technical Officer to the Chief Engineer PWD (R&B) South Kashmir without fuel	-	200	5000	Upto March 2027	13/05/2026

Reference: Chief Engineer's Letter No. CERBSK-ACCT/2026/221-222 Dt: 24/04/2026 and Superintending Engineer's Letter No. 1040-41 Dt: 27-04-2026

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	04/05/2026
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	04/05/2026 04.00 PM
3.	Bid submission Start Date	04/05/2026 04.00 PM
4.	Bid Submission End Date	12/05/2026 04.00 PM
6.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	13/05/2026 at 04.30 P.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD R&B Division Vailoo

The intending and eligible bidders may submit the tenders online at www.jktenders.gov.in under single cover in the prescribed proforma. Tenders are to be submitted online only using the e-procurement portal www.jktenders.gov.in.

- The Bidders who have not enrolled/registered in e-procurement portal should enroll/register before participating through the website www.jktenders.gov.in. The portal enrolment is free of cost.
- Interested bidders may submit their quotation online on www.jktenders.gov.in as per NIT in the website www.jktenders.gov.in. Bidders are requested to follow the instructions carefully as per the tender document and the instructions given in the above said website. All the documents in support of eligibility criteria etc. are also to be scanned and uploaded. Tenders by any other mode will not be accepted. No tender documents will be accepted after the expiry of stipulated date and time for the purpose under any circumstances what so ever. Any corrigendum/addendum regarding this tender will be available on the above said website only.
- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Receipt/ challan remitted in (Head-0059) (tender inviting authority) and Earnest Money of Rs 5000/- in shape of CDR/ FDR only. Pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division vailoo (tender receiving authority) (Name of work or Enit No. and Item No. to be mentioned on the Treasury receipt/ challan (The date of Treasury receipt / Challan should be between the date of start of bid end Bid submission End date). An amount of Rs 10000/- Performance Security in the shape of CDR/ FDR by the Successful bidder. Minimum of Two bids are necessary to decide L-1 bidder in case of Contractors.
- The 1st Lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to Rs 10000/- as performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR within 07 days before fixation of contract.
- EMD of successful bidder shall only be released after receipt of Performance Security
- This Office reserves the right to amend or withdraw any of the terms and conditions contained in the Tender Document or to reject any or all tenders without giving any notice or assigning any reason. The decision of the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Vailoo in this regard shall be final and binding on all.
- The Bidder is expected to examine all instructions, forms, specifications, terms and conditions in the NIT. Failure to furnish all information and documents required as per the NIT in every respect will be at the Bidder's risk and shall result in rejection of the bid.

DIPK-1000/26
DATED: 04-05-2026

-Sd/-
Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Vailoo

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MECHANICAL AND HOSPITAL DIVISION ANANTNAG
MECHANICAL AND HOSPITAL ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT, KASHMIR
e-mail: xenmhd-ang@jk.gov.in
GIST of e-NIT No. MHDA/TS/2026-27/ 02 Dated: 04 - 05 -2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited in two cover system (Technical and Financial) on percentage basis from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) of medical grade Oxygen Generation Plants(OGPs) or their authorized dealers/ firms authorized with full technical support as specified from the said OEM(s) or, from the firms having required experience for the below mentioned work(s):

Name of the Work	Estimated Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of Tender Doc. (In rupees)	Earnest Money (In Lacs)	Time of Completion	Position of funds
1	4	2	3	5	7
SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF 02 x 1000 LPM CAPACITY OXYGEN GENERATION PLANTS ALONG WITH ALLIED WORKS AT MMABM ASSOCIATED HOSPITAL GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE ANANTNAG	608.83	5000.00	12.18	180 days	Available with intending Department

- Position of Administrative Approval: Accorded vide Govt. Order No.: 584-JK (HME) of 2025 dated 22-08-2025.
- Position of Technical Sanction: Accorded vide No.: MHED/K/TS/139 Dated: 21-11-2025 by Chief Engineer Mechanical and Hospital Engineering Department Kashmir, Srinagar.

- Downloading of Bids: The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in from 04-05-2026 (16:00 Hrs.) and downloading documents from 05-05-2026 (11:00 Hrs.)
- Pre Bid Meeting Date: 11-05-2026 (14:00 Hrs.)
- Submission of Bids: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above website from 15-05-2026 (10:00 Hrs.) to 25-05-2026 (14:00 Hrs.) in two covers.
- Opening of Bids: The bid uploaded on the Web Site up to due date and time will be opened on 26-05-2026 (14:00 Hrs.) in Office of the Superintending Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Circle Kashmir, Srinagar. /under signed after approval.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical and Hospital Division Anantnag

No: MHDA/ TS- 291/215-16
Dated: 04-05-2026

DIPK-1019/26
DATED: 04-05-2026

J&K faces sharp voltage slump

Power voltages hit severe lows: NRPC

RIYAZ BHAT

Srinagar, May 04: In a stark admission before the Northern Regional Power Committee (NRPC), authorities have revealed that power voltages in Jammu and Kashmir have slumped to severe low levels.

The authorities have revealed that key 400kV and 220kV bus voltages across have slumped to severe low levels at 347kV and 178kV respectively—thus raising serious concerns of the power supply.

NRPC in a recent meeting stated that the 400kV as well as 220kV bus voltages at various stations in Kashmir valley are remaining critically low, also reaching 347kV and 178kV respectively.

“The low voltage is a perennial issue, and it has been deliberated in various meetings as well as in the recent meeting held in 2025,” it reads. It also said, “Further



Grid-India in quarterly operational feedback 2025 also highlighted low voltages at 400kV Amargarh, Wagoora and Wanpoh

S/s, 400kV voltages are reaching 360kV at Amargarh, Wagoora and Wanpoh substations.” NRPC also said that due

to inadequate compensation in J&K STU network, severe low voltages have been observed in J&K grid.

In last week of April-2026, this news agency reported that from 17,489 Million Units (MUs) in 2020-21 to just 14,660 MUs in 2025-26, Jammu and Kashmir in nearly past five years has recorded a decline in hydel power generation by over 16 percent—reflecting an average annual fall of nearly 3-5 percent.

The official figures in this regard revealing the power generation of J&K in MUs from 2020-21 to January 2026 states that there has been a power generation fall by 16.18 percent.

The figures reveal that in the year 2020-21, J&K had generated a total of 17,489.83 MUs of power followed by 17,170.62 MUs in the year 2022-23.

It also said that during the year 2023-24, Jammu and Kashmir was able to generate

only 16,282.93 MUs of energy followed by 15,595.82 MUs in 2024-25.

The figures further states that in the year 2025-2026: upto January-2026, J&K had generated only 14,659.92 MUs of power.

Stating the source and state wise generation data from various sources including thermal, hydro, nuclear and renewable energy for 2025-26 (upto January, 2026), the official figures reveal that a total of 14,659.92 MUs from renewable sources were generated by J&K including 375.01 MUs by the small hydro projects and 14,284.91 MUs from large hydro projects.

As already reported by KNO, Jammu and Kashmir has indicated that a power load requirement of up to 7 Gigawatts (GWs) by the coming five years needs to be considered in the winter season—signalling major infrastructure upgrades to avoid seasonal blackouts—(KNO)

Several MLAs call on CM Omar

Srinagar legislators express gratitude for resumption of Darbar Move



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 04: Several MLAs of Kashmir valley on Monday called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah here at Civil Secretariat to appraise him of several issues related to their constituencies.

Those who met the chief minister include MLA Chadoora Ali Mohammad Dar, MLA Beerwah Dr Shafi Ahmed Wani, MLA Khan Sahib Saifuddin Bhat of Budgam district, MLA Pattan Javid Riyaz Bedar and MLA Pampore Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi and flagged different issues related their constituencies.

The legislators, representing different constituencies of Budgam, Pattan and Pampore areas apprised the Chief Minister of various local issues and demands pertaining to development works, civic amenities and public service delivery in their respective areas. The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the concerns raised by the MLAs and assured them that all genuine issues flagged during the meeting would be addressed on priority.

He reiterated the government's commitment to responsive and people-centric governance, emphasizing that

coordination with elected representatives remains key to ensuring effective and timely resolution of public grievances.

In the meantime, several Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from Srinagar city on Monday called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at the Civil Secretariat here and expressed their gratitude for the resumption of the traditional Darbar Move after a gap of several years.

Those who met the Chief Minister included MLA Eidgah Mubarak Gul, MLA Habba Kadal Shamim Firdous, MLA Hazratbal Salman Sagar, MLA

Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq, MLA Lal Chowk Sheikh Ahsan Ahmed Paradesi and MLA Channapora Mushtaq Guru. Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani was also present on the occasion.

The legislators appreciated the restoration of the traditional Darbar Move, which was resumed last year in Jammu, and the subsequent reopening of offices in Srinagar.

They observed that the revival of the Darbar Move is expected to boost economic activity, particularly in the hospitality sector, and enhance overall market vibrancy in the region.

Delegation call on LG Sinha



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 04: A delegation of Associated Chamber of Commerce & Industry Kashmir (ACCİK) led by its President Tariq Ghani on Monday called on Lieutenant Governor, Manoj

Sinha and put forth various issues of business community. The ACCİK delegation also congratulated the Lieutenant Governor for the historic Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir campaign and Padyatra in Srinagar and lauded the initiative aimed at building a drug-free society and safeguarding the future of youth.

Speaker gets rousing welcome on Assembly Secretariat reopening

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 04: Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly was accorded a rousing welcome by the staff on the first day of the re-opening of the Assembly Secretariat in the summer capital.

On his arrival, the Speaker interacted with the officers and staff members, enquiring

about their presence and overall well-being. He appreciated their dedication and emphasized the importance of teamwork and commitment in ensuring smooth functioning of the Assembly Secretariat.

The Speaker also encouraged the staff to continue working with sincerity and professionalism to uphold the sanctity of the institution.



PDP-BJP alliance cost J&K its special status, statehood: Dy CM



JAHANGEER GANAIE

Shopian, May 04: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Monday said Jammu and Kashmir would not have lost its special constitutional status and statehood had Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) not entered into an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Speaking to reporters in south Kashmir's Shopian district, Choudhary said the political decisions taken in the past had far-reaching consequences for Jammu

and Kashmir. “If PDP had not aligned with the BJP, the situation would have been entirely different today. The people are aware of what led to the erosion of special status and downgrading of the state,” he said.

During the tour, the Deputy CM inspected several key projects and directed officials to accelerate the execution of works that have been pending for years. He said delays in development not only hamper economic growth but also erode public trust in governance.

Highlighting the government's commitment to transparency, he accused the previous PDP-led administration of indulging in “fraudulent appointments” and administrative mismanagement. “There was a time when backdoor appointments were rampant. That phase is over now. Our government is committed to ensuring a fair, transparent, and merit-based recruitment system,” he said.

Choudhary reiterated that accountability would remain a cornerstone of the present administration's functioning. He assured the people that strict action would be taken wherever irregularities are found and that governance would be driven by rules rather than political considerations.

On the development front, the Deputy CM said the government is focused on fast-tracking all pending projects across sectors, including roads, healthcare, and public utilities.

He assured residents of Shopian that efforts are underway to ensure the timely completion of works so that the benefits of development reach every household. “The aim is not just to announce projects, but to complete them efficiently and improve the quality of life for the people,” he added—(KNO)

Cruise operations coming to Kashmir lakes soon: Minister Sharma

WARIS FAYAZ

Sopore, May 04: Cabinet Minister Satish Sharma on Monday said Kashmir's major lakes and river stretches will soon witness structured cruise and steamer operations under a Rs 900 crore project aimed at easing congestion and boosting employment.

Speaking to reporters in Sopore, the minister said the proposed network will cover Wular Lake, Dal Lake, Nigeen Lake and around 62 kilometres of the Jhelum River. He said the initiative, backed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, is expected to reduce pressure along riverbanks while opening new avenues for tourism and jobs.

The minister said the past year remained challenging due to incidents in Pahalgam, conflict situations and heavy rains, but asserted that 2026 will mark a “180 degree turnaround” in Jammu and Kashmir's development trajectory. He said the government is working to take J&K sports to new heights by expanding infrastructure and introducing new disciplines.

Highlighting sports achievements, Sharma said Jammu and Kashmir recently clinched the Ranji Trophy for the first time, marking a historic achievement, while activities such as water sports and

downhill motor biking are being promoted. He added that preparations are underway for a Commonwealth-level Kho Kho event.

The minister said winter sports duration will be extended from a few days to around 15 days to increase tourist inflow and ensure higher hotel occupancy. He announced plans to organise major



leagues in every district and develop indoor stadiums in each block constituency, with Sopore identified for early facility expansion.

Stressing the social impact of sports, Sharma said increased participation can play a key role in addressing drug abuse among youth by providing constructive engagement and opportunities—(KNO)

Sports key to fight drug menace: Shahid Choudhary

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, May 04: Secretary/Commissioner Youth Services and Sports, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary on Monday said that youth remain the “soul and central force” of Jammu & Kashmir's development, asserting that sports is emerging as a powerful tool to counter the growing drug menace in the Union Territory. Addressing a gathering at University of Kashmir, where over 190 students from different states participated in a Wushu event, Choudhary said the past five to six years have seen a clear shift towards youth-centric policies, particularly in sports and entrepreneurship.

He said a “mission mode” campaign for a drug-free Jammu & Kashmir, launched on April 11, is being strengthened through sports initiatives. “Drug addiction traps individuals in chains and takes away their freedom. There can be no better alternative than sports to break this cycle,” he said.

Highlighting infrastructure growth, Choudhary said around 625 sports facilities have been developed across schools, colleges, villages and remote areas in the last four years. “Every playground we build stands against the drug ecosystem and every league we create channels youth energy in a positive direction,” he added. Referring to Wushu, he said the sport represents balance, resilience and respect and noted its inclusion in the Youth Olympics, expressing hope for its future inclusion in the Olympic Games.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

EDITORIAL

78 Days To Break The Chains

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's directive for a "focused, time-bound and result-oriented strategy" over the next 78 days is exactly what the fight against drug abuse in Jammu and Kashmir needed. After the initial burst of energy and the successful launch of the 'Jan Andolan,' the real test begins now. It is easy to start a campaign. It is difficult to sustain it, measure it, and deliver results. The LG's call for measurable outcomes transforms this movement from symbolic to strategic. The 78-day timeline is significant. It is not an open-ended promise that fades with time. It is a deadline. Every district

administration now knows that it will be held accountable for curbing drug abuse and dismantling narcotics networks within this period. This pressure is healthy. It forces officers to move beyond paperwork and take visible action on the ground. One of the most important aspects of LG's direction is the focus on grassroots engagement. Drug abuse does not happen in secret. It happens in neighbourhoods, panchayats, and wards. By activating Panchayat and Ward levels, the administration is tapping into the most effective surveillance system: the community itself. When religious leaders, teachers, traders, and

youth groups are made active stakeholders, the campaign is no longer a government programme. It becomes a social duty. The instruction to develop playfields in all panchayats and organise regular sports competitions is a masterstroke in prevention. A young person engaged in sports has less time, less inclination, and less vulnerability to fall into addiction. Sports build discipline, teamwork, and self-esteem—qualities that are the natural enemies of substance abuse. This is not a soft approach; it is a smart one. On the enforcement side, the LG's directions are ruthless and precise. Cancellation or suspension of driving licenses,

passports, and other documents of drug peddlers hits them where it hurts—their mobility and identity. Identification and seizure of properties linked to narcoterrorists attacks their finances. Intensified inspection of pharmaceutical shops closes a key supply route. And action against fake de-addiction centres ensures that vulnerable patients are not exploited by fraud. With 78 days remaining, the path is clear. The strategy is sound. The leadership is committed. Now, execution is everything. Every day lost is a day another young life could be saved. The time for talk is over. The time for results has begun.

Smart, Sustainable, Seamless: How Technical Textiles Are Stitching India's Footwear Future

Bringing the footwear sector more explicitly within the technical textiles ecosystem can drive innovation, expand exports and create high quality employment

Giriraj Singh

When we speak of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat we are not just speaking of self-reliance in production but of leadership in global value chains. Few sectors capture this opportunity as clearly as footwear. It is one of the most universal products in daily life used by a school student walking to class, a worker standing through long shifts, a delivery partner constantly on the move and an athlete pushing physical limits. Yet despite being the world's second largest producer India holds only a marginal share in global footwear exports.

The gap is not due to lack of capacity but due to the need for a shift towards materials design and performance. At the centre of this shift lies a category that often goes unnoticed - technical textiles. I began to understand this more clearly during a recent visit to Agra. Agra is known for its footwear industry. Walking through its production clusters and interacting with manufacturers it became evident that innovation was already underway. Several units were using materials that improved comfort, durability and flexibility. Yet many of them did not describe these as technical textiles, they simply saw them as better inputs that met evolving consumer needs.

This insight deepened during a subsequent meeting in Delhi with the footwear association. Industry stakeholders spoke about changing consumer expectations lighter shoes better cushioning improved breathability and longer durability. These were no longer premium features but were becoming standard requirements. It was in this discussion that my department highlighted a critical point: the footwear industry is already using technical textiles extensively even without formally recognising it.

That realization reframed the entire conversation. Globally the footwear industry



produces nearly 23.9 billion pairs annually with a market size of around \$500 billion. India contributes about 12.5 percent of global production yet its export share remains at only 2 percent which highlights a clear gap between capacity and global positioning. At the same time nearly 86 percent of global footwear is non leather while India's industry has historically been centred around leather.

At home the story is evolving rapidly. The Indian footwear market reached a size of \$20.67 billion in 2025 reflecting rising incomes and changing consumption patterns. While the average Indian still buys around 2 pairs of footwear per year compared to 7 to 8 pairs globally. As affordability improves and consumer preferences shift towards comfort and performance the domestic

market is set to expand significantly.

This is where technical textiles become central to the next phase of growth. At the Ministry of Textiles this transition is being approached through the Smart, Sustainable & Seamless framework. Smart footwear reflects the growing integration of technology and design. Digital tools AI driven modelling and foot scanning are enabling customised solutions at scale. This aligns with broader consumer trends. In 2025 India recorded 28.9 million smartwatch sales generating \$780 million in revenue which indicates a growing preference for products that combine functionality with everyday use. The sneaker segment further illustrates this shift. It is projected to grow from \$3.2 billion in 2024 to nearly \$6 billion by 2030 with volumes increasing from 55 million

to 70 million pairs. Consumers are clearly moving towards footwear that delivers both comfort and performance and this is where technical textiles play a defining role.

Sustainability is also becoming a decisive factor. Materials such as recycled PET and biodegradable fibres are gradually entering mainstream production. For India this represents not only an environmental imperative but also a strategic opportunity to position itself as a supplier of sustainable materials in global markets. Equally transformative is the move towards seamless manufacturing. Technologies like 3D knitting and advanced fabrication are reducing waste, improving efficiency and enabling faster production cycles. This allows manufacturers to respond more effectively to evolving demand while maintaining consistency and quality.

What strengthens this transition further is the scale of India's existing ecosystem. The footwear industry already employs over 2 million people with nearly 50 percent women participation making it a major source of inclusive employment. With an annual production of around 2.9 billion pairs productivity stands at approximately 4 to 5 pairs per worker per day in India. In comparison global production reflects a much higher level of efficiency with workers producing approximately 17 to 20 pairs per day. Established clusters in Agra Kanpur Chennai Ranipet Ambur and Kolkata are not just production hubs but the foundation on which India can scale efficiency competitiveness and global leadership in footwear.

The shift towards technical textiles is not about building a new industry but about unlocking the full potential of an existing one. The visit to Agra and the discussions in Delhi brought out a simple but powerful insight technical textiles in footwear are not an emerging concept. They are already embedded in the industry quietly shaping products and processes.

The task ahead is to recognise, organise and scale this integration. Bringing the footwear sector more explicitly within the technical textiles ecosystem can drive innovation, expand exports and create high quality employment. It can also align India's manufacturing capabilities with global demand trends particularly in non-leather and performance driven segments.

India's journey towards becoming a global manufacturing leader will depend on how effectively it leverages such intersections where traditional industries meet advanced materials and modern design. Footwear is one such intersection. Technical textiles are the thread that can help stitch this opportunity into a global success story.

The author is the Union Minister of Textiles. The views expressed are personal.

Justice, Equality And A New Economics For The 21st Century

We need public institutions with the capacity to invest and govern markets in the public interest

Mariana Mazzucato and Lara Merling

In the run-up to this year's International Monetary Fund and World Bank Spring Meetings, the one story that cut through the noise was that the World Bank had embraced industrial policy after decades of advising against it. But while much of the ensuing debate focused on whether this "U-turn" is good or bad, overdue or dangerous, few pondered the fundamental question: What has actually changed?

The bank has merely affirmed what many of us have long argued: The framework it has promoted since 1993 — when its "East Asian Miracle" report cautioned against industrial policy tools — has not served developing countries well. Such advice, World Bank Chief Economist Indermit Gill recently observed, "has the practical value of a floppy disk today." Yet in his defense of the report, he also made clear how limited the shift remains. Industrial policy, he argued, should be "targeted and temporary," an exception to a market-led model, rather than a tool for driving broader economic transformations.

The bank's latest work confirms that industrial policy is more replicable across income levels and institutional contexts than the old consensus admitted, with a toolkit that extends beyond tariffs and subsidies. Public support for private actors, the bank now argues, should come with carrots and sticks, including withdrawal of finance from firms that underperform. This new position aligns with arguments we made in "The Entrepreneurial State" and through more recent work on the role of missions and conditionalities.

But new conclusions do not automatically produce new economics. The bank still treats the state as a mere fixer of market failures,



rather than as a market creator and shaper. The question is not whether governments should intervene after markets have failed. It is what kind of economy we want to build in the first place. Which public purposes should guide investment and how can institutions govern the public-private bargain so that value is created collectively and shared fairly?

Viewed in these terms, the bank still falls short because it treats fiscal policy space as a fixed constraint within which to optimize, rather than as a set of institutional capacities that can be developed. As a result, the bank would still organize industrial policy only around specific sectors and considerations of comparative advantage. But the energy transition, water and food security, public health

and economic resilience are not sectoral issues. They call for economy-wide missions.

This matters now that the bank itself is adopting "mission" language. Mission 300, with a focus on African electricity access, and Water Forward, launched at the spring meetings to address water security, do take on major systemic, cross-sectoral challenges. But our assessment of 30 African national energy compacts finds a gap: the ambition is systemic but the architecture remains sectoral.

Nor is the World Bank an isolated case. The IMF's own economists have similarly documented how austerity and liberalization fail to deliver. Yet these findings have yet to translate consistently into new operational practices.

That needs to change. The IMF and the World Bank sit at the center of an international order whose default advice still reflects an economics not supported by real-world evidence. What they model, measure and recommend shapes how development and macroeconomic policy are done around the world. They help determine who has access to liquidity and on what terms, whose debt is treated as sustainable, whose public investment is seen as credible, and whose policy autonomy is constrained.

The wealthy countries that fund and control these institutions are not exempt from the consequences of the same economics. For decades, the same flawed assumptions shaped policy in Europe and the US, suppressing public investment, weakening public services, treating wages as costs rather than as fuel for aggregate demand, and leaving households exposed to shocks that markets failed to manage.

The resulting affordability crisis has now become a political one. The economics that constrained development policy abroad — hollowing out public capacity and narrowing what governments can do — helped fuel the far right at home.

Europe's response to the 2022 energy shock shows what is at stake. From 2022 to 2025, EU member states and the UK incurred \$1.8 trillion in additional costs, much of it absorbed by households and public budgets, while the shareholders of firms charging higher prices benefited. Spain points to an alternative. Having invested in energy security as a mission, rather than as a subsidy category, it now generates more than half of its electricity from renewables, leaving it more insulated than its neighbors from the latest energy shock.

Making such resilience the default, rather than the exception, requires an economic framework that governments can apply consistently. The Global Progressive Mobilization, convened by Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, recently brought together progressive governments from around the world to start shaping a new economic consensus.

Its foundations are clear. We need public institutions with the capacity to invest, coordinate and govern markets in the public interest. We need finance designed around missions, not leverage ratios, and policy frameworks that treat fiscal space not as a market-determined ceiling but as something built by productive investment. And we need measures of value oriented around the common good.

A Global Council on New Economics for the 21st Century, co-chaired by one of the writers (Mazzucato) and First Vice President of Spain Carlos Cuelpo, will bring these elements together. Our goal is to translate the new economics into operational principles organized around justice, equality, sustainability and global solidarity. The argument for a new economics is being won. Now we must show what comes next.

Mariana Mazzucato is Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value at University College London and the author, most recently, of "The Big Con: How the Consulting Industry Weakens Our Businesses, Infantilizes Our Governments and Warps Our Economies" (Penguin Press, 2023).

Lara Merling is a research fellow on industrial strategy at the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose.

Source: Project Syndicate

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

Over 13,000 MSMEs assessed in J&K, CS pushes AI-driven interventions

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 04: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the functioning and progress of the Jammu & Kashmir MSME Health Clinic (JKMHC), a digital initiative aimed at diagnosing, reviving and strengthening micro, small and medium enterprises across the Union Territory.

The meeting, as per an official statement, besides Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce and Director, IIM Jammu was attended by Executive Director, JKEDI; Director, Industries Jammu; Director, Employment and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, Chief Secretary issued a series of strategic directions aimed at strengthening the effectiveness and institutional capacity of the MSME Health Clinic. He emphasized the adoption of an advanced, Large Language Model (LLM)-based solution for conducting root cause analysis of stressed units, with a mature agentic AI framework backed by appropriate guardrails.

He also directed that the system be trained on local datasets to enhance contextual relevance and explore development on indigenous platforms such as BharatGenetic.

Highlighting the importance of evidence-based interventions, the Chief Secretary called for the preparation of detailed case studies based on field-level diagnostics, citing the need for grassroots-driven analysis to inform policy and rehabilitation strategies.

He further stressed that capacity building should be a continuous process rather than a one-time exercise, directing that structured training programmes



be conducted at least once every two months to build sustained expertise at the district level.

To strengthen institutional convergence, the Chief Secretary directed that experts from the Small Business Development Unit (SBDU) established under Mission YUVA be formally integrated into the MSME Health Clinic framework, with dedicated personnel deployed for implementation support.

He also called for inclusion of representatives from key institutions such as banks, NABARD and allied departments including agriculture, positioning SBDU as a nodal platform for coordinated guidance and execution at the grassroots level.

Clarifying institutional roles, the Chief Secretary underlined that IIM Jammu should primarily focus on training and capacity building, while implementation responsibilities should rest with field-level institutions. He further stressed the need to develop a robust pool of trained human resources at the district level through repeated and structured capacity-building interventions.

The Chief Secretary also directed the Industries & Commerce Department to convene joint meetings with the Labour Department and other stakeholders, while actively seeking inputs from leading financial institutions

including J&K Bank, SBI and NABARD, as well as industry bodies such as FICCI, ASSOCHAM and CII. He called for greater stakeholder engagement to incorporate sector-specific expertise into the functioning of the MSME Health Clinic.

Additionally, Dulloo instructed that a one-day comprehensive workshop be organized, preferably in July, after completion of a round of assessments in both Jammu and Kashmir divisions. The workshop, he said, should serve as a platform to gather structured feedback and suggestions from stakeholders across sectors to further refine the initiative.

The Chief Secretary further reviewed the implementation of key directions issued during the previous meeting held on March 30, 2026, including development of an interactive chatbot, acceleration of health analysis, automation of health certificates, expansion of daily interactions and constitution of district-level committees.

The meeting was apprised by the Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Vikramjit Singh that the MSME Health Clinic has been conceptualized as an end-to-end mechanism to evaluate the financial and operational health of industrial units using real-time data sources such as GST filings, banking

records, power consumption and EPFO statements.

Based on this analysis, enterprises are classified into stable, stressed (recoverable) and sick categories, enabling targeted interventions, expert advisory and structured rehabilitation plans, he added.

Highlighting the scale of progress achieved so far, he informed that 13,357 enterprises have been digitally assessed so far by the MSME Health Clinic, out of which 86.26 percent have been categorized as stable, 13.36 percent as recoverable and a small fraction identified as prone to sickness. The initiative is focused on early identification of stress signals and timely handholding to prevent units from slipping into irrecoverable stages.

Giving details about the implementation of previous directions the Director, I&C Jammu, Arun Manhas informed that a responsive chatbot has already been integrated into the portal to enable enterprises to assess their health status and receive recommendations, while work is underway to upgrade it into an AI-enabled system for enhanced user experience.

He further divulged that district-level committees have been constituted across 10 districts to oversee implementation and enhance outreach. These committees, comprising representatives from the Industries & Commerce

Department, JKEDI and Mission Yuva, have been trained extensively and will begin large-scale interactions from May 10 with a target of scaling up engagements from 20 to 200 interactions per day.

Reviewing field-level interventions, the Chief Secretary was apprised that 56 industrial units across Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur and Kashmir divisions have been surveyed in detail, covering 29 sectors. The survey identified critical, stressed and healthy units and highlighted key challenges such as high input costs, market competition, logistics constraints and working capital issues. These findings are being used to design data-driven policy interventions and rehabilitation strategies.

It was also revealed that over 60 industrial visits have been completed, with diagnostic reports prepared for several units and strategic rehabilitation plans finalized for critically stressed enterprises. Additional reports are in the pipeline and are expected to be completed by the end of May, while further field visits are planned to expand coverage.

On the certification front, more than 1,000 MSME Health Certificates have already been generated and issued to stable units, with full automation of the certification process targeted by May 10. The system also provides an option for re-evaluation to ensure continuous monitoring and support.

The meeting also reviewed convergence with Mission Yuva, under which all enterprises are being onboarded onto the UDYAM portal and subsequently integrated with the MSME Health Clinic platform. API integration between the systems is expected to be completed by early June, enabling seamless data exchange and streamlined registration processes for the times to come.

Baramulla's young athletes shine in multi-zonal school competitions

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, MAY 04: DYSS Baramulla continues its relentless drive to promote sports culture and youth engagement across the district, with a series of Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions being successfully conducted in multiple zones, witnessing overwhelming participation and enthusiasm among students.

Zone Dangerpora Monday organized an Inter-School Under-14 event at AFI Dangerpora, drawing participation from an impressive 420 students representing both government and private institutions.

The event was graced by Mushtaq Sopori, Principal Higher Secondary School Dangerpora, as the Chief Guest. He lauded the department's efforts in nurturing young talent and encouraged students to actively engage in sports for their holistic development.

Meanwhile, Zone Pattan successfully conducted an Inter-School Chess Competition for Under-14 and Under-17 boys at GHSS Pattan under the

banner of the Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyaan. The competition witnessed the participation of 42 young chess enthusiasts, showcasing strategic brilliance and competitive spirit.

In a similar stride, Zone Singhpora Kalan is actively conducting an Inter-School Badminton Competition for Under-14 and Under-17 girls at GHSS Singhpora Kalan, where budding athletes are demonstrating remarkable skill and determination.

Adding further momentum, Zone Dangiwaicha organized an Inter-Cluster/Zonal Level Volleyball Competition for Under-14 and Under-17 boys on May 4, 2026. The event recorded vibrant participation across clusters. In Cluster Behrampora, 180 students in U-14 and 48 students in U-17 categories participated.

Additionally, at the zonal level in Dangiwaicha, 180 students in U-14 and 84 students in U-17 categories showcased their sporting talent.

The event saw an outstanding total participation of 492 students, reflecting immense enthusiasm and sportsmanship.

DC Ganderbal reviews arrangements for Kheer Bhawani Mela 2026

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, MAY 04: A high-level preparatory meeting was convened here on Monday under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, to review and finalise arrangements for the annual Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela 2026, scheduled for 22nd June, 2026.

Reviewing the preparedness, the DC, as per an official statement, noted that the mela witnessed a footfall of more than 15000 devotees in 2025 and said that adequate arrangements should be put in place this year to cater large gatherings. Devotees are expected to start arriving from 21st June, with the main congregation on 22nd June.

It was informed that the Mata Kheer Bhawani Temple premises and the Central University of Kashmir campus at Tulmulla have been designated as the main accommodation sites. Adequate tents, bedding and essential facilities will be put in place well in advance.

The DC directed the R&B department to ensure timely completion of all tendering processes so that transit camps are fully equipped before the arrival of pilgrims.

The Irrigation and Flood Control department were directed to expedite desilting and cleaning of the Tulmulla Nallah, particularly in areas requiring manual intervention. Sanitation arrangements will be jointly managed by the Municipal Council and Rural Development department, with strict measures in place

to maintain cleanliness across the area.

KPDCI was directed to ensure uninterrupted power supply with sufficient backup at all venues and along approach roads. Street lighting and mobile charging facilities are to be made fully operational ahead of the mela.

Reviewing security and medical preparedness, the DC was informed that comprehensive arrangements are being put in place by the district police, SDRF and traffic authorities. A joint control room will be established for effective coordination. The Health Department will deploy ambulances, specialist doctors and set up a dedicated medical camp at the shrine and other designated venues.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer and District Traffic Police were directed to prepare a comprehensive transport and traffic management plan to ensure hassle free movement of pilgrims during the Mela.

The Floriculture department was directed to ensure beautification of the temple surroundings, while the Social Welfare department was directed to provide facilities for differently-abled pilgrims, including wheelchairs. BSNL and other telecom agencies were asked to strengthen network connectivity in and around the Mela area.

The Food Safety Department was directed to ensure availability of adequate ration, along with availability of LPG within the premises. Food Safety department was tasked with Market checking and monitoring throughout the Mela period.

PCCF felicitates winners of Forest Photography Competition



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 04: Principal Chief Conservator Forests (PCCF)/ Head of Forest Force (HoFF), J&K, Sarvesh Rai felicitated the participants of Inaugural Forest Photography Competition organized by the Planning and Publicity Division of Jammu and Kashmir Forest Department.

Launched by the J&K Forest Department, the initiative, as per an official statement, was designed to document the rich ecological heritage of the region and encourage field staff to actively record biodiversity, landscapes, People and forest sceneries.

Speaking at the event, Sarvesh Rai emphasized that the competition serves a dual purpose: showcasing the unparalleled beauty of Jammu and Kashmir's forests to the world and fostering a culture of conservation and observation among forest frontline staff.

The competition saw enthusiastic participation from across the departments. Top honors were awarded to Abdul Qayoom Sofi (Birds), Amir Shafi Rather (Landscape), and Hilal Ahmad Malik (Wildlife, People and Forest-life) for their exceptional photographic documentation of the region's diverse ecosystem.

JDA carried out demolition drive along Ring Road

KT News Desk

JAMMU, MAY 04: In a significant enforcement action undertaken on Monday, the Jammu Development Authority (JDA) carried out a major demolition drive along the Ring Road corridor to curb unauthorized constructions and ensure planned urban development.

During the drive, more than 15 illegal structures, which had been raised without obtaining the requisite building permissions from the competent authority, were demolished. These structures were found to be in clear violation of approved land use norms and building regulations.

Preliminary assessments, as per an official statement, indicated that the unauthorized constructions posed a serious threat to public safety. Many of these structures were either structurally unsound or had encroached upon critical areas, thereby increasing the risk of damage to life and property, particularly to nearby residential and commercial establishments.

The demolition



operation was conducted by the Enforcement Wing of JDA with the assistance of local administration and law enforcement agencies, ensuring that the drive was carried out smoothly and without any untoward incident. Prior notices, as per due legal procedure, had been served to the violators, providing them adequate opportunity to comply with the regulations.

The Authority reiterates its commitment to maintaining

planned development in Jammu and urges the general public to strictly adhere to building norms and obtain necessary permissions before undertaking any construction activity. Unauthorized constructions not only violate the law but also endanger public safety and disrupt orderly urban growth.

JDA further emphasizes that similar enforcement actions will continue in the future against all such violations, without exception.

Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyaan Anti-drug awareness, enforcement activities continue across Pulwama

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, MAY 04: A series of awareness, counselling and enforcement activities were carried out Monday across Pulwama district as part of the ongoing 100-day campaign under the Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan.

The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Pulwama organised a range of counselling sessions and sports activities across Pulwama, Pampore and Tral. The programmes focused on mental health awareness and sensitising youth about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

Counselling sessions were conducted at various institutions including DMPS Pampore, Lalapora, HS Rathsun, GMS Tral, Nagbal, HSS Hawl, HS Malangpora, HS Murran, BMS



Goosu and UPS Chewakalan.

Experts and speakers on the occasion highlighted the long-term consequences of substance abuse on individuals and society, urging youth to engage in constructive and positive pursuits. Each programme began with oath-taking ceremonies, where participants pledged to work towards a physically fit, mentally sound and drug-free society.

Besides, as part of the campaign, the Drug Control Department has intensified enforcement measures across the district. During an inspection drive conducted Monday, the department ordered the closure of a retail medical shop at Rajpora Pulwama for violation of prescribed laws and regulations.

Officials stated that strict adherence to the provisions of the relevant acts is necessary adding

that any non-compliance will attract action as per law.

Meanwhile, awareness programmes with active community participation were also conducted at Lalpora Tral, Booh Awantipora and Rajpora, focusing on sensitising the public, particularly youth, about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of collective responsibility in making the Pulwama drug-free.

NMBA: Yoga Awareness event held at Polo Ground Srinagar

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 04: A Yoga Awareness Event was Monday organized at Polo Ground Srinagar under the aegis of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, aiming to promote a healthy and drug-free lifestyle among youth.

The programme, as per an official statement, was conducted in collaboration with the Directorate of School Education Kashmir under the directions of District Administration Srinagar and was coordinated by the District AYUSH Office Srinagar.

On the occasion, speakers emphasized the importance of yoga as a holistic discipline that significantly contributes to physical and mental well-being. They highlighted its role as an effective tool in preventing substance abuse and fostering a balanced lifestyle.

The event was organized with



the objective of raising awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encouraging the adoption of healthy and disciplined living through yoga practices. Participants were sensitized about preventive approaches to addiction and the importance of building a drug-free society.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and staff of various government schools, along with officials from the AYUSH and Education Departments.

Among those present were Chief Education Officer Srinagar, Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din; District AYUSH Officer Srinagar, Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Payer; Nodal Officer (Yoga & Naturopathy), Dr. Seema Mustafa; and District Coordinator (CEO Srinagar), Hina Amin.

A mass yoga demonstration by participating students, an awareness session on drug abuse prevention, and interactive engagements promoting healthy lifestyle practices were key highlights of the event.

Special Relief Ration Scheme

Officers visit migrant camps to review ration distribution

KT News Desk

Jammu, May 04: On the directions of Principal Secretary to the Government, Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction Chandrakar Bharti, a team of officers headed by Additional Secretary to the Government Sudhir Bali, accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Relief, Vijay Sharma and senior officers of Directorate of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Jammu and field officers from the Relief Organization and FCS&CA visited various Migrant Zones and ration depots to take stock of the ration distribution in terms of the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants, notified by the J&K Government recently.

The team interacted with migrant beneficiaries and informed them that ration distribution is being carried out by the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department in accordance with the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants notified vide Government Order No. 15-JK(FCS&CA) of 2026 dated 05.03.2026 from all the designated ration depots in Jammu Province and the migrant can get ration from any nearest

ration depot. It was further clarified that all Relief Ration Card holders, whether PHH, NPHH or Special Category, shall continue to receive 11 kg of free ration per person per month along with 1 kg of sugar, while migrants under the non-relief category, such as pensioners, categorized as NPHH, are entitled to 5 Kg ration at government-approved NFSA rates.

For all those migrant ration card holders who may not have been able to collect the ration during the last month (April) can collect the two-month ration (April and May) in the current month after completing e-KYC formalities. "Those who may have received less quantity of ration due to any technical glitch in April or in the current month would get the balance ration also," they were told.

The team of officers also interacted with the beneficiaries of the social sector schemes at various locations.

It was informed that more than 450 families are already availing benefits of Old Age Pension, Widow Pension, Disability Pension and Marriage Assistance after integration of migrant ration cards into NFSA database, in addition to the monthly relief benefits.

People were advised to

beware of some criminal and mischievous elements who are frustrated with reforms introduced by the Government in ration distribution and are spreading false propaganda on social media about the discontinuation of migrant status after integration into the NFSA database.

The visit was coordinated by Assistant Commissioner (Relief), Kailash Devi under the overall supervision of Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), J&K Dr Arvind Karwani.

Dr Karwani reiterated that the integration of migrant ration cards into the NFSA database is being done in compliance with relevant Government Orders and rules and that Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and National Informatics Centre is working in tandem with the Relief Organization, to fully operationalize the new scheme to all migrants within the shortest time period. He appealed to all eligible migrants to immediately fill online applications for various social sector schemes and avail the benefits of these welfare schemes, which they were not eligible to avail earlier due to migrant cards being non-digitized and not integrated with NFSA database.

Union MoS Anupriya Patel calls on LG Sinha

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 04: Anupriya Patel, Union Minister of State, Health & Family Welfare, Chemicals and Fertilizers called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday. She was accompanied by Ashish Singh Patel, Minister of Technical Education, Government of Uttar Pradesh.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance headed by Bhartruhari Mahtab also called on LG Sinha at Lok Bhavan



Legal heirs of doctor can be sued in alleged medical negligence case after doctor's death: SC

PTI

New Delhi, May 4: In a significant verdict which may have wider ramifications, the Supreme Court on Monday held that under the law, the legal heir of a doctor, who is facing any medical negligence case, can be proceeded against after the doctor's death.

A bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and AS Chandurkar answered a question of law in a more than three-decade-old case, where a doctor, now deceased, had operated on the wife of the complainant (also now deceased) after which she lost her vision.

The top court, which termed the matter as an "exceptional case", where it has to dredge

out older statutory provisions to address the issue, said it was only answering the question on interpretation of the applicable law and not expounding on the normative requirement as to whether the policy adopted by the law applicable is correct or there is a need to change.

The bench said in the context of Rule 4 of Order XXII of CPC, one has to understand and see whether the right to sue against such alleged medically negligent doctor survives or not upon his death.

It said the 'right to sue' means the right to seek relief through legal proceedings and such proceedings, in a general sense, are instituted against the opposite party/defendant(s), who possess a corresponding right

to defend, as opposed to the claimant's right to prosecute.

"The right to defend is intrinsically linked to, and arises from, the right to prosecute, and vice versa. Therefore, for the continuation of proceedings, it is essential that both rights co-exist.

"Nonetheless, in view of the preceding discussion and the statutory framework provided in the 1986 Consumer Protection Act as well as the 2019 Consumer Protection Act, we conclude that upon the death of the alleged medically negligent doctor, his/her legal heirs can be impleaded and brought on record.

"Consequently, the extent of liability will be determined based on the pleadings and evidence presented. The question is answered accordingly," it held.

The top court, which examined several laws, statutes and English law provisions, said the legal question assumes importance as the implication of the holdings in this case would also apply to numerous types of tortious claims, including personal injuries that do not amount to death, including motor vehicle accidents and other industrial accidents.

"In this context, we only state the principle of law as applicable, without considering any additional policy consideration which may be relevant to be considered elsewhere under different enactments," it said, adding that in posterity, this case may be a lesson to the students and stakeholders to have a strong emphasis on legal history and jurisprudence.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Athletes role

discipline, excellence, and national integration.

"This championship carries with it a responsibility to uphold and renew the essential spirit of sport that transcends competition and connects us to our highest aspirations as human beings. Let the Inter-University Wushu Championship at Kashmir University be remembered not only for the brilliance of the contests but for the bonds of friendship it forged, the barriers it broke, and the sense of one united, determined, compassionate Indian family it renewed. May every athlete continue to light the path forward for generations to come," the Lieutenant Governor said.

LG Sinha highlighted that the rigorous discipline of Wushu reflects the resilience of our youth. He stated that the championship serves as a platform for cultural exchange, where rivals become friends and mentors shape the future "heartbeat of India."

The Lieutenant Governor encouraged each athlete to create a short video on their mobile phones and share it on social media to spread awareness against substance abuse and inspire others to adopt sports and creative activities for a positive lifestyle.

The championship has drawn an impressive participation of more than 150 Universities and over 1000 athletes, bringing together top Wushu talent from across the country. The event showcases both men's and women's competitions, reflecting the growing popularity and inclusivity of the sport at the University level.

The championship, being conducted under the aegis of the Association of Indian Universities will continue for 6 days, featuring multiple bouts and categories in Wushu, a martial art that combines agility, strength and precision.

Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor Kashmir University, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Commissioner Secretary Youth Services & Sports, Ram Niwas Sharma, Commissioner Secretary Higher Education, Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Registrar Kashmir University along with senior University Officials, prominent sports personalities, coaches and sports enthusiasts attended the inaugural event organized by the Directorate of Physical Education & Sports, University of Kashmir. (KNO)

LG Sinha directs

for the conservation and protection of wildlife resources across the Union Territory—(KNO)

Census-2027:

people alleging disproportionate quotas for the reserved population. (KNO)

Darbar move

offices, clerical halls and the renovated public waiting area. He also interacted with officers, staff and visiting citizens, assuring improved facilities and enhanced public service delivery.

The reopening marks the first full-fledged return of the Darbar Move to Srinagar after several years, restoring a key administrative tradition aimed at ensuring governance access across regions.

GOVERNANCE ROADMAP SET

On the first day of functioning in Srinagar, the Chief Minister chaired a high-level meeting with ministers and administrative secretaries to set priorities for the next six months.

Calling the period the "most productive working season," he stressed the need for early

execution of development works, better inter-departmental coordination and timely implementation of Budget announcements.

"Now it is our responsibility to deliver. We have a shared mandate to meet the expectations of the people," he said, urging officers to work collectively and efficiently.

He highlighted that the coming months coincide with crucial events, including the annual Amarnath Yatra and the peak tourism season, requiring coordinated efforts beyond security arrangements.

"This period will define our governance outcomes. From tourism to pilgrimage management, we must put our best foot forward," he added.

FOCUS ON DELIVERY, COORDINATION

The Chief Minister stressed optimum use of resources, time-bound execution of projects and minimizing lapses in fund utilization. He also appreciated departments for smooth transition and preparedness ahead of the move.

During the meeting, key issues including new Industrial and Mining Policies were discussed, while departments were directed to ensure swift implementation of decisions taken over the past year.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo also briefed the meeting on administrative preparedness, including accommodation for move employees, essential services and arrangements in both Jammu and Srinagar.

He also highlighted flood preparedness ahead of the monsoon, stressing vigilance in vulnerable districts and called for accelerated infrastructure restoration, uninterrupted power and water supply.

Additionally, he informed that the Census process will begin with self-enumeration from May 17, urging full administrative support. Digitization of land records and other governance reforms were also flagged as priority areas.

OFFICES FULLY FUNCTIONAL IN SRINAGAR

As per official orders, five-day offices in Jammu closed on April 30, while six-day offices shut on May 2. Around 38 departments have fully relocated to Srinagar, while some continue to function on a camp basis.

Working hours in Srinagar have been fixed from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm for Secretariat departments and 10:00 am to 4:30 pm for other offices. A summer secretariat will continue to operate in Jammu as well.

MLAS WELCOME MOVE

Meanwhile, several Srinagar-based MLAs, including Mubarak Gul, Shamim Firdous, Salman Sagar, Tanvir Sadiq, Sheikh Ahsan Pardesti and Mushtaq Guru, called on the Chief Minister and expressed gratitude for the revival of the Darbar Move.

They said the initiative would boost economic activity, particularly in the hospitality sector and bring renewed vibrancy to local markets.

It is important to mention, the Darbar Move, a long-standing administrative practice in Jammu and Kashmir, facilitates seasonal shifting of the government between Jammu and Srinagar, ensuring governance remains accessible and responsive across both regions. (KNO)

Kashmir upper

traffic is being allowed on the Srinagar-Leh highway between Sonamarg and Kargil, subject to weather conditions and clearance.

They added that the Kishtwar-Sinthan-Anantnag road remains closed due to snow accumulation.

Intermittent rain lashed plains including Srinagar and other districts, while gusty winds were reported from Bandipora and adjoining

areas of Sumbal and Hajin.

MAN INJURED IN SUMBAL

A man was injured after a tree fell on him along the Sumbal-Bandipora road amid strong winds. He was shifted to a hospital in Sumbal for treatment, officials said.

According to the Meteorological Department, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 20.5 degrees Celsius, 2.2 degrees below normal, while the minimum settled at 10.2 degrees Celsius. Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 11.0 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 2.0 degrees Celsius.

The Met office said rainfall activity is expected to remain fairly widespread over the next 36 hours with intermittent breaks.

"Generally cloudy conditions with spells of light to moderate rain or thundershowers are likely at most places on May 3 and 4, with possibility of thunder, hailstorm and gusty winds reaching 40-50 kmph at a few locations," an official said.

An advisory has been issued warning of thunder, lightning and gusty winds, with people asked to avoid travel on vulnerable routes and stay away from weak structures and power lines. Farmers have also been advised to suspend agricultural operations till May 5, officials added. (KNO)

'Insult to Democracy'

any political party, Sharma said no leader has the authority to question people's verdict. "People have the right to their opinion and vote. If they choose BJP or any other party, it is their decision. Insulting that choice is unacceptable," he added.

LoP also accused CM Omar and his party of promoting controversial narratives in the past. "Sometimes Yasin Malik was projected as a hero, sometimes Syed Ali Shah Geelani, sometimes there was praise for Pakistan and sometimes for China. That kind of politics will not work anymore," he said, adding that people are now demanding accountability and development.

"Jammu and Kashmir needed a Chief Minister, but what it got is a marathon runner and a part-time Chief Minister," he said, adding that governance requires seriousness and full-time attention.

He said that the region deserved leadership that listens to the poor and works at the grass-roots level. "If the Chief Minister had come from an ordinary background, whether from places like Bandipora, Baramulla or Pulwama, people would have felt represented. But what we see instead is a leadership disconnected from ground realities," he said.

LoP Sharma alleged that past years in Jammu and Kashmir were marked by appeasement, corruption and cultural exploitation and that the political discourse has now shifted towards development, peace and security.

Referring to electoral trends across the country, Sharma pointed to developments in West Bengal and said that when a secure environment is ensured, people vote freely. Taking a dig at Mamata Banerjee, he said people are rejecting certain styles of politics and that trends indicate a shift in mandate.

He also defended the revision of electoral rolls, stating that removal of ineligible names strengthens democracy. "If deceased persons or illegal entrants are removed from voter lists, it is the duty of the Election Commission. Why should anyone object?" he said.

LoP Sharma further said BJP's political footprint is growing in southern states as well. "In Kerala, our vote share is increasing. In Tamil Nadu, traditional parties like DMK and

AIADMK are being challenged. Their monopoly is breaking," he said.

On speculation about government formation in Jammu and Kashmir, Sharma categorically ruled out any attempt by BJP to engineer defections. "We will not break any party to form a government. We respect the mandate. We are in opposition and will play the role of a responsible opposition," he said.

He asserted that BJP remains focused on forming the government in the future. "Whenever the next elections are held, BJP's target will be Jammu and Kashmir," Sharma said.

Reiterating his demand, Sharma said the Chief Minister must withdraw his remark and apologise. "Democracy rests on respect for the people's voice. Any statement that undermines it must be corrected," he said. (KNO)

'Op Sindoor' reflects

including the ability to respond decisively when required.

He stressed that the element of surprise remains a critical factor in warfare and said efforts are underway to further strengthen operational readiness in this regard.

Highlighting the government's focus on defence innovation, Singh said research and development have been placed at the centre of policy priorities. He said initiatives led by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) are aimed at boosting indigenous capabilities and reducing dependence on imports.

He said the government has eased technology transfer norms to support collaboration with industry. Over 2,200 technologies have been transferred to private and public sector players so far, he added.

Singh said Indian industries have been given access to DRDO patents, a step aimed at enhancing their technological base and competitiveness. Testing facilities under DRDO have also been opened to industry to support research activities.

The minister called upon industry stakeholders to invest in emerging domains such as artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, hypersonic systems and advanced weapons platforms.

He said infrastructure development linked to the defence sector is also being prioritised, including projects under the defence industrial corridor.

Referring to his recent visit abroad, Singh said foreign companies are showing interest in partnering with Indian firms, indicating growing confidence in the domestic defence ecosystem.

Senior Army officials present at the event highlighted the need for greater synergy between the armed forces, industry and research institutions to address operational challenges through indigenous technological solutions.

They said capabilities such as unmanned systems, precision strike platforms and AI-driven tools are becoming essential in establishing an advantage in future conflicts. (KNO)

Railway push set

by train was encouraging, prompting authorities to scale up services this season.

"With increased frequency of parcel trains and improved handling systems, we expect a substantial rise in the volume of cherries being transported by rail," the official said.

Kashmir is known for producing premium-quality cherries, particularly in districts such as Srinagar, Ganderbal, Shopian, and Baramulla. However, due to their short shelf life, cherries

have long posed logistical challenges for growers, who traditionally relied on road transport to send their produce to markets in cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Chandigarh.

Farmers often faced issues such as delays, high transportation costs, and losses due to spoilage during long journeys.

The shift towards rail transport is now being seen as a potential turning point.

Local growers expressed optimism about the development, saying that faster and more reliable transport could help them fetch better prices. "Cherries are extremely sensitive, and even slight delays affect quality. If trains ensure quicker delivery, it will directly benefit us," said a grower from Shopian.

Another orchardist from Ganderbal noted that reduced transportation costs could also improve profit margins. "Road transport is expensive and unpredictable. Railways can offer a more stable alternative, especially during peak harvest," he said.

The proposed introduction of temperature-controlled cargo trains is also being welcomed, as it would help preserve the freshness and quality of cherries over longer distances.

Experts believe this could open up new markets and enhance the competitiveness of Kashmiri cherries at the national level.

Officials said coordination between the horticulture department, railway authorities, and fruit traders is being strengthened to ensure smooth operations throughout the season.

Loading points, packaging standards, and scheduling are being fine-tuned to handle the anticipated surge in shipments.

If successful, the expanded rail network could not only reduce post-harvest losses but also mark a major step forward in modernising Kashmir's fruit supply chain—bringing tangible benefits to thousands of growers dependent on the cherry trade. (KNO)

Over 1,000 athletes

as an athlete."

A participant from Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) said the event brings together talent from across the country, creating a competitive yet inspiring environment. "You get to learn from others, understand different techniques and push your limits," the athlete said.

Khushbu from Kurukshetra University said the championship is a valuable experience for young players. "Events like these build confidence and help us perform under pressure. They prepare us for bigger stages," she said.

Juji, another participant from Rajasthan, said sports play a key role in shaping personality. "Sports teach discipline, focus and resilience. These are lessons that stay with you for life," she said.

National Wushu Team Coach Kuldeep Handoo, a Dronacharya Awardee, said such championships are vital for nurturing talent. "This is where future champions are identified. Consistent competition at this level helps athletes grow and excel," he said.

While athletes remained focused on performance, some also spoke about the importance of staying on the right path. "Youth should stay engaged in sports and positive activities," one athlete said, adding briefly, "drugs only harm careers and lives."

Importantly, the championship, featuring participants from over 150 universities and more than 1,000 athletes, continues to witness intense bouts and enthusiastic participation, which was thrown open today by LG Manoj Sinha, reflecting the growing popularity of Wushu among young sportspersons. (KNO)

Lotus blooming from Gangotri to Gangasagar: PM Modi on BJP's assembly election win



PTI

New Delhi, May 4: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the lotus is now blooming from Gangotri to Gangasagar with the BJP's historic victory in West Bengal and asked all parties to work for change, not revenge, and ensure that the state's future trumps over fear.

Addressing BJP workers at the party headquarters after the win in assembly elections in West Bengal, Assam and Puducherry, Modi said it was a special day in many ways as it heralds a bright future for the country.

"It is a day of trust in the great democracy of India, trust in the politics of performance, trust in the resolve of stability, trust in the spirit of Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat.

"I bow before the people of West Bengal, Assam, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Kerala," he said at the victory celebration event where BJP President Nitin Nabin, Union ministers Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh, among others, were present.

Modi said on November 14 last year, when the Bihar election results came in, he told the BJP workers from this very spot that the Ganga flows onward from Bihar all the way to Ganga Sagar (in West Bengal).

"And today, with victory in West Bengal, from Gangotri (Uttarakhand) to Ganga Sagar (West Bengal), it is nothing but the lotus in full bloom. Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal today, in these states surrounding Mother Ganga, there are BJP-NDA governments," he said.

Democracy, not fear, won in this festival of democracy in West Bengal, Modi said.

When the BJP has won in Bengal, there should be talk of 'badlav' (change) not 'badla' (revenge), 'bhavishya' (future) not 'bhay' (fear), he said.

The Prime Minister said winning and losing are a natural part of democracy and politics, but the people of the five states have shown the world why the country is the mother of democracy.

BJP breaks through Bengal and bags Assam, Vijay's TVK stars in TN blockbuster

PTI

Kolkata/Chennai, May 4: Extending its saffron brushstroke in north and east India, the BJP was Monday set for a decisive win over the TMC in long elusive West Bengal and headed for another term in Assam while actor-politician Vijay's TVK made a stunning debut in Tamil Nadu as the largest single party in terms of seats won or led.

As votes were counted for assembly elections in West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry, Election Commission trends showed a wipeout of the Left and a solitary win for the Congress that has been battling diminishing electoral returns. That silver lining for the opposition party came from Kerala where the Congress-led UDF won or was leading in 101 of the 140 Assembly seats while the CPM-led ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) was ahead in just under 40 constituencies.

The cynosure of Election 2026, however, was West Bengal, the eastern state where the Trinamool Congress was eyeing a fourth straight term in its only bastion.

"The Lotus blooms in West Bengal! The 2026 West Bengal Assembly Elections will be remembered forever. People's power has prevailed and BJP's politics of good governance has triumphed," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on X.

"I bow to each and every person of West Bengal. The people have given a spectacular mandate to BJP and I assure them that our Party will do everything possible to fulfil the dreams and aspirations of the people of West Bengal. We will provide a Government that ensures opportunity and dignity to all sections of society," he said ahead of a grand celebration being planned at the party's headquarters in Delhi.

As counting progressed, power for the TMC seemed to



be pulling away – further and further. The state's political landscape was changing with the BJP, its campaign spearheaded by Amit Shah with Modi as its lodestar, pushing ahead in border, tribal and industrial regions, while the TMC held ground in parts of Kolkata and select rural strongholds.

According to the Election Commission, the BJP won or was ahead in 195 of the 294 seats, well ahead of the magic number of 147, power in the state finally within its grasp. The Trinamool Congress tally was 90.

The writing may be on the wall, said pollsters. If the trends hold out, it could be all but over for the tough talking Mamata Banerjee and another victory for Brand Modi.

A defiant Banerjee disagreed. "A false narrative is being spread," she alleged in a video message.

The chief minister accused the Election Commission of "not declaring results or leads" in areas where the TMC was ahead. "This is a game plan by the EC and the BJP as it (poll panel) is not declaring results or leads in areas where we are leading," she said.

Banerjee also alleged irregularities in the counting process at some locations.

"In several places, counting has been stopped after the first two to three rounds. In Kalyani,

clearly in the past as his party broke bipolar Dravidian politics and was poised to become the largest single party in Tamil Nadu with wins and leads in 109 of the state's 234 seats.

The ruling DMK that had started the morning at number three position was at 61 and the AIADMK at 44.

Chief Minister MK Stalin was trailing in Kolathur by 8,284 seats. According to Election Commission data, 15 other ministers were also lagging behind.

The choice, it appeared, was clear. Joseph Vijay Chandrasekhar could well join the pantheon of MGR and Jayalalithaa as the stars who made it big in the political firmament.

The star of hits such as "Mersal" and "Leo" went into the campaign with a list of lofty poll promises, including 8 gm gold for marriage, worth about Rs 1.12 lakh. Vijay's assurances in the party manifesto included Rs 2,500 monthly assistance for women below 60 years of age, 8 gm gold for marriage, and six free cooking gas cylinders a year per family.

In Kerala, Sunny Joseph, the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief, said the numbers indicated a pro-UDF trend in the state and expressed confidence that the UDF would reach the 100-seat mark in the 140-strong assembly.

With a major win in its pocket, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Wayanad MP thanked the people of the state for their overwhelming support.

"To all my brothers and sisters in Kerala, thank you for your faith and for your overwhelming support. The trust you have placed in us will be the UDF's guiding force as we work hard towards building a better future for each one of you," she said.

In Puducherry, the All India NR Congress had won or was ahead in 11 of the 30 seats. The DMK stood at five and the BJP at four. The TVK made its

BJP hails historic poll victory in West Bengal, Assam, gives credit to Modi's leadership

PTI

New Delhi, May 4: The BJP on Monday hailed the party's "historic victory" in the West Bengal and Assam Assembly polls, calling it a decisive endorsement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and a rejection of the opposition's "appeasement politics".

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is on course to form its first government in West Bengal as it has raced ahead in more than 200 seats, well past the majority mark, ending the Trinamool Congress's (TMC) 15-year rule in the state. The saffron party is also set to retain power in Assam, while the NDA is poised to return to power in Puducherry.

In a post on X, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the BJP's "historic" victory in West Bengal is the result of the sacrifices and struggles of countless party workers whose families endured violence but never abandoned the saffron flag.

"In this arduous journey of the BJP from zero to a resounding majority today, I bow to all those workers who offered their lives, endured violence, suffered torture, and yet never wavered from the path of ideology -- and to their families. The people of Bengal have paid tribute to all those martyred BJP workers through this resounding majority," he said. Targeting the TMC, Shah accused it of indulging in appeasement politics. "The people of



Bengal have taught such a lesson to infiltrators and their sympathisers that parties indulging in appeasement politics will never be able to forget it. With the hopes and aspirations with which Bengal has expressed its trust in the leadership of Modi ji, we will certainly fulfil them," he said.

"BJP will work day and night to restore the lost glory of Bengal, the sacred land of great personalities like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Swami Vivekananda, Kavi Guru Tagore, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, and Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, and realise the dream of 'Sonar Bangla'," he added.

"Your overwhelming affection and support strengthens our pledge to serve you better and fulfil your aspirations," he said.

BJP president Nitin Nabin said the party's victory in the West Bengal and Assam polls reflects progress and good governance under Modi's leadership.

"This sacred land of great personalities is now set to witness a new era of peace, prosperity and good governance. This historic victory is an indelible symbol of reclaiming West Bengal's identity, its great culture and its lost pride," he said. "Under the leadership of Narendra Modi ji, we are fully committed to realising the resolve to build 'Sonar Bangla' and ensuring all-round development of the state," he added.

In another post, Nabin congratulated the people of Assam for expressing their "unwavering faith" in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for

a third consecutive term. Union minister Kiren Rijju took a swipe at opposition parties, alleging that they had earlier opposed the interests of women.

"Reminds me of the sin committed by Congress, TMC, DMK and SP by voting against the women of India," he said in a post on X.

Senior BJP leader and MP Ravi Shankar Prasad congratulated the party workers, saying the victory is the result of their tireless efforts.

"Today's historic day is an emotional and proud moment because the blooming of the lotus in the birthplace of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee is not just a political victory, but a triumph of the people's faith in the BJP's ideology. This mandate is a victory of development, good governance and the spirit of 'Nation First' over appeasement, corruption and fear," he said in a post on X.

Issuance of new Aadhaar cards only to citizens up to six years requires legislative intervention: SC



PTI

New Delhi, May 4: The Supreme Court on Monday said the issuance of new Aadhaar cards only to citizens up to the age of six years require legislative intervention and appropriate amendments in the existing legal framework.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking direction to the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to issue new Aadhaar cards only to citizens up to the age of six years.

The bench said the appropriate recourse for the petitioner would be to bring all these issues to the notice of the State and other stakeholders to enable them to take cognisance of them.

It disposed of the petition with a direction that it be treated as a representation on behalf of the petitioner.

The plea filed by lawyer Ashwini Upadhyay had also sought a direction to frame stringent guidelines for issuance of Aadhaar to adolescents and adults to stop infiltrators from masquerading as Indian citizens.

It had sought a direction to the authorities to install display

boards at common service centres stating that the 12-digit unique identification number was only a "proof of identity" and not a proof of citizenship, address or date of birth.

"As may be seen from the nature of reliefs, most of these require legislative intervention and appropriate amendments in the existing legal framework," the bench said.

Upadhyay told the bench that the UIDAI has issued 144 crore Aadhaar and almost 99 per cent Indians have been enrolled.

"Point out these issues to the Parliament and the government. They will take care of them," the bench observed.

The petitioner said it was not an adversarial litigation and the plea was for preventing infiltrators from getting Aadhaar.

He referred to the issue of fake documents and said anyone with a rent agreement can get an Aadhaar.

"You raise your grievances to the Union government. They will take appropriate steps," the bench said.

The bench, without expressing any opinion on the merits, disposed of the petition with a direction that it be treated as a representation on behalf of the petitioner.

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE
In the case of: Tajalli Jan D/o: Ghulam Muhammad Dar R/o: Seer Jagir Sopore.
Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Applicant namely Tajalli Jan D/o: Ghulam Muhammad Dar as 22-01-2007 at Home Seer Jagir.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE
In the case of: Nayeem Zahoor S/o: Zahoor Ahmad Dar R/o: Ashtangoo Tehsil Alooas.
Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Daughter namely Abiha Nayeem D/o: Nayeem zahoor Lone as 05-08-2021 at Mother & Child Hospital Sopore.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE
In the case of: Rehana Bashir S/o: Javid Ahmad Wani R/o: Ialad.
Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Son namely Mohammad Hanzallah S/o: Javid Ahmad Wani as 06-12-2020 at H.S.S Hospital Hazubgh.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE
In the case of: Nafeesa Jan D/o: Ghulam Mohammad Dar R/o: Seer Jagir Sopore.
Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Applicant namely Nafeesa Jan D/o: Ghulam Mohammad Dar as 29-04-2006 at Home Seer Jagir Sopore.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE
In the case of: Shah Nawaz Fayaz S/o: Fayaz Ahmad Dar R/o: Model Town Sopore.
Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Daughter namely Aayat Nawaz S/o: Shah Nawaz Fayaz as 17-06-2018 at Mother & Child Hospital Sopore.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

Trump launches new effort to reopen Strait of Hormuz

AP

Dubai, May 4: US forces on Monday launched an effort to guide commercial ships through the Strait of Hormuz, where hundreds have been stuck since the Iran war began. Two American-flagged merchant ships have "successfully transited" through the critical waterway, the US military said. Separately, the US military denied Iran's claims that it struck an American Navy vessel southeast of the strait.

Iran handed over its latest proposal for negotiations with the US to mediators in Pakistan, Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported Friday. Trump subsequently said he's "not satisfied" with it, but did not elaborate on the proposal's apparent shortcomings. The shaky ceasefire between the US and Iran has lasted for three weeks.

European leaders see Trump's troop drawdown from Germany as new proof they must go it alone.

European leaders on Monday said President Trump's snap decision to pull thousands of US troops out of Germany came as a surprise but is a fresh sign that Europe must take care of its own security.

The Pentagon announced last week that it would pull some 5,000 troops out of Germany, but Trump told reporters Saturday that "we're going to cut way down. And we're cutting a lot further than 5,000."

He offered no reason for the move, which blindsided NATO, but his decision came amid an escalating dispute with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz over the US-Israeli



war on Iran, and Trump's anger over European allies' reluctance to get involved in the conflict in the Middle East.

Wall Street hesitates and oil prices climb with uncertainty about the Strait of Hormuz

The US stock market is holding tentatively near its record heights Monday, while oil prices climb with uncertainty about when oil tankers can resume crossing the Strait of Hormuz and restore the world's flow of crude. Dueling claims about a possible Iranian strike on a U.S. Navy vessel in the strait heightened the tensions.

The S&P 500 slipped 0.1 per cent, coming off its latest all-time high.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 216 points, or 0.4 per cent, as of 9:35 am Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was up 0.1 per cent. The action was stronger in the

oil market, where the price for a barrel of Brent crude climbed 2 per cent to USD 110.37 and briefly topped USD 114 during the morning. Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz due to its war with the United States has kept oil tankers pent up in the Persian Gulf and away from customers worldwide. That in turn has sent the price of Brent soaring from roughly USD 70 per barrel before the war.

Iran stands firm on its grip of the strait

The disruption of the waterway has squeezed countries in Europe and Asia that depend on Persian Gulf oil and gas, raising prices far beyond the region.

Trump has promised to bring down gas prices as he faces midterm elections this year.

The US has warned shipping companies they could face sanctions for paying Iran for transit of the strait. It

has enacted a naval blockade on Iranian ports since April 13, telling 49 commercial ships to turn back, U.S. Central Command said Sunday. The blockade has deprived Tehran of oil revenue it needs to shore up its ailing economy.

US officials have expressed hope the blockade forces Iran back to the negotiation table.

US claims progress in reopening the Strait of Hormuz, saying two merchant ships have transited

The US military said Monday that two American-flagged merchant ships had successfully transited the Strait of Hormuz and Navy guided-missile destroyers in the Persian Gulf were helping to restore shipping traffic. It separately denied Iran's claims to have struck an American Navy vessel.

The announcement came a day after US President Donald Trump announced a new initiative to help guide ships through the critical waterway for global energy. Iran has effectively closed the strait since the US and Israel started the war Feb 28, rattling the global economy.

The US-led Joint Maritime Information Center has advised ships to cross the strait in Oman's waters, saying it set up an "enhanced security area." U.S. Central Command didn't say when the Navy ships arrived or when the merchant vessels departed.

It was unclear whether shipping companies, and their insurers, will feel comfortable taking the risk given that Iran has fired on ships in the waterway and vowed to keep doing so.

WHO says risk to public is low after suspected hantavirus outbreak hits ship

REUTERS

Geneva, May 4: The World Health Organization said on Monday there was no need for panic and the risk to the public was low after three people died and three fell ill following a suspected outbreak of the rodent-borne hantavirus on a cruise ship in the Atlantic.

Netherlands-based Oceanwide Expeditions said it was "managing a serious medical situation" on a polar expedition ship, the MV Hondius, which was off Cape Verde, an island nation off Africa's western coast.

The cruise left Argentina about three weeks ago with around 150 passengers and stopped in the Antarctic and other locations on its way to Cape Verde, according to media reports.

"The risk to the wider public remains low. There is no need for panic or travel restrictions," WHO regional director for Europe, Hans Kluge, said in a statement.

Kluge said the WHO was acting with urgency to support the response to the outbreak and working with the countries involved to support medical care, evacuation, investigations and a public health risk assessment.

"Hantavirus infections are uncommon and usually linked to exposure to infected rodents. While severe in some cases, it is not easily transmitted between people," Kluge



said. A Dutch Foreign Ministry spokesperson confirmed that two Dutch passengers had died but gave no further details.

The WHO said in an X post that one of the sick passengers was in intensive care in South Africa. Sky News reported the passenger is British, citing South Africa's Department of Health.

Lab tests have confirmed hantavirus in one of the six people, the organization said.

Lab tests have confirmed hantavirus in one of the six people, the organization said.

Cricket binds India, Jamaica in ties 'written in runs, respect, friendship': Jaishankar



PTI

Kingston, May 4: Cricket serves as a bridge between India and Jamaica, fostering a relationship "written in runs, respect and friendship", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said as he dedicated a digital scoreboard, gifted by New Delhi, to the Caribbean nation.

Speaking at the unveiling of the scoreboard at the iconic Sabina Park cricket stadium in the Jamaican capital Kingston on Sunday, Jaishankar highlighted the unifying role of sports, particularly cricket, which he said is followed passionately by over a billion people in India.

"Sports bring nations together by creating shared experiences and fostering mutual respect. And cricket, in particular, has a special meaning for India and Jamaica," he said.

Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness was also present at the event. Sabina Park is the home of the Jamaica

cricket team and is the only Test cricket ground in the island nation.

Recalling the historic significance of Sabina Park, Jaishankar noted that the ground holds special memories for Indian cricket, including a century by legendary cricketer Rahul Dravid and the start of Virat Kohli's Test career in 2011.

Describing these moments as symbolic of the India-Jamaica connection, he said the relationship between the two countries is "written in runs, respect and friendship".

Jaishankar said the state-of-the-art electronic scoreboard would enhance the viewing experience for cricket lovers in Jamaica and stands as a testament to the enduring cricketing partnership between the two nations.

Highlighting Jamaica's rich cricketing legacy, he said the country commands immense respect globally for producing great players such as George Headley, Michael Holding, Courtney Walsh, Chris Gayle and Andrew Richardson.

Jamaican cricketers receive enthusiastic support from Indian fans, including in the Indian Premier League (IPL), Jaishankar said.

As nations cooperate and compete globally, India and Jamaica will always continue to seek "special connections that define our ties, and cricket is very much one of them", he said.

Macron urges 'coordinated reopening' of Hormuz by US, Iran

AFP

Yerevan, May 4: French President Emmanuel Macron urged the United States and Iran Monday to reopen the Strait of Hormuz in a "coordinated" way, as the US military pressed ahead with a mission to escort ships out of the waterway.

"What we want above all is a coordinated reopening by the United States and Iran — that is the only solution for reopening the Strait of Hormuz," Macron said at a meeting of European leaders in Armenia.

"We are not going to take part in any military operation in a framework that to me seems unclear," said the French leader, whose country has with Britain led efforts to assemble a coalition to reopen the strait once peace is secured.

Hardik misses MI's clash against LSG due to back spasm, Rohit returns

PTI

Mumbai, May 4: An out of form Mumbai Indians' captain Hardik Pandya on Monday missed his team's must-win Indian Premier League match because of a back spasm while Rohit Sharma returned after an injury layoff.

India T20I skipper Suryakumar Yadav came out for the toss and informed that he was "going into the shoes" of an unwell Pandya.

A team statement said, "Hardik Pandya is unwell with back spasm, hence Suryakumar Yadav is captain for today's game."

Pandya has had a forgettable IPL 2026 as captain and player, as Mumbai Indians are on the brink of elimination after finishing fourth in the group stage last year. Mumbai have two wins and seven defeats from their nine matches so far.



Pandya has scored 186 runs and taken four wickets in this IPL so far. An indisposed Pandya had earlier missed an away game against Delhi Capitals with Suryakumar leading the side.

Meanwhile, Rohit was listed

in the team sheet among the five impact sub players. Rohit is returning to the team for the first time since April 12 when he had suffered a hamstring injury during MI's contest against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

Update on Dhoni above my pay grade, he is steadily improving: Eric Simons

PTI

New Delhi, May 4: Chennai Super Kings bowling coach Eric Simons on Monday said that M S Dhoni has not travelled for the away game against Delhi Capitals here, though he is steadily improving after yet to play a game this season due to a calf injury.

More than half the season is done with CSK set to play their 10th game in what has been an underwhelming campaign. Like every season since his international retirement, there is immense speculation over the future of the 44-year-old Indian great in the IPL.

In the pre-match interaction, it was a hardly a surprise that the first question was on Dhoni, who has been batting in the nets of late. "Update on MS Dhoni is way above my pay grade. He's not with us (in Delhi), but steadily improving. He'll be ready when he's ready, and he knows when he's ready to play," that was all Simons had to say on the team icon.

Talking about the performance of the bowlers, he was all praise for Anshul Kamboj, who has impressed in all phase of the game and is the joint highest wicket-taker with 17 scalps.

"Anshul went away. Anshul you see today is not this season, he



started last year. The things that we worked on, he went into the domestic season and worked on different angles of approach to the crease to be more accurate with his yorkers in particular. We've introduced round the wicket, which is no secret now.

"There's a lot of nuances to what we're doing around the wicket that make him particularly effective. He's picked up wickets and been able to restrict the run rate as well. But I think what it really boils down to is his professionalism, the way that he trains," Simons said.

"If you stood next to me and watched the way that he trains, the way that he understands what he's going to do, the simplicity I spoke about, the clarity, I think in the modern game a bowler needs

to be clear about what he wants to do. He's very clear about his tactics, and he's very clear about what his field setting is. There's no grey area for him," added Simons.

With four wins from nine matches, CSK find themselves in a must-win situation for the remainder of the five league matches. They come into Delhi having comprehensively beating Mumbai Indians. Simons remains confident that his team can still make the play-offs from their existing situation. "There has become a bit of a gap between the top four and the rest, but we still have our destiny in our own hands and we do know that we can beat any team in the league. So if we keep playing to our potential, there's no reason why we can't be on the top of the table.

Movies Schedule

Tuesday, 5th May



Raja Shivaji (U/A16+)
Hindi - 05:00 PM



Michael (U/A 13+)
English with English Subtitles
11:30 AM, 05:10 PM



The Devil Wears Prada 2 (A)
English with English Subtitles
11:00 AM, 02:10 PM, 07:30 PM



Ek Din (U/A13+)
Hindi - 01:30 PM



Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A)
Hindi - 12:00 PM



Call: 95416 13868 For assistance with tickets