



Over 60,000 people join padyatra in Budgam

Drug trafficking, terror funding two hands of same enemy: LG Sinha

'Many boys, girls in grip of narcotics, they're victims not criminals, need care; 481 FIRs, 500 arrests in 24 days'

Naveed Ul Haq Ganaie

Budgam, May 05: Likening drug trafficking with terror funding, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that these are two hands of the same enemy and the war against narcotics can only be won by putting collective efforts.

The Lieutenant Governor, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), joined a large people's movement in Budgam today as part of drug-free J&K campaign and assured the citizens that every arm of administration would act with resolve and unity to confront the issue and ensure that the threat is effectively eliminated.

Addressing a huge gathering of over 60,000 people, the Lieutenant Governor said the



fight against drugs is not merely a social issue but a serious matter needed to be resolved on priority. "The entire world

knows that our neighbour, a major patron of terrorism, is smuggling drugs into Jammu Kashmir. Drug | More on P6

Stringent enforcement, faster prosecution key to curb menace: CS

KT News Desk

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Tuesday chaired the 17th Union Territory-level meeting of the Narco Coordination Centre (NCCORD) and undertook a comprehensive review of the Union Territory's performance in stringent enforcement of drug laws, prosecution of offenders, and treatment and rehabilitation of victims affected by substance abuse. The meeting was attended by the Director General, Police; Director General, Prosecution; Principal Secretary, Home; Administrative Secretaries; | More on P6

CM calls for translating budget announcements into tangible outcomes

Directs time-bound achievement of targets

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 05: As a follow-up to the Budget Announcements for implementation during 2026-27, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat here to fast-track implementation of key Budget initiatives, with a focus on timely delivery of welfare measures for the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary; Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javed Rana, Javid Dar and Satish Sharma; Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani; Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo; Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretaries of Jal Shakti, Public Works and Finance, besides all Administrative Secretaries, senior officers of the Finance Department, heads of departments and



other concerned officials. At the outset, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, briefed the Chief Minister, outlining the status of various Budget announcements across departments under different grants and status submitted by the departments.

Administrative Secretaries briefed the Chief Minister on the progress achieved so far and the action taken by their respective departments in implementing the Budget proposals.

Departments reviewed during the meeting included General Administration, Planning, Development &

Monitoring, Information, Science & Technology, Power Development, School Education, Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Finance, Agriculture Production, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Culture, Public Works, Jal Shakti, and Housing & Urban Development.

During the deliberations, the Chief Minister issued a series of directions aimed at expediting implementation, strengthening inter-departmental coordination, and ensuring strict adherence to timelines. He stressed the importance of translating Budget | More on P6

Haj departures conclude from Sgr, 3,952 pilgrims airlifted in 28 flights

Final flight takes off

4,692 pilgrims from J&K

12 drop out due to health issues

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 05: The outbound Haj movement from Srinagar for Haj 2026 concluded on Tuesday with the final flight taking off, marking the successful completion of a coordinated and smooth airlift operation that saw thousands of pilgrims depart for the holy journey.

Executive Officer of J&K Haj Committee, Dr Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a total of 3,952 pilgrims departed from the Srinagar Haj Embarkation Point in 28 flights

to Madina.

He said the departing pilgrims included 2,201 males and 1,751 females, while the overall number of pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir scheduled to perform Haj this year stands at 4,692.

"Remaining pilgrims are using Delhi and Mumbai embarkation points," Dr Qureshi said, adding that 12 pilgrims had to cancel their journey at the final stage due to health issues.

With the last flight taking off today, the embarkation process from Srinagar has officially closed.

Srinagar International Airport confirmed the successful culmination of the Haj operations, stating that all 28 flights carrying 3,952 pilgrims departed smoothly as part of a well-coordinated | More on P6

Design Your Degree

LG interacts with JU students, faculty

KT News Desk

Jammu, May 05: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday interacted with achiever students and faculty of Jammu University's Design Your Degree (DYD) programme at Lok Bhavan and reviewed the initiative's impact on academic growth and innovation.

During the interaction, the students from different semesters presented a detailed overview of their learning experiences, pedagogy of DYD, and shared their major achievements secured on national platforms and landmark competitions.

They also briefed the Lieutenant Governor of the



technology-driven projects aimed at solving real-world challenges, including Agri Vimaan for providing drones to farmers for spraying in farms, Ru-stay for sustainable tourism in rural areas, Arpan-waste to wealth, Bhoomify for turning waste paper into high quality biodegradable products.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the students for their practical approach to learning and their focus on social impact. He encouraged them to develop an effective mechanism for temple waste management in Jammu.

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, | More on P6

In 3 days, 'Vande Bharat Express' ferries 16,349 passengers

Commuters applaud amenities, jerk-free ride

Yogesh

Jammu, May 05: The 'Vande Bharat Express,' recently launched between Jammu and Srinagar, continues to be a major attraction among passengers—not only for its speed but also for its premium services.

This semi-high-speed train, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), has set new records of popularity within just the initial days of its operation, thereby instilling unwavering confidence among travellers.

A tremendous surge in daily passenger volume has been observed on the Vande Bharat Express operating on this route.



On May 4th, the train recorded an occupancy rate of 82 percent, with approximately 4,680 passengers traveling across the two pairs of Vande Bharat services.

This figure rose to 96% the very next day, i.e., May 5th. (Note: On | More on P6

From 70 flops to one hit, Kashmir teenager's breakthrough reel draws nationwide attention

Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, May 05: A teenage student from North Kashmir's Rafiabud in Baramulla district has emerged as a major social media sensation after his singing reel crossed 42.7 million views within nine days, drawing attention from established artists and digital influencers.

Rasik Ahmad Meer, 15, from Hachepora village, shot to fame after uploading a cover of a Bollywood track that rapidly went viral on Instagram. The video, recorded on a smartphone without professional setup, has now placed the young singer in the spotlight.

The reel caught the attention of Punjabi singer Jasmine



Sandlas, who reacted to the performance online. It also drew engagement from digital personalities such as Aly Goni and Simmi Chahal, amplifying its reach further.

Rasik had been consistently posting singing reels despite limited response. His earlier uploads failed to gain traction, but persistence paid off when

his latest performance struck a chord with viewers.

"I did not expect this response. I was just posting regularly and learning," Rasik told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), adding that the support from his family, especially his elder brother, played a key role in keeping him motivated.

Despite the sudden fame, Rasik says his focus remains on studies while he continues to nurture his interest in music. He aspires to perform on a national platform like Indian Idol and represent Kashmir.

His rise comes at a time when Kashmir's cultural link with the entertainment industry is witnessing renewed momentum. Over the past | More on P6

'Op Sindoor' success reflected effectiveness of indigenously developed weapons, systems: MoS Defence

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, May 05: Stating that the success of 'Operation Sindoor' reflected effectiveness of indigenously developed weapons and systems, Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on Tuesday said India's military strength is increasingly being driven by its domestic defence manufacturing ecosystem.

Addressing the North Tech Symposium 2026 in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, Seth, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) credited the armed forces for their "courage and determination" in executing the operation, stating that their efforts were bolstered by advanced



Made-in-India equipment. "India's military might is forged in the factories of our defence industries," he said, adding that the combined efforts of the government, defence public sector undertakings, private

industry, start-ups and MSMEs have strengthened national security.

Referring to 'Operation Sindoor,' the Minister said the forces dismantled terror hideouts and countered adversarial

designs, underlining the role of indigenous technology in enhancing operational capability.

He said India's defence manufacturing sector has recorded significant growth, with rising production and export figures pointing to the country's emergence as a capable player in the global defence market. This progress, he said, reflects the government's push towards self-reliance in defence.

Highlighting the role of innovation, Seth described MSMEs as the backbone of the economy and start-ups as key drivers of future growth. He said they will play a pivotal role in achieving the government's vision of a developed India by 2047. | More on P6

World Asthma Day

Asthma lifelong disease, demands consistent proper medical care: Experts

'Anti-inflammatory inhalers key to controlling symptoms, reduce risk of severe attacks, fatalities'

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, May 05: Asthma, a chronic respiratory condition affecting millions globally, is a lifelong disease that demands consistent and proper medical care, experts said on Tuesday.



World Asthma Day 2026 was observed on May 05 across the globe, with healthcare professionals, policymakers, and patient groups

intensifying efforts to raise awareness about asthma care and push for improved access to essential treatment.

This year's theme, "Access

to anti-inflammatory inhalers for everyone with asthma, still an urgent need," underscores the pressing need to make proven, life-saving medications widely available and affordable.

Medical experts say that anti-inflammatory inhalers are central to controlling asthma symptoms and significantly reducing the risk of severe attacks and fatalities.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), noted | More on P6

No drug peddler will be spared, 4 lakh join awareness drives: DC Budgam

'20 FIRs, 14 arrests in 25 days; 850 pharmacies under CCTV, 15-bed de-addiction IPD made operational'

Naveed Ul Haq Ganaie

Budgam, May 05: Deputy Commissioner Budgam Athar Aamir Khan on Tuesday said the administration has adopted a zero-tolerance approach against drug abuse, with massive public participation and intensified enforcement measures underway across the district.

Speaking during the anti-drug padyatra led by Manoj Sinha, which was held from New Bus Stand to Old Bus Stand in Budgam, the Deputy

Commissioner, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that around 4 lakh people have participated in awareness programmes conducted across the district.

"Awareness programmes were conducted in which approximately 400,000 people participated. Our commitment is that no individual and no household in Budgam will remain untouched by this campaign," he said.

Highlighting enforcement actions, | More on P6

2 dead, 2 missing after vehicle falls in Nallah on Mughal Road

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, May 05: Two persons have died while two others remain missing after a vehicle they were travelling in was found in a nallah near Chhattapani along the Mughal Road, officials said on Tuesday.

Officials told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that four persons went missing on Monday while travelling on the Mughal Road following snowfall that made the road slippery, triggering a search and rescue operation.

During the operation on Tuesday, the vehicle was traced in a nallah at Chhattapani. Two bodies were recovered from the spot, while | More on P6

No room for quality compromise, accountability must be visible: Deputy CM

Reviews progress on PWD works, sets deadline for completion of restoration works

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 5: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting to review progress on the ongoing Public Works Department (PWD) projects being executed across Jammu and Kashmir.

While reviewing the division-wise status of works, the Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, directed the officers to ensure timely completion of projects under R&B, PMGSY, Cities and Towns, Potholes, Mechanical and NABARD, with zero tolerance for delays, spill overs, lapses or quality standards.

Emphasizing quality and efficiency, the Deputy Chief Minister called for strict adherence to timelines in execution of all PWD works, including those related to health and education sectors. He warned that contractors causing undue delays would face strict action. He directed for expediting the renovation and upgradation works of PWD Guest Houses, ensuring completion within the set timelines. He also stressed the timely execution of blacktopping works across J&K.

Highlighting the need for faster implementation of major infrastructure



projects, he directed for taking up the big road projects under SASCI for smooth and prompt initiation.

The Deputy Chief Minister reviewed the progress under various sectors, including R&B, PMGSY, Cities & Towns, CRIF, RIDF, Pothole and other infrastructure components. He instructed the senior officers, including Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers, to conduct regular site visits to ensure quality and pace of work.

During the comprehensive review, he underscored strict adherence to quality benchmarks in all ongoing and upcoming projects, asserting that there would be no tolerance for substandard execution, delays or administrative lapses. "There is no

room for quality compromise. Accountability must be visible at every level," he stated, directing the officers to ensure close supervision and timely completion of works.

He also emphasized expeditious resolution of land, Forest and compensation cases to avoid project delays and directed that bar charts be prominently displayed at all the project sites for monitoring progress.

The Deputy Chief Minister specifically called for acceleration of work on key projects, including Ramban Bridge, Majalta Bridge, PWD Guest House Udhampur, New Assembly Complex Jammu, Pragwal-Inderpati Bridge, PWD Guest House Hyderpora, Boulevard Road and other major road and bridge projects

across J&K.

He further directed for removal of bottlenecks hindering the road widening projects. He stressed that all procedural requirements, including technical sanctions, tendering and allotments, be completed in the shortest possible time to ensure timely execution.

He directed the concerned officials to submit a detailed report on the Ramnagar accident and instructed immediate replacement of poorly constructed parapets at identified locations to enhance public safety.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineers, Director Finance, Planning officials, Superintending Engineers, and Executive Engineers from all engineering wings of Jammu and Kashmir.

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju inaugurates H. E. Bakula Rinpoche Memorial Lecture Series in Leh

KT NEWS DESK

Leh, May 05: Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju Tuesday inaugurated the H. E. Bakula Rinpoche Memorial Lecture Series at the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS) at Choglamsar in Leh. The lecture series is being conducted as part of the 2569th Vesak Buddha Purnima Celebrations currently going on in the UT of Ladakh.

Rijiju started the proceedings by lighting the traditional lamp and offering a traditional Khatak to the portrait H. E. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche (KBR).

Addressing the gathering at CIBS Rijiju, as per a PIB statement, said that there could not have been a better time for him to come to Ladakh as the Holy Relics of Tathagata are on display and the entire region is immersed in the hues of devotion and spirituality. He expressed his gratitude towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi for listening to the long lasting wishes of the people of Ladakh and allowing the relics to be displayed at this land after a gap of more than 70 years.

Talking about the life of H. E. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, Rijiju said that KBR has made contributions not only for Ladakh and India but also the whole of Buddhism. He expressed an urgent need for his life and contributions to be studied in depth so that the future generations can be made aware of the exemplary work done by him for his region and also his religion.

Rijiju asserted that KBR became the voice of Ladakh and Ladakhis wherever he went as the cause of the upliftment of his people was very close to his heart and he did not miss any opportunity to work



towards the fulfilment of this cause in whatever capacity he could. The Minister credited KBR for bringing modern education to Ladakh and said that all future generations will continue to bear the fruits of the efforts that he had put in during his lifetime.

The Minister also made a special mention of KBR's efforts at reviving Buddhism in Mongolia, where he served as Ambassador of India, and said that it is because of his efforts that people of Mongolia look up to Indians and hold them in high regard.

Rijiju talked at length about KBR's philosophy of not letting go

of one's roots irrespective of where one ends up in life. He said that this is in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha and should be adhered to by all.

Senior dignitaries from UT administration including Chief Secretary Ladakh Ashish Kundra, DGP Ladakh Mukesh Singh, CEC Kargil Mohammad Jaffar Akhoun and Administrative Secretaries Sanjit Rodrigues and Bhanu Prabha were also present on the occasion.

After concluding his talk at the venue, Rijiju also visited the site of the display of the Holy Relics of the Tathagata at Jivetsal and paid obeisance to the Relics on display.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates Digital X-Ray unit, Thyroid Analyser at PHC Parigam Pulwama

Inspects works on under-construction 50-bedded hospital at Kakapora



KT NEWS DESK

PULWAMA, MAY 05: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Tuesday undertook an extensive visit of the Pampore constituency of Pulwama district and took stock of works on various public utility projects as well as reviewed healthcare facilities.

MLA Pampore, Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi; Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani; Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr. Jehangir Bhakshi; CEO/CMO Kulgam senior officers of district administration and other sectoral officers also accompanied the Minister.

During her visit, the Minister, as per an official statement, inaugurated state-of-art

round of the PHC Parigam and took stock of medical facilities available. She also interacted with medical staff and local residents.

The Minister outlined the government's commitment to equipping peripheral health institutions with modern technology and adequate manpower. Later, the Minister also inspected the under-construction 50-bedded hospital at Kakapora. She reviewed the progress of ongoing works and directed the executing agencies to expedite construction while maintaining quality standards.

Stressing the importance of timely completion, she noted that the hospital will play a crucial role in providing accessible and affordable healthcare services to the people of the area.

Meanwhile, Sakeena Itoo also visited the site for 50-bedded Integrated AYUSH Hospital and Yoga Training Centre at Ratnipora. She highlighted the growing importance of traditional systems of medicine and holistic wellness, stating that the proposed facility will promote preventive healthcare, wellness tourism, and community well-being through AYUSH practices and yoga.

She emphasized the government's commitment to equipping rural healthcare institutions with modern technology to ensure accessible and affordable healthcare for all. The Minister also took

Satish Sharma assures prioritising solarisation over conventional electricity in J&K



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 5: Minister for Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, Tuesday reaffirmed government's strong commitment towards accelerating the solar energy adoption across Jammu and Kashmir, while directing the officials to ensure time-bound resolution of all issues related to ongoing and proposed solar initiatives.

A delegation from the Jammu and Kashmir Solar Association called on the Minister here Tuesday to discuss key concerns regarding promotion of renewable energy in the region.

The Minister, as per an official statement, assured the delegation of full support from the government, particularly in facilitating installation of the rooftop solar systems in far-flung and underserved areas.

Emphasizing the strategic importance of solar energy, Satish Sharma said that expanding clean energy infrastructure is central to the government's

vision of building a sustainable, energy-efficient and environmentally responsible Jammu and Kashmir. He said that increased adoption of solar power would not only help meet rising energy demands but also reduce the dependence on conventional energy sources. Demonstrating a proactive approach, the Minister directed the officers to resolve all pending issues of the Association in a time-bound manner. He stressed that delays in approvals, clearances or implementation must be addressed urgently to ensure seamless execution of solar projects across the Union Territory.

Satish Sharma further called for improved coordination among the government departments, implementing agencies and private stakeholders to eliminate bottlenecks and fast-track solar initiatives. He assured that the government would extend all necessary policy and administrative support to strengthen the renewable energy ecosystem.

Vibrant Village Programme-II: DC Bandipora reviews proposals

KT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, MAY 05: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Tuesday chaired a meeting of the District Level Screening Committee to review and finalize departmental proposals under the Vibrant Village Programme-II (VVP-II) for identified border villages in the district.

During the meeting, various departments presented action plans for approval under VVP-II, focusing on infrastructure development, renewable energy, education, healthcare, disaster management, skill development, public utilities, and livelihood generation initiatives.

Detailed discussions were held on proposals aimed at strengthening educational institutions, healthcare facilities, rural infrastructure, power supply, water conservation, disaster preparedness, tourism promotion, and

employment generation in the identified villages.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, stressed the importance of practical, sustainable, and community-oriented project planning under the programme. She directed departments to ensure proper convergence, avoid duplication of works, and prioritize projects that directly benefit the local population while improving essential services in remote border areas. Emphasizing coordinated implementation, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the need for effective inter-departmental coordination to ensure smooth execution of approved works under VVP-II.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer Bandipora, Assistant Commissioner Development Bandipora, officers from various line departments, and other concerned officials.

Social Welfare Srinagar Dept organises Facilitation Camp

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 05: Department of Social Welfare Srinagar, through its SANKALP - Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW), organized a facilitation camp at Ganderpora, Srinagar Tuesday. The initiative aimed to extend welfare services and create awareness among the local population about various government schemes.

The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from residents, with officials from SANKALP-HEW Srinagar providing on-the-spot assistance and guidance on a wide range of social welfare schemes. Beneficiaries were informed about eligibility criteria, required documentation, and application procedures for pensions, scholarships, financial aid, and other

social security initiatives and nearly 50 beneficiaries were onspot linked to various schemes.

A special emphasis was placed on reaching marginalized and vulnerable sections of society, ensuring that no eligible individual is left out of the government's welfare framework. Officials also actively addressed public queries and grievances, facilitating immediate solutions wherever possible.

Speaking on the occasion, officials from SANKALP-HEW Srinagar highlighted the importance of such outreach programs in bridging the gap between the administration and the public. They reiterated the department's commitment to inclusive development and ensuring easy access to welfare services for all.

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: Reshma Begum W/o: Abdul Qayoom Dar R/o: Sher Colony 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 Aya Qayoom D/o: Abdul Qayoom Dar as 31-07-2014 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: Fayaz Ahmad Sofi S/o: Gh Nabi Sofi R/o: Baba Yousuf.

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

(Registrar of Birth and Death) ...Non Applicant
NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Self namely Fayaz Ahmad Sofi S/o: Gh Nabi Sofi as 10-04-1966 at Home.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

CM Omar expresses grief over death of Director Finance's son

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 05: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed deep sorrow over the untimely demise of Amaan Zahoor, son of Zahoor Ahmad Wani, Director Finance.

In his condolence message, the Chief Minister conveyed heartfelt

sympathies to the bereaved family and prayed for strength and fortitude to them in this hour of grief.

He also prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

Amaan Zahoor Wani, 25, son of Director Finance Zahoor Ahmad Wani, passed away in Delhi on Monday following a sudden and massive cardiac arrest.

CM deposes minister, advisor to offer condolences

KT NEWS DESK

Anantnag, May 05: On the directions of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Minister Javid Ahmed Dar and Advisor to Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani on Tuesday visited the residence of Director Finance Zahoor Ahmad Wani in Anantnag to offer condolences on the untimely demise of his son, Amaan Zahoor Wani.

Amaan Zahoor Wani passed away in Delhi following a sudden cardiac arrest yesterday.

The Minister and the Advisor were accompanied by MLA Gulmarg Farooq Ahmad Shah and MLA Pahalgam Altaf Ahmad Wani.

They visited the bereaved family at their residence in Akad, Anantnag, and conveyed heartfelt condolences to Zahoor Ahmad Wani on behalf of the Chief Minister and the entire government. Expressing deep sorrow over the tragic loss, they offered words of comfort to the grieving family and prayed for strength and forbearance in this hour of grief, as well as for eternal peace to the departed soul.

EOW busts health educator recruitment scam, accused held



KNO

Srinagar, May 05: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Kashmir on Tuesday cracked a recruitment fraud case in the Health Department and arrested a senior official for his alleged role in facilitating fake appointments, officials said.

In a statement, a spokesperson said the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Kashmir of Crime Branch J&K has conducted searches in connection with FIR No. 19/2017 registered under Sections 420, 467, 468, and 471 RPC of Police Station Crime Branch Kashmir (now EOW Kashmir) and arrested a habitual offender, Shahnawaz Ahmad Mir, Senior Assistant in the Health Department and resident of Tankipora Shaheed Gunj Srinagar, for his involvement in

the case.

He said the case originated from a communication received from the Deputy Director Health Services Kashmir, indicating that one Bashir Ahmad Sofi of Mazhama Budgam had fraudulently secured his appointment as a Health Educator by producing forged transfer orders and a fabricated Last Pay Certificate.

"Investigation revealed that the accused illegally entered service at Block Sheeri Baramulla and drew salary, causing wrongful loss to the state exchequer."

He said, further investigation has revealed Shahnawaz Ahmad Mir's involvement in multiple similar cases, which are under probe or have been charge-sheeted. Further investigation in the instant case is ongoing.—(KNO)

Ladakh sees massive turnout for Lord Buddha's relics: Rijiju

KNO

Leh, May 05: Union Minister Kiren Rijiju on Tuesday said that thousands of people from across Ladakh are visiting Leh to pay obeisance to the sacred relics of Lord Buddha, terming it a rare and fortunate opportunity for the region.

Speaking to reporters, Rijiju said his visit was primarily aimed at participating in events linked to the relics currently housed in Leh. He said people in large numbers are thronging the venue for darshan, adding that such an opportunity is otherwise available only abroad.

The Union Minister also delivered the Kushok Bakula Rinpoche Memorial Lecture, where he underlined the need for younger generations to understand the life and legacy of Kushok Bakula



Rinpoche. He said Bakula Rinpoche's contribution towards modernising Ladakh and reviving Buddhism in Mongolia remains unparalleled.

Highlighting development, Rijiju said several schemes are being implemented in Ladakh through the Ministry of Minority Affairs

and other central initiatives. He hailed the support extended to the region over the years under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Describing his visit as brief, the minister said he felt a sense of peace after paying respects to the relics and interacting with the local people—(KNO)

People's verdict must be respected: Farooq Abdullah on election results

NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIE

Budgam, May 05: National Conference (NC) President Farooq Abdullah on Tuesday said that the people's verdict in the recently declared election results in four states and one Union Territory must be respected, expressing hope that the new governments would work for public welfare.

Speaking to reporters at Charar-i-Sharief in central Kashmir's Budgam district, Abdullah said the decision of the people is before everyone. "New governments have come in; may Allah guide them to work for the welfare of the people. This nation belongs



to all of us, and it should be taken care of so that everyone progresses." On the upcoming Panchayat elections, Abdullah said the NC is ready to participate and is awaiting the official notification. He described Panchayats as an essential pillar of

democracy, stating that they enable development at the grassroots level.

Referring to developmental issues at Charar-i-Sharief, Abdullah said work on the Khanqah project was initiated during his tenure in 1996

but alleged that later modifications weakened the structure. He claimed that substandard construction and structural flaws have made the first floor unsafe for prayers.

He added that despite expert recommendations, no corrective measures were implemented. Urging the present administration to intervene, he appealed for renovation and completion of the unfinished Khanqah project.

Abdullah also raised concerns about infrastructure issues at Pakherpora Shrine, stating that the ground near the new mosque requires immediate attention—(KNO)

Singla visits Shopian, assesses ongoing NMJKA campaign



KT NEWS DESK

Shopian, May 05: Secretary, Information Technology Department and District Mentor of Nasha Mukta JK Abhiyan (NMJKA) for Shopian on Tuesday chaired a grand anti-drug awareness camp under the 100 day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan at the Mini Secretariat, Shopian.

Dr. Piyush Singla inspected the multiple stalls set up by various departments showcasing government schemes, skill development programmes and awareness materials aimed at sensitizing the participants about various livelihood, self employment schemes and other skill based initiatives available for youth.

During the visit, the departments were directed to strengthen efforts to combat the drug abuse by facilitating access to welfare schemes, vocational training, counselling and employment oriented programmes. Emphasis was laid on integrating affected individuals into the mainstream through structured support systems.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Piyush Singla appreciated the proactive role of the district administration in effective organisation of the 100 day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan. He highlighted the serious social and economic consequences of drug addiction and called for a unified and sustained response. He emphasized that the fight

against drug abuse cannot be undertaken by the government alone and requires collective efforts from the society, educational institutions and the families.

Dr. Piyush Singla encouraged the youth to adopt positive and productive paths and urged the parents to guide and support their children with care and vigilance. He stressed that the issue must be addressed with compassion, dignity and collective responsibility.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, in his inaugural address, stated that sustained efforts are underway across the district under the Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan. He urged the public to confidentially share information about the individuals affected by substance abuse to ensure timely intervention, treatment and rehabilitation.

He highlighted the importance of promoting self employment opportunities as a means of recovery and reintegration into society. Cultural performances formed an integral part of the programme with the students from Gujjar and Bakerwal Hostel Shopian, New Greenland Higher Secondary School Shopian, and Upper Primary School Safanagri presented impactful performances. A skit depicting the harsh realities of drug abuse and its adverse effects on individuals and families received appreciation for its realistic portrayal and strong message of awareness and recovery.

Continued on
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RS Polls

Swear you didn't back BJP: Tanvir Sadiq to PDP Chief



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, May 05: Senior National Conference leader and MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq, on Tuesday challenged Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Mehbooba Mufti and her party legislators to publicly swear that they did not vote in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the recent Rajya Sabha elections.

Speaking to reporters in Srinagar, Sadiq said that if the PDP leadership is true to the people of J&K, it must remove doubts over its role in the polls.

Defending his party's conduct, he stated that the National Conference followed all laid-down procedures during voting. "Our polling agents ensured that ballots were shown as required. There was complete transparency. Had we not shown the ballot, our vote would have been declared invalid," he explained.

He added that attempts to mislead people would not

succeed in a democratic system. "People are the ultimate decision-makers. Whoever thinks they can take people for granted or hoodwink them will get a response through the ballot box," he remarked.

Sadiq also drew parallels with electoral outcomes across the country, noting that recent elections have shown how unpredictable voter behaviour can be. "From West Bengal and Assam to Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, results have surprised many. In Tamil Nadu, someone who until recently was only seen as a celebrity is now in a position to become Chief Minister, reflecting how people decide outcomes," he said, adding that such shifts underline the power of voters.

He further referred to political changes in Kerala, observing how power dynamics between alliances continue to evolve, reinforcing that no party should take voters lightly.

Continued on
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Govt filled numerous Health Dept vacancies: Sakeena Itoo

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pulwama, May 05: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo on Tuesday said that CM Omar Abdullah led Government has filled in numerous vacancies in the Health Department during the past 18 months.

Talking to reporters here in South Kashmir, Minister Itoo said, "The government has made significant progress over the past 18 months by filling numerous vacancies in the Health Department and initiating key reforms aimed at improving service delivery."

The Minister said that several posts have already been filled, while many more have been referred for recruitment. She added that infrastructure gaps are being systematically addressed, with a focus on ensuring that people can access quality healthcare within their own areas instead of travelling outside for treatment.

Accompanied by MLA Pampore, Hasnain Masoodi, the Minister toured several areas including Parigam, Kakapora, and Ratnipora to review ongoing developmental works in the health sector. During the visit, she inaugurated a digital X-ray facility and a thyroid analyzer at the Primary Health Centre (PHC) Parigam in the presence of Director Health Services Kashmir Jehangir Bakshi.



These new diagnostic facilities are expected to significantly enhance early detection and treatment capabilities for the local population.

The Minister also inspected the proposed site for a 50-bedded Integrated AYUSH Hospital and Yoga Training Centre in Ratnipora. Stressing the importance of integrating traditional and modern systems of medicine, she said such institutions are essential to promote alternative healing practices alongside advanced medical care.

At Kakapora, Itoo reviewed the construction work of a 50-bedded hospital and directed concerned authorities to expedite the project to ensure

timely completion. She underlined that the government remains committed to delivering quality healthcare facilities at the grassroots level.

Meanwhile, the Minister referred to the recent directive by the Supreme Court of India mandating an examination for Rehbar-e-Taleem (ReT) teachers within three years. "The interests of the teaching community will be safeguarded," she said.

Itoo said that proactive steps are being taken to overcome staff shortages across departments, with a special focus on strengthening the healthcare system through sustained recruitment and infrastructure development—(KNO)

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EDITORIAL

CM's Six-Month Roadmap Is A Season Of Delivery

The Darbar Move has brought the government back to Srinagar. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah laid out a clear plan for the next six months, saying "it is time to deliver". The CM has called this the "most productive working season" for Jammu and Kashmir. He is right. The next few months will decide how well the government performs. The Amarnath Yatra is coming. The tourism season is at its peak. The monsoon will bring its own challenges. The government cannot afford to relax. The

message is simple: deliver results. All departments must work together, finish projects on time, and use resources wisely. People have expectations, and it is their responsibility to meet them. This is not a new message, but the timing makes it important. The Darbar Move is an old tradition. It was started so that governance reaches both the Jammu and Kashmir regions. But tradition alone does not help anyone. What matters is what the government does after reaching Srinagar. A roadmap has been promised.

Now people will watch if that roadmap leads anywhere. There is good news for local businesses too. MLAs from Srinagar have welcomed the move, saying it will boost hotels, transport, and markets. This is true. When the government shifts, money starts moving. But the bigger benefit is trust. When people see the government working in their city, they feel heard. The direction has been set. Now the departments must walk the path. The next six months will show whether this government is serious about change or

just busy with paperwork. The Amarnath Yatra will test its management skills. The tourism season will test its coordination. The monsoon will test its readiness. The people of Jammu and Kashmir are watching. They have seen many promises before. They want to see action now. The CM has taken charge. He has spoken clearly. The time for talking is over. The time for delivering has begun. Let these six months be remembered not for what was said, but for what was done.

The Bharatiya Janata Party Must Steer Bengal To A Second Renaissance

A lot that has gone wrong with Bengal has to change, and change fast. The BJP has to hit the ground running.

Kanchan Gupta

The Bharatiya Janata Party's victory in the West Bengal assembly election will be remembered for a long time not only because it marks the party gaining political power in a state where it has for long been seen as an also-ran but also for the comprehensive and crushing defeat suffered by the Trinamool Congress.

Mamata Banerjee and her nephew may try hard to delegitimise the BJP's victory by citing the extraordinary measures taken by the Election Commission of India, ranging from the Special Intensive Revision of the voters' list to the deployment of Central armed forces, turning the election into a David versus Goliath fight. But David lost and, truth be told, there is little or no sympathy for him in West Bengal.

The sheer scale of the BJP's victory is unimaginable. The party's top leadership had sensed the discontent and set about the task of harnessing it in a methodical manner. For the past couple of years, this preparation went on right under Mamata Banerjee's nose but she failed to see it and her party colleagues could not muster the courage to force her to see it and stave off an end so humiliatingly brutal.

It would be easy and absolutely correct to explain the BJP's juggernaut flattening the TMC as the consequence of a massive consolidation of Hindu votes that outweighed the Muslim vote which Mamata Banerjee



had banked upon. But this explanation is at once simplistic and not entirely reflective of facts that merit attention for a better understanding of the jhor — storm — that has blown across West Bengal, from the hills to the sea, uprooting and destroying what had been carefully cultivated to keep the BJP forever an outsider, a bohiringoto, in the state's power politics.

Cynics would argue that corruption is no

longer an election issue in our country and that crime, at best, has traction in mobilising street protests. Monday's result shows that both premises are wrong. The voters of Bengal have voted overwhelmingly against the massive corruption that had come to define the TMC government — images of cash being recovered from a minister who was possibly the closest aide of Mamata Banerjee have lingered as have the pain and the anguish of

thousands of teachers, middle-class Bengalis who found themselves out of their jobs because another minister had taken cash and given jobs to thousands of others.

Similarly, the criminality of a callous administration and an indifferent, if not complicit, political leadership has been punished by the voters. Chanting women are safest in West Bengal does not make sense or carry conviction when facts fly in the face of such claims. West Bengal has the dubious distinction of being lazy about registering complaints and, worse, the conviction rate is among the lowest in the country. While other states have witnessed a decline in child marriage, West Bengal has seen a spurt. This is a state where women are publicly flogged as punishment and the political leadership keeps quiet because silence equates votes.

If Mamata Banerjee thought her communal politics of minority appeasement — it began with declaring Urdu an official language of West Bengal — would not fetch a backlash, then she is not quite the astute politician she is made out to be. Over the years, her indulgence of Islamists to the exclusion of mounting Hindu concerns generated anguish and, then, anger, which has gathered pace with political developments in Bangladesh where the minority Hindu population is under attack. With the Jamaat-e-Islami winning all constituencies along Bangladesh's border with India, the Hindu Bengali suddenly woke up to the reality of the enemy at the gate. In a sense, this served as a tipping point in

coalescing Hindu votes against Mamata Banerjee and her patently communal regime.

Last, though not least, doles work up to a point and not beyond. That point has been reached in Bengal. Vast stretches of Bengal now appear to be devoid of young men and women who have migrated to other states to earn a livelihood, leaving behind old parents and ageing relatives. There was a time when Bengal would send out accomplished Bengalis — scientists, technicians, artists, actors, musicians, teachers, doctors, lawyers — who would become a part of the host state's respected elite. Now Bengal has a diminishing number of accomplished Bengalis to send out. The meme about Gurugram waiting for their Bengali maids to return after voting in the election was not the least bit funny; for many non-resident Bengalis, this writer included, it was extremely hurtful and depressing.

All this and more that has gone wrong with Bengal has to change, and change fast. The BJP has to hit the ground running. A New Bengal and a second Renaissance are possible. Bengal has the wherewithal for both. What it needs is leadership. The BJP, having proven it can win Bengal, has to now steer the state to a future that would serve everybody well and restore the lost pride in being in Bengal and being Bengali.

Kanchan Gupta, a veteran journalist who began his career with the launching of The Telegraph in 1982, is Senior Adviser, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. Source: The Telegraph India

Maritime Chokepoints Reshape Security

Recent developments highlight how maritime chokepoints remain critical to both geopolitical contestation and geo-economic stability

Upasha Kumari

Recent developments highlight how maritime chokepoints remain critical to both geopolitical contestation and geo-economic stability. In the Strait of Hormuz, through which a significant share of global energy trade transits, U.S. President Donald Trump indicated that naval forces have been directed to respond to potential mine-laying activities by Iranian vessels. This follows the seizure of a tanker linked to Iranian oil shipments and reported incidents involving Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and commercial shipping. Taken together, these developments signal a calibrated escalation rather than an isolated episode, reinforcing the fragility of this maritime corridor.

The Strait of Hormuz is not just a maritime passage; it is a point where geographic realities underpin energy security and strategic signaling. Nearly a fifth of globally traded oil passes through this narrow waterway, making even limited disruptions disproportionately consequential. What is at play is not only the risk of closure, which remains unlikely given the costs to all actors, but the persistent possibility of managed instability. Low-intensity, deniable actions such as mine deployment, vessel harassment, or targeted seizures create uncertainty without crossing thresholds that would trigger full-scale conflict. This "grey zone" dynamic allows states to exercise coercive leverage while retaining plausible deniability.

Such dynamics point to a broader structural condition. Contemporary maritime competition is increasingly defined not



by decisive naval battles but by the ability to shape risk environments in critical corridors. Chokepoints like Hormuz function as strategic pressure valves, where even the perception of insecurity can influence insurance premiums, freight rates, and routing decisions. In this sense, disruption operates as much through market psychology as through physical interdiction. The result is a form of economic statecraft that weaponises uncertainty rather than outright blockade.

Beyond Hormuz, the Indian Ocean's wider chokepoint architecture reinforces this logic. The Strait of Malacca remains indispensable for East Asia's energy lifelines, while secondary routes such as the Mozambique Channel and the Lombok Strait offer limited redundancy at higher

economic and logistical cost. This uneven geography creates asymmetries of vulnerability. States dependent on uninterrupted flows bear higher exposure, while those capable of threatening disruption gain strategic bargaining power. A shift is visible from sea control to what may be better understood as chokepoint-centric deterrence.

Here, influence is exercised through positional advantage, selective disruption, and the credible signaling of escalation potential. Control is rarely absolute; instead, it is contingent, episodic, and often indirect. The strategic objective is not domination of the commons in a classical Mahanian sense, but the ability to modulate access at critical nodes. For India, these evolving dynamics carry layered

implications. Geographically central to the Indian Ocean Region, India is both a stakeholder in the stability of maritime flows and a potential security provider.

Its maritime vision, articulated through SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), must therefore move beyond presence-based diplomacy to capability-driven deterrence. This includes enhancing maritime domain awareness, investing in mine countermeasure capabilities, deepening interoperability with partner navies, and strengthening institutional mechanisms for cooperative security. Equally, it requires recognition that economic resilience, including diversification of energy routes and strategic reserves, is inseparable from maritime strategy. An additional layer of complexity lies in the

growing entanglement between state and non-state actors, and the blurring of military and commercial domains.

The presence of paramilitary forces, private shipping interests, and globally distributed supply chains means that chokepoint tensions are no longer confined to traditional state-to-state confrontation. Instead, they unfold across a hybrid battlespace where legal ambiguity, fragmented accountability, and asymmetric tactics prevail. This complicates deterrence, as responses must be calibrated not only to avoid escalation but also to maintain the legitimacy of maritime norms such as freedom of navigation. In this environment, the challenge is not simply securing sea lanes, but governing risk in a domain where disruption is diffuse, attribution is contested, and the economic consequences are immediate and far-reaching. The developments in the Strait of Hormuz ultimately point to a larger conclusion.

In an interconnected global order, chokepoints are not peripheral constraints but central theatres of geopolitical contestation. Their significance lies not only in their physical narrowness, but in their capacity to compress risk, amplify leverage, and transmit shocks across the international system. As great power competition intensifies, the governance of these narrow seas will increasingly define the stability of both regional security architectures and the global economic order.

The writer comments on international relations and education, is the co-author of Creativity and Critical Pedagogy in Education and is pursuing a PhD in Political Science. Source: The Statesman

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India's Steel Sector Advances Towards Self-Reliance

Rising exports and expanding specialty steel output are further reinforcing India's global position. With clear pathways for green steel and decarbonisation, the industry is aligning with long term sustainability goals.

Press Information Bureau

India's steel sector is a key "sunrise sector" with strong and steady growth. It became the world's second-largest steel producer in 2018 and has retained this position. At the same time, steel consumption has more than doubled over the past 12 years. As demand increased, exports rose while imports declined, improving self-reliance. To support this growth, the government ensured raw material availability and reduced production costs. It also improved access to global markets for Indian steel producers. Under the PLI scheme, 23,022 crore investment supported specialty steel production and job creation. This resulted in 2.4 million tonnes of output and over 13,000 new jobs. India has achieved about 66% of its National Steel Policy production target. Going forward, green steel aims to reduce emissions by avoiding use of fossil fuels to reduce the carbon footprints. India is also committed to decarbonising the sector and achieving net zero emission by 2070.

Steel Sector Momentum

India's steel sector, the backbone of India's growth story, continues to strengthen its march towards domestic reliance. India became the world's second largest steel producer in 2018 and has retained this position since then. Share of global crude steel production rose from 5.2% in 2014 to 7.9% in 2024. This reinforces India's position as a competitive and expanding global player.

The country is also the 2nd largest consumer of finished steel as per the World Steel Association. India's finished steel consumption has witnessed a significant rise. It increased from 77 million tonnes (MT) in 2014-15 to 163.7 MT in 2025-26. This growth reflects the rapid pace of infrastructure development, expanding urbanisation. It is also driven by robust growth in manufacturing, and a sustained increase in domestic demand. Collectively, these trends underscore steady evolution of India's steel sector as a key contributor to industrial growth and economic development.

Aligning with the broader vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and greater self-reliance, India is working to reduce dependence on foreign sources. A strong domestic steel ecosystem will create new business opportunities, boost industrial growth and support the country's infrastructure push. In this direction, India is working towards achieving 500 MT of steel production capacity by 2047. At the same time, it is pursuing decarbonisation of the steel sector to meet net-zero emission intensity target by 2070.

Robust Steel Sector Performance

As world's most widely used engineering and construction material, steel has been recognised as one of India's 'Sunrise Sectors'. It plays a pivotal role in driving domestic consumption and industrial growth.

Steel production in India continues to show strong and sustained momentum. In March 2026, steel output rose by 2.2% over March 2025. Meanwhile, the cumulative index for FY 2025-26 registered a robust 9.1% growth compared to the same period last year. This reflects enhanced production and demand base.

Steel is an alloy primarily composed of iron, carbon (< 2%) and manganese (1%), along with small quantities of silicon, phosphorus, sulphur and oxygen.

There are different forms of steel and iron which are vital for the steel sector. Some of them are:

Crude steel - first solid steel product formed upon solidification of liquid steel.

Finished steel - product obtained upon hot rolling/forging of Semi-finished steel.

Hot metal, pig iron and sponge iron - key forms of iron that constitute important categories within the steel industry.

Crude Steel

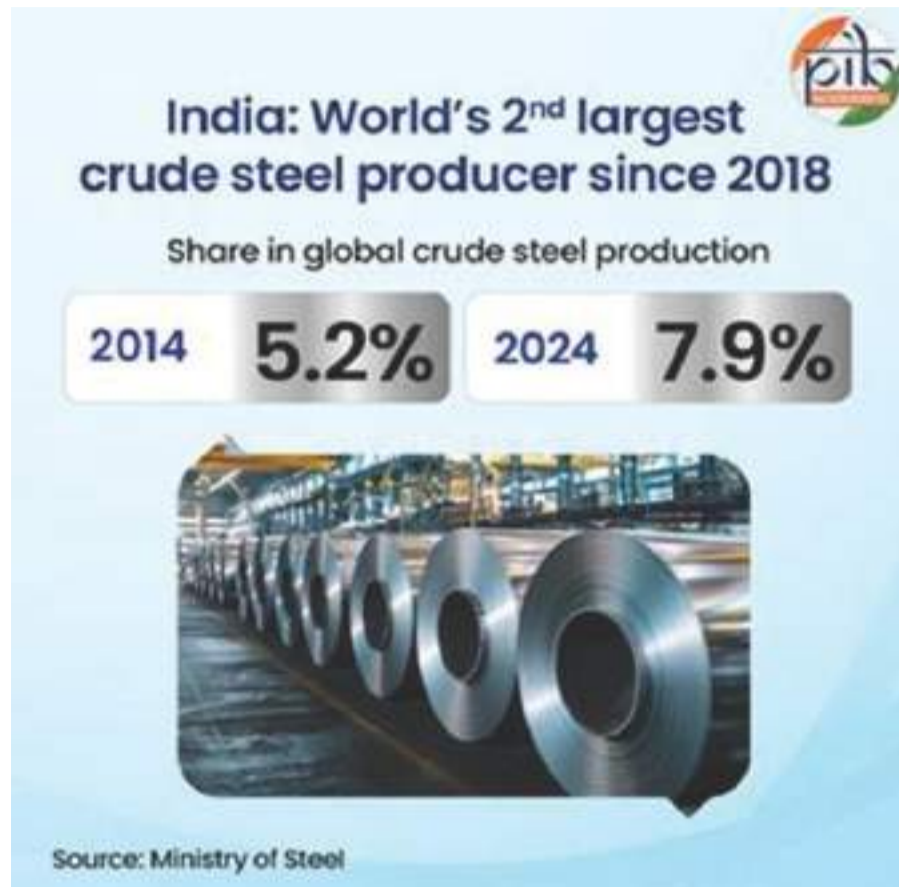
Crude steel, which serves as a raw material for other steel products, has shown significant growth over the years. It increased from 43.44 million tonnes (MT) in 2004-05 to 88.98 MT in 2014-15, and further expanded to 168.4 MT in 2025-26. This progression highlights India's resilience and steady expansion in the global steel industry. The production of crude steel recorded a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 9% between 2021-22 and 2025-26. Additionally, during FY 2025-26, crude steel production rose by 10.7% compared to the same period last year, reflecting continued strong growth. In recent years, crude steel production was 127.2 MT in FY 2022-23, increased to 144.3 MT in FY 2023-24, then to 152.2 MT in FY 2024-25, and reached 168.4 MT in FY 2025-26.

Hot Metal, Pig Iron, and Sponge Iron

During April to September 2025-26, Hot Metal, which is the liquid iron produced in blast furnaces, saw a 7.3% increase in production compared to the same period last year, rising from 43.99 million tonnes (MT) to 47.21 MT. Similarly, pig iron, another direct output from blast furnaces, experienced a 6.6% rise in production, increasing from 4.04 MT to 4.31 MT during the same period. Sponge Iron, also known as direct-reduced iron, posted a strong performance with a 9.1% growth, going from 27.00 MT to 29.46 MT. This overall growth indicates a broad-based expansion across the industry's core segments.

Finished Steel

The production of finished steel, which is a vital material for modern infrastructure and manufacturing, was 160.9 million tonnes (MT) in FY 2025-26. This represents a 9.7% increase compared to the previous year. Meanwhile, the consumption of finished steel remained strong at 163.7 MT, reflecting a 7.6% growth and indicating sustained domestic demand. Over the recent years, finished steel production has increased from 123.2 MT in FY 2022-23 to 139.2 MT in FY 2023-24, then to 146.7 MT in FY 2024-25, and finally reaching 160.9 MT in FY 2025-26. Similarly, steel consumption grew from 119.9 MT in FY 2022-23 to 136.3 MT in FY 2023-24, then to 152.1 MT in FY 2024-25, and finally to 163.7 MT in FY 2025-26.



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Trade Story of Steel

India's steel trade performance reflects a strengthening and increasingly competitive domestic industry. Exports of steel rose by 29.1% in March 2026 (year-on-year), while imports declined sharply by 9.5%. This signal enhanced domestic capacity and reduced reliance on foreign supply. The positive shift underscores India's emergence as reliable global steel supplier. It also demonstrates the country's improved ability to meet rising domestic demand.

India has also established itself as a leading exporter of iron and steel alloys. Rising exports of steel and related products contribute to higher foreign exchange earnings. This, in turn, helps improve the trade balance. It supports the broader vision of a self-sustained and resilient industrial ecosystem under Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Top destination for India's finished steel exports in March 2026 were Vietnam, Belgium and Taiwan. Together, they comprise of more than 50% of India's total finished steel exports.

Besides, exports of finished steel increased by 35.80% in FY 2025-26 compared to the same period last year. Meanwhile, imports declined by 46.47% during the same period.

Government Reforms Supporting Steel Sector

The Government has implemented several measures to strengthen raw material availability, ensure global market access, and reduce import dependence. These steps have lowered production costs, driven growth in the steel industry, and supported MSMEs and small steel producers.

Steel is a de-regulated sector, with the Government playing a facilitative role by fostering a conducive policy framework for its growth and development.

Production Linked Incentive (PLI) for Specialty Steel

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme is a government initiative. The primary aim was to strengthen India's manufacturing capabilities by offering financial incentives to eligible companies based on their incremental sales.

Specialty steel, the downstream, value-added product of steel manufacturing process. It is one of the 14 sectors covered under PLI Scheme, which aims to boost domestic production of high-value steel. It was launched in 2021, with a financial outlay of 6,322 crore. It will improve the trade balance, raise export value realisation. It will also help the Indian steel industry upgrade technology and move up the value chain.

The scheme offers incentives for 5 years (FY 2024-25 - FY 2030-31) to companies that meet specified investment and production targets. Under the scheme, export volumes are projected to rise more than threefold. Meanwhile import volumes are expected to decline by nearly four times from 2023-24 to 2029-30.

The Steel Ministry's PLI 1.0 and PLI 1.1 Scheme had the investment commitment of 44,106 crore. They also guarantee

direct employment of 33,460 people and incremental production of 14,340 thousand tonnes.

Key achievements of PLI scheme are:
23,022 crore investment realized
2.4 million tonnes specialty steel production
13,264 direct jobs created
236 crore incentives disbursed
24 million tonnes specialty steel capacity created
6,000 crore import substitution achieved

The third round (PLI 1.2), announced in November 2025, targets investments in advanced and emerging steel products. PLI 1.2 covers 85 applications across 4 product categories, namely

Steel Grades for Strategic Sector, Commercial Grades - Category 1, Commercial Grades - Category 2, and Coated & Wire Products.

The scheme offers incentive rates ranging from 4% to 15% for a period of five years, commencing from FY 2025-26. However, incentive disbursement will begin from FY 2026-27.

Recently, the Government also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) for 85 specialty steel projects of 55 companies under PLI 1.2. The projects involve investment of 11,887 Crore and a committed capacity addition of ~8.29 MT.

Promoting Domestic Production

The government follows a policy-driven approach to promote domestic steel manufacturing and enhance long-term sectoral resilience.

Domestically Manufactured Iron and Steel Products (DMI&SP) Policy: The policy, revised in May 2025, provides preference for DMI&SP in Government procurement. It covers notified iron and steel products, specifies minimum domestic content requirements. In addition to this, it also lists exempted capital goods for manufacturing iron & steel products which can be imported. It also includes provisions to encourage adoption of indigenous technologies and reduce import dependency. The continuous monitoring and feedback mechanisms ensure transparency, accountability, and long-term sustainability of the policy outcomes.

To augment domestic production, "Melt and pour rule" was introduced. Herein, all steel should be manufactured entirely in India from start to finish, including the initial melting and pouring of crude steel. By promoting indigenous technology and reducing import dependence, it strengthens self-reliance.

National Steel Policy: The National Steel Policy 2017 envisions expanding crude steel capacity to 300 MTPA and production to 255 MTPA by 2030-31. Additionally, raising per-capita finished steel consumption to 158 kg from the current 61 kg. The policy also aims to meet domestic demand for high grade automotive, electrical and special steels. It also seeks to reduce coking coal import dependence from 85% to 65% by 2030-31.

India has already achieved 168 MTPA of crude steel production in FY 2025-26. This implies that ~66% of crude steel production capacity under National Steel Policy 2017 has been achieved. This marks progress toward the long-term capacity target.

Infrastructure Projects

In FY 2023-24, construction and infrastructure remained the primary drivers of steel demand, accounting for about 68% of total consumption. Meanwhile, the engineering and packaging sectors contributed around 22%, and the automobile industry about 9%.

Did You Know?
Major steel zones are located in Kalinganagar, Angul, Rourkela, Jharsuguda, Nagarnar, Bhilai, Raipur, Jamshedpur, Bokaro, Durgapur, Kolkata and Vizag.

Identification of Steel Zones: The Government is fast-tracking key logistics and infrastructure projects across 12 major steel zones. Priority rail, road and port expansions are underway to ease bottlenecks and develop world-class multimodal connectivity supporting the sector's growth.

PM GatiShakti Masterplan (October, 2021): The Ministry of Steel has uploaded geolocation data of over 2,100 functioning steel units onto the PM GatiShakti platform. It includes their products and capacities to support coordinated, data-driven logistics planning in the sector.

Reduced Import Dependency
The Government has introduced several measures to strengthen raw material security, improve quality standards, and enhance competitiveness of steel sector.

The Basic Customs Duty on Ferro Nickel and Molybdenum ores has been reduced to zero in the Union Budget 2024-25. These materials are key raw inputs for the steel industry.

The Steel Scrap Recycling Policy (2019) has been notified to boost the availability of domestic scrap. It also aims to produce high quality ferrous scrap for quality steel production thus minimizing the dependency on imports.

Steel Quality Control Orders (QCOs) ensure that only BIS compliant steel is made available to the end users. They ban sub-standard/ defective steel products in the domestic market as well as imports, safeguarding industry and consumer interests. The Government has mandated 143 QCOs of 723 products (as of 31 December 2025). This ensures compliance with quality standards, while avoiding market distortions and protecting consumer requirements.

The Ministry of Coal is advancing Mission Coking Coal, launched in 2024. It significantly ramps up domestic coking coal production to reduce import of coking coal. This will reinforce long term self-sufficiency in this critical input. This mission aims to increase domestic raw coking coal production up to 140 MT by FY 2029-30.

In April 2025, the Government imposed a 12% safeguard duty on select non-alloy and alloy steel flat products. This protects domestic manufacturers from import surges and maintain fair market competition.

In addition, the SARAL-SIMS system was introduced in November 2025 as a simplified registration process under the Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS). It strengthens import monitoring and enables more effective oversight, addressing the concerns of the domestic steel industry.

International Market Reach

The Government's efforts to reform Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policies have significantly contributed to increase FDI inflow. This has resulted in increase in FDI inflow by 120% between 2014 and 2024, compared to 2004-2014. FDI equity inflows into the manufacturing sector also rose by 69% in the similar years.

Government supported via provision of 100% FDI under automatic route. This resulted in attracting 1,60,000 crore (USD 18.67 billion) between April 2000 and June 2025 by metallurgical industries.

Furthermore, Free Trade Agreements with United Kingdom, European Union, and others are likely to expand market access for the sector.

De-carbonisation In Steel Industry: The Way Ahead

Commitment of Ministry of Steel to Decarbonise the Steel Sector in India

In the short term (FY 2030), the focus is on reduction of carbon emissions in the steel industry. This will be achieved through promotion of energy and resource efficiency, greater use of renewable energy etc.

For the medium term (2030-2047), Green Hydrogen based steel making and Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage are the focus areas.

For the long term (2047-2070), disruptive alternative technological innovations can help achieve the transition to net-zero.

Under decarbonisation, CO2 emissions (or its equivalents) are reduced to achieve a lower output of greenhouse gases. As per the Paris Agreement, reducing CO2 from transport and power generation is essential to meet global temperature standards.

Green steel is the manufacturing of steel without the use of fossil fuels. So-called "green hydrogen" is one solution that could help reduce the steel industry's carbon footprint

The future of India's steel industry is being shaped by a strong push towards low carbon and sustainable production. In 2024, India became the first country to introduce an official Green Steel Taxonomy. It defines Green Steel in terms of percentage greenness of the steel. It is produced from the steel plant with CO2 equivalent emission intensity less than 2.2 tonnes of CO2e per tonne of finished steel. As of 31 March 2026, 89 steel units have been awarded green steel certification, covering a production volume of 12.34 MT.

In a step towards achieving the larger goal of decarbonisation, some of the defined targets are:

Standards & Procurement: Set green steel standards, monitor emissions across steel plants, and adopt green public procurement.
Technology & Efficiency: Deploy

best-available technologies, raise pellet use, and promote circular economy by increasing scrap utilisation.

Clean Energy Shift: Reach 45% renewable energy penetration by 2030, create aggregator model for renewable energy, expand natural gas availability, and scale biochar.

Green Hydrogen & Carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS): Demonstrate pilot projects for use of green hydrogen in DRI (Direct Reduced Iron) and BF (Blast Furnace) processes and establish CCUS pilot plants by 2030.

R&D & Innovation: Launch a national steel decarbonisation R&D roadmap and priority projects.

Finance & Global Linkages: Improve access to funding, technology, and international collaboration.

Just Transition: Upskill and reskill the steel workforce for a low-carbon transition.

Government Measures for Low Carbon Steel

To promote low carbon steel making, the Government has undertaken several other key initiatives.

The Union Budget 2026-27 proposed CCUS technologies for steel and other industries with 20,000 crore outlay over 5 years.

Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS) comprise a set of technologies designed to capture CO2 emissions from large, stationary sources. This includes fossil fuel-based power plants and other industrial facilities.

It also involves the transportation of the captured CO2 (typically via pipelines, and in certain cases through shipping, rail, trucks). The CO2 is transported to designated sites for either utilisation in various applications. It can also be injected into geological formations and depleted oil and gas fields. This enables its permanent storage and trapping of the CO2.

The Steel Scrap Recycling Policy, 2019 is also boosting domestic scrap availability. India's total steel scrap consumption stands at about 30 MT, with around 5 MT imported. This makes the availability of high-quality domestic scrap essential for the transition to green steel. Increased scrap usage lowers specific energy requirements, reduces water consumption by 40% and greenhouse gas emissions by 58%. As a result, this strengthens India's decarbonisation efforts (January, 2025).

Ministry of Steel constituted 14 Task Forces in February, 2025 to recommend measures across the steel industry decarbonisation chain.

Under the National Green Hydrogen Mission, Ministry of Steel has awarded 4 pilot projects for use of hydrogen in steel sector. These projects are being implemented in 3 areas including partial hydrogen injection in vertical shaft based DRI to substitute natural gas. They also involve using hydrogen in existing blast furnace to reduce coal and coke consumption.

Measures such as the Motor Vehicles (Registration and Functions of Vehicles Scrapping Facility) Rules (2021) support emission reduction. The National Solar Mission (2010), and the Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) energy-efficiency scheme (2012) further improve energy efficiency.

The steel sector has adopted the Best Available Technologies (BAT) available globally, in the modernization & expansions projects.

Japan's New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) Model Projects for Energy Efficiency Improvement have also been implemented in steel plants.

These measures reinforce India's commitment to de-carbonising the steel sector and achieving net zero emission intensity by 2070. In line with its vision of a future-ready steel sector, the Government has taken a major step to integrate advanced technologies.

AI in Steel Pavilion, is first-of-its-kind collaborative platform which is designed as problem-to-solution marketplace. It brings together real-time industry challenges and connects them with AI solution providers, startups, technology firms, and research institutions. This supports in developing practical, scalable solutions.

It presents specific operational, logistical, safety, quality control, sustainability, and marketing challenges faced by steel producers and mining companies. This initiative marks a clear shift from gradual digitization to a mission-mode adoption of AI across the entire steel value chain. It covers mining, logistics, production, quality assurance, marketing, and corporate governance.

Steel Sector Outlook

India's Steel sector is rapidly strengthening its capacity, competitiveness, and self-reliance. Government reforms in raw material security, logistics, quality control, and PLI incentives are driving higher production and reduced import dependence. Rising exports and expanding specialty steel output are further reinforcing India's global position. With clear pathways for green steel and decarbonisation, the industry is aligning with long term sustainability goals. Together, these steps are building a resilient, future ready steel ecosystem that will support India's growth in the years ahead.

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana

DC Sgr reviews progress in installation of roof top solar systems

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 05: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Tuesday chaired a comprehensive meeting of KPDCCL Engineers, Banks and scheme vendors here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex to assess progress of target achievements under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana for the financial year 2025-26 in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Executive Engineers of KPDCCL, Zonal Head J&K Bank, Lead District Manager (Banks), empanelled vendors of the scheme and other officials of KPDCCL.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner, who is also the Chairman Monitoring and Management Committee of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana conducted a detailed review of performance across all four Electric Divisions of Srinagar District focused on targets achieved, applications received and installations completed



under the scheme during year 2025-26.

The DC was informed that as more than 5300 solar roof-tops have been installed across Srinagar District under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

Emphasizing the need to accelerate implementation, the DC directed all stakeholders to work in close coordination to reach all eligible beneficiaries.

On the occasion, the DC emphasized the need to accelerate the pace of implementation to

reach the eligible beneficiaries within the stipulated timelines. He urged Banks to clear pending approved applications promptly and ensure swift loan disbursement to facilitate timely installation of rooftop solar systems.

During the meeting, the DC also directed KPDCCL executing engineers to ensure steady progress, timely delivery of benefits to consumers, promoting the adoption of renewable energy solutions, and minimizing consumers' electricity bills.

TVK falls short within touching distance; what next to ensure majority

PTI

Chennai, May 5: In a completely unexpected turn of events in the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, the TVK has emerged victorious, putting an end to the almost six decade-long dominance of the two major Dravidian parties—DMK and AIADMK.

By clinching victory in its debut electoral contest, the party has elevated its status to that of a recognised political entity. However, the Vijay-led TVK did not secure a mandate large enough to form a government with an absolute majority on its own, requiring another 10 to cross the finish line. Experts have varied opinions.

Specifically, to attain a simple majority, a political party must win at least 118 out of the total 234 constituencies. The TVK, however, secured victory in 108 constituencies. Given that the TVK fell short of the majority mark, what might unfold next?

TVK leader Vijay has won in both constituencies he contested—Perambur in Chennai and Tiruchirappalli East. As per the

election commission rule, he will have to resign from one of these seats. TVK sources said that the leader is likely to surrender the Tiruchirappalli assembly seat.

If Vijay does so, the party's total tally of seats will decrease by one. Then it will be 107. Adding to the number games, TVK appointed Speaker of the Assembly will be ineligible to cast a vote during a confidence motion and the party's effective voting strength will be reduced by yet another seat, which comes to 106.

Accordingly, the TVK requires the support of an additional 12 members to demonstrate its majority. As of now, within the DMK alliance, the Congress party has secured five seats, the two Communist parties have won two seats each (totaling four), while the DMDK has secured one seat, the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) has won two seats and the VCK has secured two seats.

Within the AIADMK alliance, the PMK has grabbed four seats, the BJP has won one seat, and the AMMK has secured one

seat. Going by the calculations, if TVK gets the support of other parties within both alliances, it would gain an additional 21 seats.

TVK could potentially secure a total of 129 seats (108 + 21). However, the TVK does not require the support of all those parties, and the backing of just 12 members would suffice.

As Vijay is expected to visit Lok Bhavan on Wednesday (May 6) to meet the governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar to stake claim to form government, the governor is expected to offer the TVK two options.

First, he may summon the TVK chief and instruct him to demonstrate his majority on the floor of the legislative assembly. Alternatively, he might ask Vijay to gather letters of support from "allied" parties and submit them to him.

If the TVK secures support exceeding 118 seats, the governor would invite the party form the government. If TVK fails to garner support from other political parties, it will be denied the opportunity to form the government.

In such a scenario, the governor has the option to invite the DMK, the party holding the second-highest number of seats to form the government.

If DMK too is unable to form a government, the state of Tamil Nadu will come under governor's rule for the subsequent six months. Following this period, fresh legislative Assembly elections will be once again held across all 234 constituencies.

Senior political analyst Sumanth Raman told PTI that the TVK is likely to opt to be a minority government with outside support.

"Since it is the single largest party, TVK has the option to go for that". I don't think he (Vijay) will opt for official support from other political party's MLAs," he said.

"If he opts for minority government, the only thing is that, Vijay will have to prove the support once again after six months".

Raman also pointed out that in 2006 when DMK won only 92 seats, the then party president, the late M Karunanidhi formed a minority government with outside support.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Drug trafficking,

trafficking and terror funding are no longer separate issues—they are two hands of the same enemy. We must remember that when we fight against drugs, we are also fighting against terror. When we protect our youth, we protect our nation," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that he launched the Drug-Free Jammu & Kashmir campaign 24 days ago on 11th April in Jammu with the faith that no enemy, no matter how conspiratorial, can stand before a united society.

The Lieutenant Governor appealed to every family, social organization, spiritual and political leaders in Budgam to intensify drug-free J&K campaign across the district and assured them that the administration and its full strength is committed to eradicating drugs.

Highlighting the scale of action taken so far, LG Sinha said that in the past 24 days, security agencies across Jammu and Kashmir have registered almost 481 FIRs and arrested more than 500 individuals involved in drug-related activities.

"Their properties are being seized and the entire financial network linked to drug trafficking is under strict surveillance," he said, adding that authorities are targeting both street-level peddlers as well as major drug kingpins.

The Lieutenant Governor also announced an informal 'Parents Brigade' in every village and city, wherever possible. He said the aim is to create a voluntary network of parents, women and youth who will be trained and empowered to identify early signs of drug use in villages or wards, and to immediately connect families with resources.

The Lieutenant Governor said the entire district of Budgam must stand against the poison of drugs that is destroying the souls of our youth.

"I believe that every young person lost to addiction is a loss of strength for our future workforce, and a lost soldier for our police and army. Every family broken by addiction is a crack in the foundation of our society," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor, as per KNO, observed that in this war against drugs, society must accept the truth that many boys and girls are in the grip of narcotics. He said there is no harm in accepting this, as they are our own children. They are victims, not criminals, and they need our embrace, compassion and care.

"Furthermore, the public must eliminate the stigma, so that if a family is suffering, they do not have to endure the pain in silence. This tradition must change because today's circumstances are such that silence will not defeat this; the public must raise its voice," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He stated that drug addiction is not just a health issue; it is also a crisis of national security. He said drugs entering into our society do not only hollow out the aspirations of our youth and damage their self-confidence, but the drug trade is also funding terrorism and radicalization.

"The law enforcement agencies alone cannot win this war; the administration alone cannot win it. But together, every teacher, parent, spiritual leader, elder, doctor, youth and woman becomes an invincible force, and I have full faith that Budgam will carry this campaign forward with this spirit," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said in this 100-days campaign, people have 76 days left and in these 76 days, we must prove that when society decides to fight against a social evil, every citizen wins.

"I have directed every police station in the Kashmir Valley to gather full information on active drug smugglers and peddlers in their jurisdiction and take decisive action within 30 days. We are monitoring every financial transaction of drug cartels, and action will be ensured not just against small-time peddlers but against major smugglers. The palaces built with drug money will be razed to the ground," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also urged every citizen to participate actively in the awareness campaign and become the eyes and ears of the police and administration.

"If you see any suspicious activity in any corner of Budgam, report it immediately. With your cooperation, it will be ensured that no drug peddler can remain around any village, neighbourhood, or college in Budgam. I want to tell the drug smugglers, elements linked to the narco-terror network, and drug peddlers active in Budgam that your time on the soil of Budgam has ended. Our agencies know who you are. Our administration is coming after you, and today I promise every resident of Budgam that not a single drug smuggler will escape accountability," the Lieutenant Governor said. (KNO)

Stringent enforcement,

Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir; and other senior civil and police officers, while Deputy Commissioners and Senior Superintendents of Police from all districts participated through video conferencing.

During the deliberations, the Chief Secretary laid emphasis on strengthening the legal framework and plugging procedural gaps in handling NDPS cases. He directed the Law Department to explore the feasibility of recording statements of in-service witnesses through video conferencing, particularly in cases where officials are transferred outside their districts, to ensure continuity and avoid delays in trials. Stressing accountability, he called for a thorough analysis of acquittals in NDPS cases and fixing responsibility wherever investigative or procedural lacunae are identified.

Highlighting the need for a more impactful enforcement strategy, the Chief Secretary underscored the importance of investigating both backward and forward linkages in drug trafficking cases and actively challenging bail orders to enhance deterrence. He called for a well-defined strategy to dismantle drug peddling networks, with strict action against identified offenders by law enforcement agencies.

Advocating a broader approach, he stressed the use of non-kinetic measures against violators, including cancellation of driving licences, passports, and vehicle registrations, besides scrutiny of financial transactions through bank accounts to choke illicit proceeds.

He also emphasized capacity building in the rehabilitation ecosystem, directing for the training of a large pool of counsellors to be made available across schools, colleges, Primary Health Centres, and at the block level through trained Self-Help Group members.

The Chief Secretary further directed the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS) to create a pool of master trainers, ensuring at least three to four trained resource persons per district, supplemented with periodic refresher courses to continuously upgrade their skills.

The Chief Secretary also enjoined upon Deputy Commissioners to ensure the functionality of inpatient (IPD) facilities in drug de-addiction centres in all district hospitals and asked the Health Department to strictly adhere to protocols for the availability of essential medicines at all health institutions.

Additionally, he called for strict action in cases involving seizure of vehicles under Section 52A of the NDPS Act to ensure effective enforcement of legal provisions.

On the occasion, Commissioner Secretary, Law, Achal Sethi, gave a detailed presentation on the incidence and categorization of NDPS cases across districts, highlighting trends in intermediate and commercial quantity cases. He elaborated on delays in disposal of such cases, the ratio of cases instituted versus those disposed of in special NDPS courts, and the stages at which these cases are pending. He also suggested a series of remedial measures aimed at reducing backlog and ensuring expeditious disposal of cases.

Earlier, IGP Crime, Sarah Rizvi presented a comprehensive overview of enforcement efforts, acquittals, and actions taken by law enforcement agencies to combat the drug menace in Jammu and Kashmir.

She informed that during 2026 so far, 542 NDPS cases have been registered across police stations, leading to the arrest of 716 individuals and seizure of 640 kilograms of narcotics

valued at approximately 18.49 Cr.

She further highlighted that the current year has witnessed a significant rise in cases involving commercial quantities, with 31 such cases registered compared to 19 during the corresponding period last year. Details of major FIRs and seizures linked to interstate drug cartels were also shared during the meeting.

The meeting was informed that a total of 10,956 NDPS cases are pending across various courts, including 6,156 cases in five Special NDPS Courts. In 2025, 1,991 cases were instituted while 483 were disposed of. It was further revealed that prosecution had challenged 91 bail orders in 2025 and 57 in 2026 so far in intermediate and commercial quantity cases.

Regarding convictions, the figures stood at 135 in 2024, 140 in 2025, and 23 in 2026 till date. Out of 1,435 prosecution witnesses who attended court proceedings, 839 were examined, while 596 returned without examination due to various reasons, indicating areas needing procedural improvement, the meeting was apprised.

The meeting also noted that in 24 cases, backward and forward linkages were successfully established, leading to attachment of properties worth 53.77 lakh and freezing of bank accounts amounting to 22.63 lakh. Non-kinetic measures were also actively pursued, with 489 driving licences recommended for cancellation and 700 vehicle registrations for suspension between January and March this year due to their involvement in illicit activities.

The participants held detailed deliberations on strengthening enforcement mechanisms, enhancing rehabilitation measures for affected individuals, and ensuring speedy disposal of cases to secure maximum punishment for offenders, thereby creating an effective deterrent against drug trafficking and abuse in the Union Territory.

CM calls for

announcements into tangible outcomes on the ground, with a focus on efficiency, transparency and public welfare. He also called for equitable development across all regions in terms of funding and resource allocation.

Reiterating the government's commitment to development and good governance, the Chief Minister directed all departments to closely monitor progress and remove bottlenecks to ensure that the benefits of Budget provisions reach the people in a timely manner.

In 3 days, 'Vande

Tuesdays, only a single pair of Vande Bharat trains—Nos. 26404 and 26403—remains operational.)

On this day, approximately 2,744 passengers undertook their journey.

Overall, analyzing the occupancy statistics for the four-day period of successful operations from May 2nd to May 5th, approximately 16,349 passengers enjoyed their journey, and the average occupancy rate for these four days stood at approximately 82 percent. This massive volume of passengers clearly demonstrates that pilgrims and tourists are now prioritizing the modern travel experience offered by the Vande Bharat Express over traditional trains.

During their journey, passengers expressed their delight regarding the train's state-of-the-art amenities. In their feedback, passengers lauded the following features and offered positive responses; notably, several passengers specifically highlighted the train's smooth and jerk-free ride, even while navigating through winding tracks. Passengers praised the quality of the pure and nutritious food being served on the Vande Bharat train, noting that officials from the Jammu Division are conducting continuous inspections on board to ensure that passengers experience no deficiencies whatsoever in the amenities provided.

Speaking on the Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat train—which is helping to realize the dreams of the people of Jammu and Kashmir—Uchit Singhla, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, stated: "The operation of the Vande

Bharat Express on the Jammu-Katra route symbolizes the modern transformation of Indian Railways. The fact that occupancy levels have surged from 82% to 96% in just two days is a matter of immense pride for us. We are delighted that passengers are not only satisfied with the services but are also viewing this train as the most reliable option for their travel needs. We are continuously analyzing the feedback received from passengers to ensure that their journey becomes even more memorable. In the coming times, as the tourism season gains momentum, we anticipate that this train will operate at 100% occupancy." (KNO)

LG interacts with

University of Jammu, along with department heads and faculty members, were present during the interaction.

Haj departures

effort involving multiple agencies. In a message, the airport authorities extended prayers and best wishes to the pilgrims for a safe and spiritually fulfilling journey, while thanking all stakeholders and staff for ensuring seamless operations.

The Haj departure process from Srinagar had commenced on April 18, with arrangements reviewed earlier by Haj Committee of India CEO Shanavas C. (IAS), who inspected facilities at Haj House Bemina and the airport, directing officials to ensure smooth, hygienic and pilgrim-friendly services.

Officials had earlier informed that around 4,700 pilgrims from J&K would undertake the pilgrimage this year, with departures conducted in phases.

Meanwhile, Dr Qureshi said that refunds ranging between Rs 17,000 and Rs 31,000 have been credited to Haj 2025 pilgrims, depending on deficiencies in facilities such as accommodation in the Markazia area of Madina and availability of transport services in the Mashair region. (KNO)

'Op Sindoor' success

He also emphasised the need for continuous technological advancement, noting that rapidly evolving global security challenges require the industry to stay ahead of the curve. He urged stakeholders to invest in research and development and explore emerging domains.

The minister referred to initiatives such as the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor, stating that they have strengthened the defence ecosystem and created opportunities for industry participation.

Speaking on the occasion, Lieutenant General Anindya Sengupta, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Central Command, as per KNO, called for closer collaboration between the armed forces and industry to meet evolving operational requirements. He said self-reliance would enable strategic autonomy and technological sovereignty.

The three-day symposium, organised by the Indian Army's Northern and Central Commands along with the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers, is themed "Raksha Triveni Sangam - Where Technology, Industry and Soldiering Converge".

The event features participation from private defence manufacturers, start-ups and academia, showcasing technologies such as unmanned aerial vehicles, drones, counter-UAV systems and surveillance equipment. (KNO)

From 70 flops

few years, film shoots have resumed in the Valley and cinema infrastructure has seen revival.

Earlier, Faheem Abdullah and Arslan Nizami made a mark with film projects, indicating a growing presence of Kashmiri talent in mainstream music, now, Rasik's viral success adds another chapter to this trend. (KNO)

2 dead, 2 missing after

efforts are underway to trace the remaining two missing persons.

Officials said identification of the deceased is being ascertained and further investigation is underway. (KNO)

No drug peddler

Khan said that in the last 25 days, 20 FIRs have been registered and 14 arrests made in connection with drug-related offences.

"A zero-tolerance approach is being adopted. No drug peddler will be spared, and all will be dealt with strictly under the law," he said.

He added that poppy cultivation in the district has been brought down to zero, while strict regulatory mechanisms have been put in place to monitor pharmaceutical distribution. "Approximately 850 pharmacies have been equipped with CCTV cameras and computerised billing systems to ensure transparency and prevent misuse," he said.

The DC said strict action has also been taken against erring drug shops. "Licenses of 11 such shops have been revoked, 22 suspended and six sealed," he said.

He said action has also been taken against vehicles and individuals linked to drug activities. "Registration Certificates of 24 vehicles and 27 driving licences have been cancelled," he added.

On rehabilitation, Khan said the administration has strengthened treatment facilities in the district. "Addiction treatment facilities are operational round-the-clock at the District Hospital. A drug de-addiction centre is functional, and from April 11, a 15-bed IPD facility has also been made operational," he said.

Reaffirming the administration's commitment, the DC said, "No drug peddler will go unchecked, and no youth or child who has fallen victim to drugs will remain without rehabilitation or treatment."

The padyatra witnessed massive participation from officials, students, youth and civil society members, reflecting a strong public resolve against drug abuse. (KNO)

Asthma lifelong

pulmonologist Dr Naveed Nazir Shah said asthma continues to pose a major public health challenge, particularly in developing regions. "Nearly 96 per cent of asthma-related deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, largely due to lack of access to proper medicines and timely care," he said. "We need to ensure better healthcare coverage and make treatments more affordable and accessible for all patients."

Doctors also stressed that misconceptions around asthma treatment continue to hinder effective management. Inhalers, they clarified, are safe and not habit-forming, and should be used as prescribed. Reducing exposure to triggers such as air pollution and dust, along with adopting personalised asthma action plans, can greatly improve patient outcomes.

Adding to the awareness drive, chest specialist Dr Hamid Mir, posted in Anantnag, explained that asthma is a chronic disease affecting the airways of the lungs. "It is characterised by inflammation and narrowing of air passages, which leads to symptoms like shortness of breath, wheezing, persistent cough, and chest tightness," he said.

Dr Mir cautioned against common myths associated with the condition. "Asthma is often underestimated, but it can be life-threatening if not properly controlled. Another misconception is that treatment can be stopped once symptoms improve—this can actually worsen the condition. Many patients require daily medication to prevent attacks," he added.

Experts said that while asthma cannot be completely cured, it can be effectively managed through consistent care. "Maintaining a clean environment, avoiding pollution, following a healthy lifestyle, and adhering strictly to prescribed medication are key to controlling the disease," they said.

Doctors further warned that poorly managed asthma can lead to long-term damage to the airways, making early diagnosis and sustained treatment essential.

Health professionals reiterated the need for collective action—from governments to communities—to bridge treatment gaps and ensure that no asthma patient is left without access to essential care. (KNO)

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: Ghulam Nabi Kumar S/o: Ghulam Qadir Kumar R/o: Hygam Tehsil Khoie.

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 Furhan Nabi Kumar D/o: Ghulam Nabi Kumar as 24-05-2020 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: Farhat Mohiuddin S/o: Showkat Ahmad Beigh R/o: Warsum Tehsil Kralpora.

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 Sawdah Showkat D/o: Showkat Ahmad Beigh as 13-04-2025 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: Firoze Ahmad Malik S/o: Khazir Mohd Malik R/o: Adipora.

Versus

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

(Registrar of Birth and Death)

...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Daughter namely Safiya Firoze D/o: Firoze Ahmad Malik as 30-01-2019 at M.C.H Sopore.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: Mohd Ashraf Bhat S/o: Mohd Shaban Bhat R/o: Sangrama.

Versus

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

(Registrar of Birth and Death)

...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Self namely Mohd Ashraf Bhat D/o: Mohd Shaban Bhat as 15-01-1974 at Home.

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

GOVT. OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER, KUPWARA

Phone: 01955-253335 | Fax: 01955-252130 | Email: kupwara@nic.in

Subject: Re-Advertisement Notice for Engagement of Krishi Udyami (KU) / Agricultural Entrepreneur in District Kupwara (Phase I & II) – 18 Vacant Positions
Reference: No. CAO/Kup/Dev/2026-27/161-63 dated 04-05-2026 from Chief Agriculture Officer, Kupwara

Advertisement Notification No. 03 DDCK of 2026
Dated: 04-05-2026

Applications in the prescribed format are invited from eligible candidates for engagement as Krishi Udyami (KU) on a contractual basis for a period of two years (extendable), subject to the terms and conditions laid down in the contract agreement.

A. KEY DETAILS

S. No.	Details	Description
1	Position	Krishi Udyami (KU) – Agricultural Entrepreneur
2	Number of Positions	18 across pre-identified Panchayat-level Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) of District Kupwara (List enclosed as Annexure I)
3	Engagement Duration	Initially 2 years, extendable annually subject to satisfactory performance - Diploma in Agriculture & Allied Fields OR Graduation in Science (BSc) OR Graduation in Agriculture & Allied Fields (BSc/BVSc). - Preference: Post-graduation (Science/Agri & Allied) and Computer Diploma/Certification.
4	Qualification	Diploma Courses: Agriculture, Horticulture, Veterinary Sciences, Forestry, Fisheries, Sericulture, Agricultural Engineering, BHT, BAT (from Govt.-recognized institutions). Allied Graduation Courses: BSc in Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Fisheries, Sericulture; B.Tech in Agri. Engineering; B.VSc & AH (Govt.-recognized institutions). *Computer Certification: Minimum 3 months from Govt.-recognized institution (Full selection criteria at Annexure II)
5	Job Profile	To operate Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) as per Annexure III
6	Remuneration	Self-earning / entrepreneurship based engagement (Detailed norms at Annexure IV)
7	Last Date of Application	20th May 2026

B. GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Detailed information including the application form can be downloaded from the official websites of:
 - District Administration Kupwara
 - Agriculture Production Department (<https://ikapd.nic.in/> / <https://hadp.jk.gov.in/>)
 - Candidates must possess the requisite qualification for the post applied.
 - Age limit: 21-45 years as of the last date of submission.
 - Self-attested photocopies of the following documents must be uploaded with the application form:
 - Date of Birth certificate (Matriculation)
 - Marks certificates of all qualifying examinations
 - Domicile certificate
 - Character certificate issued by a competent authority
 - Completed applications must be submitted online via District Administration Kupwara website.
 - Additional details, application forms, and clarifications may also be obtained from the Office of the Chief Agriculture Officer Kupwara or via e-mail: plgcaokupwara@gmail.com
 - Postal delay, if any, shall not be the responsibility of APD/advertising authority.
 - Incomplete applications will be summarily rejected.
 - Original documents must be produced at the time of verification.
- ### C. OTHER TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR KRISHI UDYAMIS (KUS)
- Security Deposit: Selected KUS shall enter into an agreement with APD and deposit a refundable security amount of 10,000 in the form of FDR from a scheduled commercial bank.
 - Nature of Engagement: The engagement will operate on a franchise-franchisee model. KUS will run Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) with departmental support, promoting entrepreneurship, local empowerment, and effective delivery of agricultural services in J&K.
 - No Right to Regular Appointment: The engagement shall not confer any right to regular appointment in government service.
 - Asset Custodianship: Department-owned assets at KKG shall remain the property of the department. KUS will act as custodians and ensure proper maintenance.
 - Supervision: KKGs will be managed by KUS under the supervision of a designated APD officer to ensure adherence to departmental goals and guidelines.
 - Training & Fees: KUS shall receive training and will be entitled to training participation fees from contingency funds.
 - Input License: The Directorate of Agriculture shall facilitate issuance of input licenses to KUS, ensuring regulatory compliance.
 - Nodal Agency: The Mission Director, HADP shall act as the nodal agency for establishment, administration, and monitoring of KKGs.
 - Technology Support: KUS will receive continuous technical support from Development Departments, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), and SKUAUST cyber extension hubs integrated with KKG software.
 - Linkages: APD/HADP shall facilitate linkage of KKGs with input companies and financial institutions through MoUs.
 - Extension Services: Panchayat-level functionaries of Agriculture & Allied Departments shall extend their services through KKGs.
 - Service Charges & Reporting: KUS may charge nominal service fees as per the approved rate card issued by the Mission Director, HADP. Weekly reporting to Panchayat, Block, and Line Departments is mandatory.
 - Succession on Disengagement: If a KU exits or is disengaged, the KKG will be taken over by the designated APD Officer until a replacement KU is engaged.
 - Agreement Termination: Either party (KU/APD) may terminate the agreement with 3 months' prior notice. KUS must provide an undertaking to serve for at least 2 years. In case of premature exit, the 10,000 security deposit will be forfeited, in addition to the 3-month notice requirement. For all purposes, the designated APD Officer shall act as the custodian of KKG assets and services.
 - Flexibility of Terms: APD reserves the right to modify/add conditions at the time of agreement signing.

Note: Candidates are advised to carefully go through all annexures before applying.

DISTRICT DEV. COMMISSIONER KUPWARA

No: DDCK/2026/HADP/400-3 DATED: 4-05-2026 DIPP-1045/26 DATED: 05-05-2026

Annexure-I

List of Vacant KKG Centers (1st and 2nd Phase)

S.No	District	Name of KKG	Panchayats	Block	Phase
1	Kupwara	KKG Chamkoot	Chamkoot A	Tanghdar	1st Phase
2	Kupwara	KKG Dapal	Dapal, Dudi, Katwari	Machil	1st Phase
3	Kupwara	KKG Machil	Machil, Pushwari	Machil	1st Phase
4	Kupwara	KKG Sogam	Sogam A, B, C, D	Sogam	1st Phase
5	Kupwara	KKG Tanghdar	Tanghdar A, B, C	Tanghdar	1st Phase
6	Kupwara	KKG Zangli	Zangli, Kashira	Kupwara	1st Phase
7	Kupwara	KKG Amroohi	Amroohi	Tanghdar	2nd Phase
8	Kupwara	KKG Chanipora A	Chanipora A	Tanghdar	2nd Phase
9	Kupwara	KKG Chountwari A & B	Chountwari A & B	Machil	2nd Phase
10	Kupwara	KKG Hangnikoot, Hafrada	Hangnikoot, Hafrada	Tarathpora	2nd Phase
11	Kupwara	KKG Khawarpara A, B	Khawarpara A, B	Tanghdar	2nd Phase
12	Kupwara	KKG Monabal, Bandi	Monabal, Bandi	Qalamabad	2nd Phase
13	Kupwara	KKG Mundian A, Mandian B	Mundian A, Mandian B	Keran	2nd Phase
14	Kupwara	KKG Nachiyani Dildar A	Nachiyani, Dildar A	Tanghdar	2nd Phase
15	Kupwara	KKG Nagsari, Ladah, Narikoot, Moori	Nagsari, Ladah, Narikoot, Moori	Kalarooch	2nd Phase
16	Kupwara	KKG Riddi	Riddi	Reddi Chokibal	2nd Phase
17	Kupwara	KKG Ring Bala, Ring Payeen	Ring Bala, Ring Payeen	Teetwari	2nd Phase
18	Kupwara	KKG Darpora	Darpora A, B, C	Sogam	2nd Phase

Annexure II

PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF KU/AE

The following procedure and criteria shall be adopted for the recruitment of Krishi Udyamis (KUS):

- Application Submission: Interested candidates are required to submit their applications as per prescribed format (Annexure A). Applications must be submitted on or before the specified deadline. Any postal delay shall not be the responsibility of the APD/recruitment authority.
- Eligibility Criteria: Candidates must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the official notification, including educational qualifications, age limits, and any other specified requirements.

requirements.

3. Selection Process:

The selection of KUS will be based entirely on a point-based system, as detailed below:

Description	Maximum Points
Domicile of Local Panchayat	25 Points
Female candidates	05 points
Educational Qualification	45 Points
Diploma in Agri/BHT/BAT etc*	15 Points

Description	Maximum Points
General Graduation (Science)	25 Points
Graduation in Agri. & Allied Courses**	45 Points
Post-Graduation (Science/Agri & Allied)	10 Points
Diploma/Certification in computers***	15 Points
TOTAL Marks	100

* Diploma courses: Diploma in Agriculture, Horticulture, Veterinary Sciences, Forestry, Fisheries, Sericulture, Agri. Engineering, BHT, BAT from government recognized institution

** Agri Allied courses: BSc in Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Fisheries, Sericulture; B. Tech in Agriculture Engineering, BVSc & AH from a Government recognized institution

*** Diploma/Certification course in computers of 3 or more months duration from a government recognized institution*

The highest-scoring candidates meeting the eligibility criteria will be considered for the position.

4. Document Verification:

Shortlisted candidates will be required to undergo document verification. Original certificates, mark sheets, and other essential documents must be presented for verification.

5. Publication of List of Selected Candidates:

The list of selected candidates, subject to document verification, will be published on the official websites of the District and the Agriculture Production Department.

6. Engagement Duration:

Successful candidates will be engaged initially for a period of two years, with the possibility of annual extensions based on satisfactory performance and continuation of scheme.

7. Agreement Signing:

Selected candidates will be required to sign an Agreement with the Agriculture Production Department, outlining the terms of engagement and responsibilities.

8. Declaration:

Applicants must submit a declaration (Annexure B) affirming the accuracy of the information provided in the application.

Annexure III – JOB PROFILE

a) Job Summary:

The role of establishing and managing Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) at the panchayat level is undertaken by the Krishi Udyami (KU) in collaboration with APD. Responsibilities encompass the provision of agricultural services, dissemination of information, and serving as a liaison between farmers and various government departments.

b) Key Responsibilities:

i. Kisan Khidmat Ghar Establishment: KUS are responsible for establishing and managing KKGs in the designated panchayat, ensuring the availability of operational facilities.

ii. Agri-Input Sales Handling: KUS oversee the sale of recommended agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides, ensuring farmers have access to quality inputs.

iii. Development Departments Liaison: KUS facilitate communication between farmers and relevant development departments, fostering collaboration and ensuring seamless delivery of services.

iv. Application Processes Facilitation: KUS assist farmers in the application processes for various schemes and services, including schemes under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP), Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), and crop insurance.

v. Advisory Services Provision: KUS provide interactive advisory services to farmers on crops, diseases, inputs, and weather through multi-functional kiosks, enhancing farmers' knowledge and decision-making.

vi. Utilization of Digital Portals: KUS manage the utilization of digital portals created by the Agriculture Production Department, facilitating processes such as booking inputs & custom hiring services and connecting with marketing channels to streamline agricultural activities.

vii. B2B and B2C Marketing Management: KUS play a crucial role in facilitating the marketing of farmers' produce through business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) channels, contributing to the economic well-being of farmers.

ix. Infrastructure Maintenance: KUS maintain an inventory of KKG infrastructure, ensuring the proper functioning of facilities and equipment.

x. Record Keeping and Reporting: KUS are responsible for maintaining functional records of KKG activities and submitting regular reports, contributing to effective monitoring and evaluation.

c) Expected Skills:

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Basic knowledge of agriculture and allied sectors.
- Familiarity with computer applications and digital platforms.

Annexure IV

REMUNERATIVE MODEL FOR KRISHI UDYAMIS (KUS):

The Krishi Udyami (KUS) engaged in the Holistic Agriculture Development Program will have a structured earning model designed to ensure fair compensation for their efforts and contributions. The primary sources of income for KUS are as follows:

a) Service Charges:

KUS are entitled to earn by charging a fee for the various services they provide through the KKG. These service charges may include facilitating applications, providing advisory services, assisting in marketing farmers' produce, and other services outlined in the program. The rates for these services shall be notified by Mission Director HADP from time to time.

b) Input Sales Commission:

KUS will receive a commission for the sale of recommended agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. This commission is a percentage of the sales made through the KKG. Necessary licenses for the same shall be provided/facilitated by the APD.

c) Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) Marketing Commission:

KUS involved in facilitating the marketing of farmers' produce through B2B and B2C channels will receive a commission based on the successful transactions.

d) Contingency Fee for Training:

KUS will be entitled to payment of a contingency fee for any training sessions or programs they undergo as part of their professional development. It is essential to note that the earning potential of KUS is directly linked to the efficient and effective operation of KKG, the volume of services provided, and the successful facilitation of various agricultural processes. The program aims to create a sustainable and rewarding income structure for KUS, aligning their success with the overall progress of agricultural development in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

DECLARATION (Annexure B)

I, [Your Full Name], Son/Daughter of [Your Father's Full Name], Resident of [Your Complete Address], hereby solemnly affirm and declare that the entries made herein in the application form for engagement as a Krishi Udyami (Agricultural Entrepreneur) for Kisan Khidmat Ghar (KKG), are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and nothing has been concealed therein. I undertake that if any misrepresentation of facts or concealment of any information in the above application is found at any stage, my candidature/selection shall be liable to be canceled ab initio, without giving any notice to me.

Signature of candidate: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

APPLICATION FORM

- Name of the applicant: _____
- Parentage: _____
- Panchayat applied for: _____
- Present address: _____
- Permanent address (Domicile): _____
- Aadhaar no.: _____
- Contact no.: _____
- Email: _____
- Date of Birth: _____
- Highest Education Qualification: _____
- Gender: _____
- Age as on last date of submission (years, months & days): _____
- Qualification Details:

S.No	Qualification	Year of passing	Board/University	Subjects	Marks & Percentage
A					
B					
C					
D					
E					
ICT know how (Degree/Diploma/Certificate course)					

Any other Qualification/Experience/achievement relevant to job: _____

DIPP-1045/26

DATED: 05-05-2026

Affix Latest passport size photograph with background

India retain No.1 position in ICC T20I rankings



PTI
Dubai, May 5: Three-time World Cup winners India on Tuesday retained the top spot in the ICC T20I rankings followed by England and Australia at second and third respectively.

India had created history by becoming the first team to successfully defend their T20 World Cup title and also win it for a record-extending third time in March, when they co-hosted the tournament with Sri Lanka.

"The latest rankings rate all matches played since May 2025 at 100 per cent and those of the previous two years at 50 per cent," the ICC said on its website.

"Sitting at 275 points, India see their lead over England (262 points) trimmed by merely one

point, while Australia are placed closer to England at the third place with 258 points," it added.

While two-time winners England have 262 rating points, one-time champions Australia have 258 points.

In all, there is no change in ranking for the top seven teams in the ICC T20I rankings with New Zealand (247), South Africa (244), Pakistan (240) and the West Indies (233) remaining at the following spots.

However, Sri Lanka (221) have lost six rating points and subsequently slipped to the ninth position while Bangladesh (225) have moved up one place to be at eighth. Afghanistan (220) are at 10th with a close margin of gap with Sri Lanka.

Zimbabwe and Ireland are ranked 11th and 12th

respectively. "Cricket's rising force in North America, the USA have leapfrogged two spots after gaining six points, and see themselves rise to the 13th place, overtaking Netherlands and Scotland who are at 14th and 15th ranks respectively," the ICC said.

"Namibia was unchanged at 16th place while Nepal (17th) and Oman (19th) jumped a spot each, overtaking UAE (18th) and Canada (20th) respectively."

The ICC informed that the number of teams being ranked are down from 102 to 98. "The number of teams in the rankings is down from 102 to 98 as Fiji, Gambia, Greece and Israel didn't make the cut as they did not play the requisite eight T20Is in the past three years," the ICC said.

India remains top remittance recipient country in the world with USD 137 bn: UN

PTI
United Nations, May 5: India received more than 137 billion dollars in remittances in 2024, the top remittance recipient country in the world and the only nation to surpass 100 billion dollars, the UN agency on migration said.

"India consistently leads as the top recipient of remittances, followed by Mexico," the World Migration Report 2026, released by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on Tuesday, said.

In 2024, India, Mexico, the Philippines and France were the top four remittance recipient countries globally.

"India, however, continued to be well above the rest, receiving more than USD 137 billion, and remained the only country to surpass USD 100 billion," the report said.

Since 2010, India has been the top remittance receiving country in the world, when it had received 53.48 billion dollars, which grew over the years to 68.91 billion dollars in 2015, 83.15 billion dollars in 2020 and 137.67 billion dollars in 2024.

The report said that the distribution of remittances varies across regions as well, with South Asia estimated to experience the highest growth in 2024 at 11.8 per cent, driven by continued strong inflows to India, Pakistan and



Bangladesh. High-income countries are almost always the main source of international remittances. For decades, the United States of America has consistently been the top remittance-sending country in the world, with a total outflow surpassing USD 100 billion in 2024. It was followed by Saudi Arabia (over USD 46 billion), Switzerland (around USD 40 billion) and Germany (nearly USD 24 billion).

The report also said that countries in Asia continue to account for the largest share of internationally mobile students. In 2022, more than one million international students came from China, the single largest origin country worldwide. India ranked second, with over 620,000 students abroad.

Beyond these two leading countries, origin country numbers drop considerably: Uzbekistan (150,000), Viet Nam (134,000) and Germany (126,000) follow, while the United States, France, Nigeria, the Syrian Arab Republic and Nepal each had between 95,000 and 115,000 students studying abroad. More than half of the world's internationally mobile students reside in countries in Europe and North America.

The Indian diaspora has been instrumental in the expansion of India's technology sector, it said.

The report pointed out that protecting migration's role in development also means addressing the "brain drain" challenge and turning it into "brain gain". When skilled workers emigrate, origin countries may lose human capital, but tailored policies can circulate

knowledge so that both origin and destination countries benefit.

"India's brain gain efforts include annual diaspora conventions and innovation hubs to entice Indian scientists and entrepreneurs back (or to mentor startups remotely), while China's initiatives like the Thousand Talents Plan have successfully attracted thousands of overseas Chinese academics to return and bolster domestic research and development. Such programmes can have mixed results, however, notwithstanding the longer-term benefits," it said.

The report also noted that, consistent with previous years, the

largest internal displacements in Asia in 2024 were triggered by disasters rather than conflict and violence.

Rubio expects 'frank' meeting with pope as Trump takes fresh potshots at Leo



REUTERS

Vatican City, May 05: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio expects a "frank" meeting with Pope Leo during a visit to the Vatican this week, the US ambassador said on Tuesday, after President Donald Trump took a fresh pot-shot at the pope for criticizing the US war in Iran.

"Nations have disagreements, and I think one of the ways that you work through those is ... through fraternity and authentic dialogue," said Brian Burch, the US ambassador to the Holy See.

"I think the Secretary is coming here in that spirit," Burch told journalists. "To have a frank conversation about US policy, to engage in dialogue."

Trump has repeatedly disparaged the first US-born pope in recent weeks, drawing a backlash from Christian leaders across the political spectrum.

In his latest comments, Trump told right-wing radio talk show host Hugh Hewitt that "the Pope would rather talk about the fact that it's okay for Iran to have a nuclear weapon, and I don't think that's very good."

"I think he's endangering a lot of Catholics and a lot of people. But I guess if it's up to the Pope, he thinks it's just fine for Iran to have a nuclear weapon," Trump said.

Leo has never said Iran should have nuclear weapons, but has opposed the war which Trump says is aimed at ending Iran's nuclear program.

India, Jamaica agree to boost trade, skilled mobility: Jaishankar

PTI
Kingston, May 5: India and Jamaica have agreed to strengthen trade linkages and explore cooperation for recruitment and mobility of skilled professionals, including healthcare workers and teachers, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.



Jaishankar, the first Indian external affairs minister to arrive here on a bilateral visit, called on Prime Minister Andrew Holness and held delegation-level talks with Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

Addressing a joint press conference after

talks with his Jamaican counterpart here on Monday, Jaishankar said the discussions were comprehensive, and the two sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties, identifying new avenues to deepen the partnership.

Three MoUs were signed in the areas of health cooperation, solarisation of The Hugh

Lawson Shearer Building, and broadcasting.

"We signed several important agreements and discussed effective implementations of MoUs which have been recently concluded in the fields of digital transformation, cultural exchange, sports and digital payments to ensure tangible outcomes on the ground,"

he said. Jaishankar said that India has recognised Jamaica's growing role as a logistics hub and gateway to the Caribbean for trade and investment.

"We agreed to strengthen further trade, business and investment linkages, explore cooperation for recruitment and mobility of skilled professionals, including nurses, healthcare workers and teachers," he said.

The two sides also discussed expanding cooperation in defence and security, healthcare, digitisation, agriculture, education and infrastructure, the minister said.

Spain says no decision taken yet to accept hantavirus cruise ship

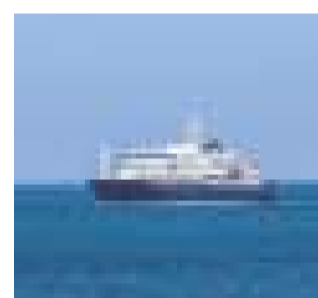
AFP
Madrid, May 05: Spain said Tuesday it will not decide whether to let a cruise ship with hantavirus cases dock until epidemiological data had been analyzed.

"Based on the epidemiological data collected from the ship during its stopover in Cape Verde, it will be decided which port of call is most appropriate. Until then, the Ministry of Health will not take any decision, as we

have informed the World Health Organization," the health ministry said in a social media post.

Passengers and crew desperately hunkered down in isolation on a ship stuck off Cape Verde on Monday, after local authorities barred it from docking following the death of three people in a suspected hantavirus outbreak.

The island nation's refusal to allow them to disembark came even as WHO Europe said the risk to the wider public remained low. Passengers from



Britain, Spain and the United States, as well as crew from the Philippines, were among

the 23 nationalities aboard the MV Hondius, which was carrying 149 people.

Those on board are under "strict precautionary measures," the ship's operator Oceanwide Expeditions said in a statement, including isolation, hygiene protocols and medical monitoring.

The company has confirmed three deaths among those on the cruise, which was travelling from Ushuaia in Argentina to Cape Verde off the coast of west Africa.

IPL mania hurls a yorker to cricket fans and Pundits: Is the yorker dead in T20?

PTI
New Delhi, May 5: There was a time when the final overs of a T20 contest carried a familiar script. As panic spread through the batting side and the equation tightened, captains would turn to specialists capable of delivering cricket's ultimate pressure-release valve -- the classical yorker.



But in an IPL era increasingly shaped by 220-plus totals, pre-meditated ramps, reverse scoops and batters willing to stand virtually anywhere on the crease, the delivery that once inspired dread is facing its sternest test.

The question increasingly being asked in dressing rooms and fan discussions is: Has the league's batting revolution killed the yorker? Has the yorker become a high-risk delivery that hapless bowlers prefer to avoid? Not really. We can hold off on writing the yorker's epitaph, say the pundits.

The delivery that once defined an era built by Lasith Malinga and perfected by Bumrah still survives. Only now, in a batter-dominated age, it demands

even greater courage and precision to remain cricket's ultimate finishing weapon.

"The yorkers remain an important part of the game even though it has become a batter's game," Madan Lal, former India all-rounder, told PTI. "You have to be very consistent in your line and length for a yorker. You have to hit the lower side of the bat. If it hits slightly higher it is a six. Same with wide yorkers. Your length is key," said Lal, a member of the 1983 World Cup winning squad. "You have to keep

practising for that. Yorkers and slower ones remain part of the game very much," he said.

Other experts echo Lal. The consensus view is that while IPL has not killed the yorker, it has exposed the cricketer's vulnerability, increased the punishment for imperfection and elevated its execution into one of cricket's rarest acts of skill.

What has changed, experts say, is that T20 cricket has forced the yorker to evolve from a routine death-over option into a specialist skill requiring extraordinary precision.

Movies Schedule

Wednesday, 6th May

	Raja Shivaji (U/A16+) Hindi - 05:00 PM
	BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+) Hindi - 04:10 PM, 07:10 PM
	Ek Din (U/A13+) Hindi - 01:30 PM
	Michael (U/A 13+) English with English Subtitles - 11:30 AM, 04:35 PM
	The Devil Wears Prada 2 (A) English with English Subtitles - 11:00 AM, 02:10 PM, 07:30 PM
	Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A) Hindi - 12:00 PM

Tickets at flat ₹92 & ₹199
(Recliner & Royale Club)

INOX SRINAGAR

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For assistance with tickets