



Drug addiction, terrorism two faces of same coin: LG Sinha

- ◆ Neighbouring country smuggling drugs into J&K by design
- ◆ Narco-terror network inflicted suffering on generations for decade
- ◆ People need to break silence to win this war against drugs
- ◆ Religious leaders should warn youth about dangers of narcotics



Jahangeer Ganaie

Anantnag, May 09: Stating that narco-terror network has inflicted suffering on generations of Jammu Kashmir for decades, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that drug addiction and terrorism are two faces of the same coin. Addressing a public gathering here in South Kashmir, LG Sinha, according to the

news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, “Our neighbouring country is smuggling drugs into Jammu Kashmir by design. The drug money has been used to build narco-palaces by drug smugglers and a large portion of drug money is being used for terrorism and radicalization. While drugs are ruining the future of Jammu Kashmir’s youth on one hand, on the other, terror outfits are using that money to buy weapons and that are shedding the blood of our brothers and sisters in the UT.” The Lieutenant Governor joined Padyatra in Anantnag as part of “Drug-Free J&K Campaign” and walked with thousands of participants along the streets of the historic town. He said, “This narco-terror network has inflicted suffering on generations of Jammu Kashmir for decades. That is why I | More on P6



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha leads Padyatra in Anantnag on Saturday as part of ‘Drug-Free J&K Campaign’

Lt Gen Subramani named next Chief of Defence Staff

PTI
New Delhi, May 09: Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani (retd) has been named India’s next Chief of Defence Staff and his primary mandate will be to implement the ambitious military theaterisation plan and bolster tri-services synergy. The government has also appointed Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan as the next Chief of the Naval Staff. While Lt Gen Subramani will replace incumbent Gen Anil Chauhan as the country’s senior-most military commander, Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan will succeed Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi as the Navy Chief, according to an official statement. Widely known as an expert on Pakistan and China, Lt Gen



Subramani retired as Vice Chief of Army Staff on July 31 last year and is currently serving as military adviser to the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS). He will take over as the Chief of Defence Staff on May 30. Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, presently heading the Western Naval Command, will take charge on May 31. Both Gen Chauhan and Admiral Tripathi | More on P6

Nasha Mukt Abhiyan

Over one crore join anti-drug campaign in J&K; 646 arrested

614 FIRs, 2.16 lakh awareness events, Rs 25.97 cr properties attached, 44,602 patients treated, 160 drug hotspots identified, 252 DLs cancelled, 3,000 chemist shops inspected

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 09: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Saturday said the ongoing 100-day “Nasha Mukt J&K Abhiyan” has witnessed large-scale public participation and intensified anti-narcotics action across the Union Territory, with over one crore people taking part in awareness programmes and 646 persons arrested under the NDPS Act so far. According to official figures accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), a total of 2,16,123 awareness



events have been conducted across Jammu and Kashmir under the campaign, involving participation from educational institutions, community groups. | More on P6

Unusual heat grips Kashmir, temps soar; Sgr records 31.7°C

MeT forecasts rain, hailstorms, gusty winds between May 11-13

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 09: Kashmir witnessed an unusual rise in day temperatures on Saturday, with Srinagar recording 31.7 degrees Celsius, which was 7.6 degrees above normal, while several other places across the Valley also saw temperatures significantly above seasonal averages. According to the data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Qazigund recorded 31.0°C, Pahalgam 25.2°C, Kupwara 29.5°C, Kokernag 28.6°C and Gulmarg 23.0°C. Sopore emerged among the hottest places in the Valley at 32.1°C,

while Beerwah in Budgam recorded 28.7°C and Alooosa in Bandipora 30.3°C. In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded 35.1°C, Banihal 30.0°C, Batote 24.6°C, Bhandarwah 28.8°C and Katra 32.0°C. The MeT department said weather is expected to remain generally dry till May 10 evening, with chances of brief showers at a few places during evening and night hours on Saturday. From May 11 to May 13, the MeT predicted generally cloudy conditions with one or two spells of light to moderate rain and | More on P6

Sports council steps up fight against drug abuse

Pledge drives, women’s self-defence camps, youth competitions held

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 09: Through a sustained, ground-level campaign reaching students, athletes, and communities across J&K, the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council has positioned organised sport as a powerful tool in combating substance abuse across the Union Territory. Over recent weeks, the Sports Council has implemented an intensive calendar of activities under the My Youth My Pride initiative and the Nasha Mukt Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, ensuring participation from both the Jammu and Kashmir divisions. The outreach reflects a deliberate strategy to engage youth through structured sporting platforms



while reinforcing the message of a drug-free society. Large-scale pledge ceremonies have been conducted at key sports venues, drawing enthusiastic participation from young athletes. In Jammu, thousands of students across all sports disciplines joined the drive and pledged to uphold a drug-free lifestyle. Similar initiatives were | More on P6

Six-month rainfall deficit raises water crisis fears in J&K

Streams, springs, rivers flowing below normal across multiple districts | Seven consecutive winters of below-normal precipitation worsen concerns

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 09: Jammu and Kashmir has recorded below-normal precipitation for six consecutive months, raising concerns over a looming water crisis, declining river levels and reduced hydroelectric power generation in the Union Territory, according to weather data shared by Kashmir Weather. The latest figures for April, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), show that J&K received 86.5 mm rainfall against the normal 99.6 mm, marking a 13 per cent deficit. The continued shortfall follows seven consecutive winters



of below-normal precipitation, intensifying fears over water availability in the coming months. Experts and weather observers warned that the prolonged dry spell could severely affect drinking water supplies in far-flung areas, especially if the region witnesses another

extended dry period during summer. They said streams, rivers and springs across several districts were already flowing below normal levels, which may impact irrigation and hydroelectric power generation dependent on water discharge. The rainfall distribution across districts remained uneven, with several Kashmir districts witnessing sharp deficits during April. Shopian recorded the highest shortfall at 67 per cent, receiving 33.9 mm rainfall against the normal 102.1 mm. Kathua saw a 60 per cent deficit, while Anantnag recorded 46 per cent below-normal rainfall. Kulgam | More on P6

Family support key to fighting drug addiction: Experts

‘Stigma, criticism push recovering addicts back into substance abuse’

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, May 09: Emotional support from families can play a decisive role in helping people overcome addiction, experts said, stressing that recovery is not possible through medicines and counselling alone. As concerns continue to grow over the rising number of drug addiction cases in Jammu & Kashmir, mental health professionals and doctors working in de-addiction centres have underlined the importance of

compassion, understanding and active family participation in the rehabilitation process. Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Samreena Jan, a counsellor at an Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) in South Kashmir, said individuals battling substance abuse often need emotional reassurance more than anything else during their recovery journey. She said patients who receive consistent encouragement, care and acceptance

from their family members tend to show stronger commitment towards sobriety and are less likely to relapse. “Family support creates emotional stability for recovering addicts. When a person feels accepted rather than judged, it becomes easier for them to regain confidence and continue treatment sincerely,” she said. Jan added that while professional counselling, medication and rehabilitation programmes are essential,



long-term recovery largely depends on the environment

a patient returns to after treatment. According to her, many recovering addicts struggle to reintegrate into society because they continue to face criticism, taunts and mistrust from their own relatives and community members. She warned that such behaviour often becomes one of the major causes of relapse. “In many cases, relapse is not due to treatment failure but because recovering addicts are constantly reminded of their

past mistakes and made to feel unwanted. A judgmental attitude only pushes them deeper into isolation and addiction again,” she said. The counsellor urged families and society to adopt a compassionate and supportive approach towards those trying to rebuild their lives after addiction. Dr Aadi, a medical officer at ATF Shopian, said opioid addiction, especially heroin abuse, continues to dominate the cases reported | More on P6

Second National Lok Adalat of 2026 held across J&K

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 09: Continuing its endeavour to fulfil the constitutional commitment of providing swift, cost-effective, and efficient dispute resolution to the masses in general and the litigant public in particular, the J&K Legal Services Authority, under the patronage of Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority), the dynamic leadership of Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority and the able guidance of Justice Sanjay Dhar, Chairperson, High Court Legal Services Committee organized Second National Lok Adalat of the year 2026 across the UT of Jammu & Kashmir, to promote amicable settlements in a wide range of cases, including MACT claims, matrimonial disputes, cheque bounce cases under the Negotiable Instruments Act, money recovery, commercial disputes, and compoundable criminal offences.

With a view to facilitating meaningful settlements, pre-Lok Adalat sittings and counselling sessions, as per an official statement, were held well in advance by the Legal Services Institutions across the Union Territory. Awareness programmes, coordination meetings and sensitization sessions were also conducted



at different levels to encourage litigants and stakeholders to avail the benefits of Lok Adalat as an effective mode of Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority inaugurated the National Lok Adalat at District Court Complex, Srinagar. Upon his arrival, the Justice Sanjeev Kumar was received by Haq Nawaz Zargar, Principal District & Sessions Judge (Chairperson, DLSA) Srinagar, Shazia Tabassum, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Tasleem Arief, Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Srinagar, Tabasum Qadir Parry, Secretary,

DLSA Srinagar along with other Judicial Officers of the District Judiciary.

During his visit, the Executive Chairman inspected various benches constituted for the Lok Adalat and interacted with the Presiding Officers, members of the benches, Advocates and litigants, appreciating the arrangements made for the smooth and effective conduct of the Lok Adalat. Several disputes were amicably settled on the spot with the active intervention of the benches. MACT compensation cheques were also distributed among eligible beneficiaries, providing timely relief to the claimants.

As per the information received

from various Legal Services Institutions working in different districts across the UT of J&K, out of total 89,222 cases taken up by 180 Benches in the day long National Lok Adalat, 83,623 cases were amicably settled and disposed off involving an amount of Rs.42,09,04,185/- as compensation/settlement amount in cases like Motor Accident Claims, civil, criminal, labour disputes, Electricity and Water Bills, Land Acquisition, Family matters, cheque dishonor and Bank Recovery etc.

While interacting with the Judicial Officers and other stakeholders, Justice Sanjeev Kumar appreciated the collective efforts of the Judicial Officers, Secretaries, District Legal Services Authorities, Advocates, Legal Aid Defence Counsels, Para Legal Volunteers, court staff and all other stakeholders for their active participation in making the 2nd National Lok Adalat of 2026 successful.

Highlighting the importance of Lok Adalats, the Justice Sanjeev Kumar stated that Lok Adalats serve as an effective mechanism for alternative dispute resolution by enabling parties to settle disputes amicably in a speedy and cost-effective manner, thereby reducing pendency of cases and strengthening the justice delivery system. He urged the litigant public to take maximum advantage of such initiatives and resolve their disputes through consensus.

DC Srinagar conducts onsite review of construction of Activated Carbon WTP Nishat

Emphasizes timely completion of the vital Water supply project to boost supply, quality of water across district

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 09: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Saturday conducted an extensive onsite inspection of key ongoing water supply infrastructure projects being executed under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 aimed at strengthening and augmenting the supply and quality of drinking water in the district. The DC, as per an official statement, was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas, Executive Engineer Water Works Division, Aijaz Rafiq, Executive Engineer I&FC, Executive Engineer PHE Mechanical, Javid Ahmad, Executive Engineer UEDD, Shabir Ahmad, Officers of PMU 2.0 and other concerned.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the progress of the ongoing construction of the 7 MGD Activated Carbon Chamber (ACC) at Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Nishat, a significant



infrastructure initiative designed to enhance water treatment capacity and ensure improved drinking water quality for the city. He also reviewed the progress of the 0.1 MGD Water Supply Scheme (WSS) at Ishbar Nishat, including its distribution and coverage components intended to address water shortages in tail-end habitations of the area. While reviewing the progress of the 7 MGD Activated Carbon Chamber at Nishat, the DC was informed that the project is being executed on a turnkey basis at an estimated cost of Rs 3.66 crore and is scheduled for completion by 31 December 2026. On the occasion, the DC stressed the importance of maintaining execution timelines and ensuring strict adherence

to prescribed quality standards. He observed that the project would play a crucial role in addressing seasonal water quality concerns and enhancing the overall reliability of the city's drinking water supply system. The DC stated that, once operational, the Activated Carbon Chamber would function as a critical tertiary-stage treatment barrier, ensuring consistent water quality throughout different seasons by effectively addressing variability in raw water characteristics. He further noted that the project represents a major transition from conventional treatment practices to a modern multi-barrier advanced water treatment system, thereby significantly strengthening Srinagar's urban water infrastructure and public health safeguards.

DC Budgam reviews arrangements for holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, MAY 09: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan along with SSP Budgam, Hari Prasad KK Saturday convened a stakeholders meeting involving community organisations, Shia Anjumans, officials of various departments and other stakeholders to review and finalise the arrangements being put in place for ensuing month of Muharram-ul-Haram.

At the outset, there was a detailed discussion on the key priorities and arrangements that are required to be put in place for the smooth conduct of the Muharram.

The representatives, as per an official statement, from different Shia Anjumans, community representatives and other stakeholders demanded scheduled power and water supply, repairing and surface levelling of key roads and links, timely distribution of ration, LPG, and firewood, arrangements



for sanitation, installation/restoration of street lights, adequate health care facilities, transport and other related facilities.

The DC directed power and Jal Shakti departments to ensure smooth scheduled supply of power and water supply, Forest Department to firewood, FCS&CA was directed to ensure advance distribution of ration, Cooperatives department was directed to make rice, sugar and

other supplies available through temporary outlets within the district.

Likewise, R&B Department and ULBs were directed to get the road and drainage works and repairs done in advance, ARTO was directed to make transportation plan available for and from the key centres. Directions were issued for repair of toilets and also immediate construction at identified spots at Budgam, Magam, Khanda etc.

Nasha Mukht J&K gains momentum across Shopian

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, MAY 09: Diverse range of awareness and outreach events numbering in hundreds were Saturday conducted across district Shopian under the ongoing 100 Day Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, witnessing proactive participation from students, youth, teachers, religious leaders, cooperative societies members, government departments and civil society members.

The day-long campaign featured pledge ceremonies, awareness rallies, sports activities, yoga sessions, poster display campaigns, painting & counselling sessions, seminars & debates and public interaction programmes aimed at spreading awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and promoting a drug-free society.

Educational institutions, as per an official statement, across the district actively participated by organizing anti-drug awareness talks, sports

activities and assembly sessions to encourage students towards positive and healthy lifestyles.

Similarly, members of cooperative societies, lambardars and other frontline workers also participated in engagement and outreach activities in public spaces especially in business units, market places, shops, petrol pumps, playgrounds etc.

Special awareness drives and outreach programmes were also carried out by various government departments including RDD, Revenue, Poshan Projects, R&B, Fisheries, Ayush, Information, Co-operative, Transport, Agri allied departments, and other departments as part of the awareness campaign.

The campaign witnessed overwhelming public response and reflected the collective resolve of the administration and society to build a safer, healthier and drug-free Shopian through sustained awareness, prevention and community participation.



IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: Sameer Ahmad Sheikh S/o: Ali Mohd Sheikh R/o: Ashpeer 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 Humira Jaan D/o: Sameer Ahmad Sheikh as 07-10-2019 at Home Ashpeer 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: Abdul Majid Bhat S/o: Abdul Gani Bhat R/o: Amargrah Sopore.

Versus

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

(Registrar of Birth and Death)

...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Applicant namely Abdul Majid Bhat S/o: Abdul Gani Bhat as 03-12-1958 at Home Amargrah.

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: Zahoor Ahmad Laway S/o: Sonallah Laway R/o: Hyder 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 Applicant namely Zahoor Ahmad Laway S/o: Sonallah Laway as 25-02-1974 at Home Hyder Colony 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

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION SRINAGAR

NEAR J&K BANK Zaldagar Srinagar

Telefax No. 0194-2952696 e.mail ld-to-exenmidsrinagar@jk.gov.in

Sub: - Corrigendum to this office e-NIT No. 10 OF 2026-27, Dated:-06-05-2026. Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 05 HP new priming pump at LIS Rawalpura Astanpora, LIS Dar Mohalla & LIS Bemina Right.

Ref: - JK Government official e-Procurement portal Tender ID No.: - 2026_IFC_309422_1

CORRIGENDUM

Intending bidders are requested to note the following change in the tender document

S. No.	Clause	Read the below given	Instead of
1	Appendix A S. No 1	(Make:KEC/ABB/Siemens/CGL/GEC/equivalent). Or as per the order issued for empanelled OEM's copy enclosed	The priming pump set shall be of reputed ISmark preferable make Crompton/Kirloskar/ Substantially equivalent.

Rest of the terms and conditions shall remain un-altered as laid down in the original e-NIT.

Sd/
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Srinagar

No. MIDS/Ts/696-702
Dated:- 09-05-2026

DIPK-1174/26
DATED: 09-05-2026

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION SRINAGAR

NEAR J&K BANK Zaldagar Srinagar

Telefax No. 0194-2952696 e.mail ld-to-exenmidsrinagar@jk.gov.in

Sub: - Corrigendum to this office e-NIT No. 09 OF 2026-27, Dated:-05-05-2026. Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 40 HP, 980 RPM VT Motor and Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 01 Tone Chain Pulley block at LS Zazna-A.

Ref: - JK Government official e-Procurement portal Tender ID No.: - 2026_IFC_309391_1

CORRIGENDUM

Intending bidders are requested to note the following change in the tender document

S. No.	Clause	Read the below given	Instead of
1	Appendix A S. No 1	(Make:KEC/ABB/Siemens/CGL/GEC/equivalent). Or as per the order issued for empanelled OEM's copy enclosed	KEC/ABB/Siemens/CGL/GEC/equivalent

Rest of the terms and conditions shall remain un-altered as laid down in the original e-NIT.

Sd/
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Srinagar

Dated:-09-05-2026
No. MIDS/Ts/684-90

DIPK-1173/26
DATED: 09-05-2026

NC Govt elected, not nominated: Dy CM



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, May 09: Asserting that the present government was elected by the people under the Constitution of India, Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary on Saturday over his remarks on the National Conference-led government.

The Deputy Chief Minister, while talking to reporters during his visit to a Polytechnic College here said the government's priority is to strengthen technical education and create better employment

opportunities for the youth of the Union Territory.

"Polytechnics and ITIs prepare skilled youth. We want quality subjects and modern courses so that students receive proper education and secure employment opportunities," he said, while urging Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to introduce more job-oriented courses in technical institutions across Jammu and Kashmir.

Reacting to LoP Sharma's remarks, the Deputy Chief Minister said he could only "laugh" at such statements. "Sometimes he makes good jokes. Perhaps he does not understand the real issues being faced by the people

of Jammu and Kashmir," Choudhary said.

He said unemployment and public grievances increased during the previous governments' tenure. "For the last more than a decade, unemployment rose under the BJP-PDP governments. You never talked about unemployed youth or the lack of basic facilities in hospitals," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister also alleged that the Jal Jeevan Mission had failed to adequately address drinking water shortages in several areas of Jammu and Kashmir. "You launched the Jal Jeevan Mission, but people are still struggling for water. We are trying to address and fix these issues," he added.

Dy CM Choudhary also said recruitment in the education sector suffered during the previous administration due to the freezing of teaching posts, which adversely impacted employment prospects for educated youth. "We are not nominated or selected representatives. We are elected by the people under the Constitution of India," he said—(KNO)

Ministers review sports infra, development works in north Kashmir

KT NEWS DESK

Sopore, May 09: Minister for Agriculture Production and Rural Development Department, Javid Ahmad Dar and Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, and Science, Satish Sharma on Saturday toured various areas of North Kashmir, including Sopore, Baramulla and Rafiabad, where they reviewed the sports infrastructure, assessed the developmental works and interacted with the local residents and youth.

As part of the visit, the Ministers inspected the Sports Stadium at Hadipora Sopore to review the ongoing sports activities and assess the available infrastructure for the local youth and athletes.

During the visit, the Ministers interacted with the players, coaches and sports officials and reiterated the government's commitment towards strengthening the sports infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that the development of modern sporting facilities is vital for nurturing talent at the grassroots level and channelising the



energy of youth towards constructive and positive activities. Highlighting the importance of sports in youth empowerment and social development, Satish Sharma said the government is focused on creating better opportunities for the aspiring athletes by improving infrastructure, providing quality training facilities

and ensuring wider participation of youth in sports activities across urban as well as rural areas.

The Ministers also reviewed the condition of the stadium, play fields and other allied facilities and directed the concerned officials to ensure timely upgradation, proper maintenance and effective

utilisation of the sports infrastructure. They assured that all possible support would be extended for the promotion and development of sports in the area. Local sports persons and residents apprised them of various issues and demands related to the stadium and sports facilities. The Ministers assured

them that all their genuine concerns would be addressed on priority to further strengthen the sporting ecosystem in the region.

During the tour, Satish Sharma also paid obeisance at Shalkoot Tapyana Sahib Gurdwara, where he directed the concerned authorities to undertake solarisation of the Gurdwara complex as part of the government's push towards sustainable and green energy initiatives.

The Ministers further visited several areas including Zaloor, Gund Brath, Machipora, Hadipora and Shalkoot, including Tipyana Sahib Gurdwara, where they interacted with the local residents and reviewed various developmental issues and public concerns.

They also toured different areas of the Rafiabad constituency and took stock of ongoing developmental works and civic issues raised by the people.

Reaffirming the government's commitment towards inclusive development, Ministers said sustained efforts are being made to strengthen infrastructure, improve public services and ensure holistic growth across all regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

Youth hold key to Srinagar's future: SSP Chakravathy

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, May 09: Asserting that youth hold the key to shape up Srinagar's future, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Dr G.V. Sandeep Chakravathy on Saturday said that sports play a vital role in shaping the character of youth, and games like cricket teach fighting spirit, discipline and teamwork.

Speaking at T20 Cricket Tournament organised by Srinagar Police under the Civic Action Programme (CAP) here, SSP Chakravathy congratulated all participating teams and appreciated the enthusiasm shown by players during the tournament, saying such sporting events provide a constructive platform for youth and help channelise



their energy in a positive direction. "Games like cricket teach us fighting spirit and teamwork. Srinagar's real future lies with its youth. Such tournaments are not only about winning or losing, but

about learning discipline, unity and determination," the SSP Srinagar said. He urged youngsters to continue the momentum created through sports and spread a positive message in society, especially against the growing menace of drug abuse.

"Our youth should become ambassadors of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and take this message to every locality and every household. Community participation and youth engagement are essential for building a healthier and drug-free society," he said.

Dr. Chakravathy further said Srinagar Police will continue to organise sports and community-based programmes aimed at engaging youth and strengthening trust between police and the public—(KNO)

J&K gets 200 e-buses for tourism, pilgrimage in eco-sensitive areas

WARIS FAYAZ

Srinagar, May 09: Jammu and Kashmir is set to receive 200 electric buses under the PM E Drive Scheme, a major push towards sustainable and eco-friendly public transport in the Union Territory.

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H. D. Kumaraswamy conveyed the approval in an official communication addressed to Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The proposal for the allocation of electric buses was submitted by the Jammu and Kashmir government following a request made by Chief

Minister Omar Abdullah, the letter states.

The 200 e-buses are to be deployed for tourism and pilgrimage activities in the ecologically sensitive and hilly regions of Jammu and Kashmir. The Union Minister said the move would help advance the objectives of green mobility and reduce vehicular emissions in environmentally sensitive areas.

The communication further mentions that CESL has been directed to include 200 electric buses for Jammu and Kashmir while issuing the next tender under the PM E-Drive Scheme—(KNO)

Ganderbal residents seek Russian poplar removal

RAJA SYED RATHER

Ganderbal May 09: Residents across several areas of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district are facing growing health concerns due to pollen released by Russian poplar trees, with locals alleging that authorities have failed to address the issue despite repeated pleas.

Residents from Ganderbal, Nagbal, Gund, Cherwan, Hayan, Palpora, Ninhama and Kangan said that the pollen from Russian poplar trees has triggered severe respiratory problems, including allergies, breathing difficulties and asthma-related complications, particularly during the spring season.

Muhammad Sahil, a resident of Kangan, said that patients suffering from allergies and pre-existing respiratory ailments are the worst affected. "The administration must immediately remove the Russian poplar trees and replace them with non-allergenic alternatives," he urged.

Health expert Dr Zakira said pollen allergy remains one of the major causes of respiratory illnesses during the pollination season. "A significant number of patients visiting hospitals during this period suffer from pollen-related allergies and respiratory distress," the doctor said, adding that despite existing guidelines, little progress has been made on the ground.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Mehbooba alleges ruling party minister demanded Rs 30 lakh for transfer, posting

NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIEE

Budgam, May 09: Dropping a political bombshell over the ruling National Conference (NC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Saturday alleged that a minister in the present, National Conference regime demanded Rs 30 lakh from an officer for 'a transfer posting'.

She said that when the officer approached NC president Dr Farooq Abdullah with the complaint, he was allegedly told to "talk to the minister" as he was their treasurer.

However, PDP Chief, however, did not disclose the identity of the officer or the minister concerned.

However, NC's state spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar termed allegations levelled by Mehbooba Mufti as "baseless." "The PDP Chief desperate to protect herself politically, made claims without evidence or naming anyone, only to help the BJP," Dar said.

Addressing a workers' convention in central Kashmir's Budgam district, Mehbooba Mufti accused the NC-led government of corruption, failing to fulfil electoral promises and ignoring public concerns.

She said the people of Budgam had given a strong message against what she termed as broken promises



and injustice by electing a young representative to the Assembly despite the might of the ruling establishment.

She alleged that the present government had failed to address pressing public issues and was allegedly blocking several pro-people proposals raised by the PDP in the Assembly.

Targeting the government over employment and education, Mehbooba referred to the demand for establishment of a National Law University (NLU) in Budgam and said promises made during elections had remained confined to speeches.

"The youth of Budgam deserve quality educational institutions and better opportunities. Announcements alone cannot solve

unemployment," she said.

The former chief minister also expressed concern over what she described as attempts to weaken the position of Urdu in Jammu and Kashmir.

She said the Urdu language was deeply linked with the culture, literature and identity of the region and should not be sidelined in recruitment examinations and official procedures.

Mehbooba further raised concern over increasing unemployment and growing drug abuse among youth, saying the younger generation was facing uncertainty, fear and frustration.

"You say you care for our youth, then officials should visit schools and colleges

and interact with students. We need to understand why youngsters are falling into drugs," she said.

Referring to the situation after 2019, Mehbooba alleged that the atmosphere in Jammu and Kashmir has deteriorated and young people are facing immense pressure and uncertainty.

"After 2019, the environment here has completely changed. Youngsters are frustrated and depressed. Even social media posts invite police action," she alleged. She also questioned the administration's approach towards youth-related issues and said creating fear would not solve the growing social crisis.

On anti-drug measures, the PDP president supported strict action against drug peddlers but said innocent family members should not be targeted for crimes committed by individuals.

"Take strong action against those involved in drug trafficking, but innocent families should not suffer," she said.

Mehbooba further accused the ruling setup of failing to provide relief to people struggling with unemployment, inflation and social distress, while asserting that PDP would continue to raise public issues both inside and outside the Assembly—(KNO)

'Diabetes, hypertension lead causes of kidney failure in Kashmir'

JAHANGEER GANAIEE

Srinagar, May 09: Senior urologist Dr Saleem Wani on Saturday said diabetes and hypertension have emerged as the leading causes of kidney failure in Kashmir, while warning that smoking, substance abuse and delayed diagnosis are contributing to the growing burden of kidney and bladder-related diseases in Jammu and Kashmir.

Dr Wani said uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension are the primary reasons behind rising kidney failure cases, followed by stone diseases and other structural disorders affecting kidneys, ureters and bladder. "Diabetes and hypertension are lifestyle diseases and are the number one causes of kidney failure. If these diseases are kept under control and lifestyle modifications are adopted, there are high chances of preventing complications," he said.

He stressed the importance of effective glycaemic control, blood pressure regulation and salt restriction to reduce the risk of kidney damage. "The diabetes treatment should be done under proper medical supervision. Patients should keep their blood pressure under control and follow dietary precautions," he advised.

Dr Wani said the long-term effects of uncontrolled diabetes often damage multiple organs, including the kidneys, eyes and heart, adding that patients should regularly consult nephrologists, ophthalmologists and cardiologists for timely monitoring. "After several years, diabetes starts affecting the



kidneys, eyes and heart simultaneously; therefore, regular check-ups become very important," he said.

The urologist expressed concern over the increasing trend of cigarette smoking and substance abuse among youth in Kashmir, saying both are becoming major public health threats. "Smoking and substance abuse go side by side and become the cause of very dangerous diseases," he said, while urging people to support anti-drug campaigns and avoid tobacco use.

Linking smoking directly with bladder cancer, Dr Wani said cigarette smoking remains the single biggest risk factor behind the disease. "We treat and operate many patients, but even after treatment, some continue smoking, because of which the toxic effects remain in the body and the disease progresses further," he said.

He stressed that early diagnosis remains the key to cancer prevention and treatment, saying awareness about symptoms is essential for timely detection.

"The symptoms of bladder cancer

include blood in urine and a burning sensation during urination. If a smoker notices blood in urine, he should immediately consult a doctor as it can be an early sign of cancer," he said. On consumption of traditional Kashmiri Nun Chaai (salt tea), Dr Wani clarified that salt does not directly cause diabetes but can worsen hypertension and related complications, particularly among chronic patients.

He cautioned against cross-practice between different systems of medicine, saying doctors should prescribe only those medicines and treatments in which they are professionally trained.

"I am an allopathic doctor. I have studied allopathic medicine, and I will only speak about that. One should avoid prescribing medicines of systems they have neither studied nor fully understand," Dr Wani said. "Awareness, timely diagnosis, specialist consultation and lifestyle modification remain key to reducing the growing burden of kidney and bladder-related diseases in Jammu and Kashmir."—(KNO)

National Mission For Sustainable Agriculture: Building Climate-Resilient Farming In India

Press Information Bureau

Rainfed agriculture in India, which constitutes nearly 60 percent of the net sown area, remains a cornerstone of the country's agrarian economy, contributing approximately 40 percent of total food production. Given its substantial role, the sustainable management of natural resources alongside the systematic development of resilient rainfed farming systems is critical to addressing the growing demand for food grains. In this context, the Government launched the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) in 2014-15 under the framework of the National Action Plan on Climate Change. The mission was envisaged as a strategic intervention to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate variability on agriculture while ensuring long-term food and livelihood security.

Subsequently, from 2018-19, NMSA was operationalized as a sub-mission within the Umbrella Scheme of the "Green Revolution-Krishonnati Yojana". Further institutional restructuring from 2022-23 resulted in its inclusion under the umbrella of Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PMRKVY), reflecting a consolidated approach to sustainable, climate-resilient agricultural development.

Integrated Policy Interventions for Climate-Resilient Agriculture under NMSA

The National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) promotes climate-resilient farming through a set of targeted and integrated interventions. It provides a strong foundation for sustainable agricultural development by enhancing water-use efficiency, improving soil health, and strengthening climate resilient agriculture. Key interventions under NMSA include the Rainfed Area Development (RAD) component, which encourages Integrated Farming Systems (IFS) for diversified and risk-resilient agriculture and Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) initiative, which promotes micro-irrigation to improve water-use efficiency. These efforts are further complemented by the Soil Health Management (SHM) component, supported by the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, which promotes balanced nutrient use and sustains long-term soil fertility.

Rainfed Area Development (RAD): Strengthening Integrated Farming Systems (IFS)

The Rainfed Area Development (RAD) component has been implemented under the NMSA since 2014-15. It aims to promote sustainable agricultural production through agro-climatic zone-specific Integrated Farming System (IFS) models developed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). It encourages a holistic approach by integrating multi-cropping, rotational,



inter- and mixed-cropping systems with allied activities such as horticulture, livestock, and fisheries to enhance farmers' income and resilience.

In FY 2025-26, an allocation of 343.86 crore was made to States/UTs for the implementation of RAD, under which 96,013 farmers received training.

National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA)

NRAA serves as an expert body to provide knowledge inputs on the systematic upgradation and management of the country's dry-land and rainfed agriculture. The focus is on promoting rainfed agriculture by enabling knowledge-based interventions and efficient coordination with various agencies.

Improving Water-Use Efficiency through Micro-Irrigation Technologies

The Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) initiative is designed to enhance water-use efficiency by promoting the adoption of precision irrigation and other water-saving technologies. Subsidies are provided to beneficiaries to expand coverage of micro-irrigation systems.

PDMC primarily focuses on improving efficient use of water at the farm level through micro-irrigation techniques, particularly drip and sprinkler irrigation. Drip irrigation involves the targeted application of water to the root zone through emitters attached to lateral pipes, thereby minimizing losses and optimizing resource use. In contrast, sprinkler irrigation distributes water under pressure through a network of pipes and nozzles, simulating rainfall and ensuring uniform coverage across the field.

Implemented since 2015-16, about 109 lakh hectares have been covered under the scheme, with 26,325 crore released as

central assistance, significantly improving water-use efficiency. Furthermore, the Government has set a target of bringing 100 lakh hectares under micro-irrigation over the five-year period from 2025-26 to 2029-30. Achieving these targets necessitates the annual coverage of at least 20 lakh hectares under micro-irrigation through the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme.

Soil Health Management (SHM): Improving Soil Health and Productivity through Integrated Nutrient Management

Soil Health Management (SHM) promotes location and crop-specific sustainable soil management practices, including residue management and organic farming. It supports systematic soil fertility mapping, balanced application of macro and micronutrients, and appropriate land-use practices. Additionally, SHM emphasizes the judicious use of fertilizers and the implementation of measures to mitigate soil erosion and land degradation, thereby ensuring long-term soil health and productivity.

Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme: Translating Science into Farmer Advisories

Launched in 2015, the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme serves as the principal farmer advisory instrument under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA). During FY 2025-26, a total of 97.53 lakh soil samples were collected, of which 92.87 lakh samples were tested. Cumulatively, 25.79 crore Soil Health Cards have been generated up to February 2026. These cards provide crop-specific nutrient recommendations, enabling farmers to rationalize fertilizer use and enhance soil health.

An evaluation conducted by NITI Aayog

in 2025 indicates that the scheme has contributed to correcting nutrient imbalances, particularly by reducing excessive urea use, and has led to improvements in agricultural productivity. It has also supported the broader objectives of Integrated Nutrient Management (INM). Notably, 68.5 percent of surveyed farmers reported a significant improvement in soil health following the adoption of recommended practices, while 25.7 percent observed marginal improvements.

Enhancing Farmer Decision-Making through Soil Fertility Maps

The Soil and Land Use Survey of India (SLUSI) has been entrusted with preparing village-level soil fertility maps to delineate spatial variations in nutrient status at the cadastral level, building on district-level maps already developed nationwide. As part of this initiative, soil fertility mapping has been undertaken in 6,954 identified model villages to provide farmers with field-level, site-specific nutrient information for balanced fertilizer use.

These maps are publicly displayed within villages to enhance awareness and facilitate informed decision-making on nutrient management. To date, soil fertility mapping has been completed in 2,023 model villages.

Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through ICAR-Led Research Systems

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) launched the flagship programme National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) in 2011 to develop and disseminate climate-resilient agricultural technologies. NICRA has significantly contributed to NMSA to develop capacity of farmers & stakeholders in the domain of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures by conducting capacity building programs and demonstrations on location specific promising climate resilient technologies. The initiative supports both short- and long-term research aimed at enhancing the adaptive capacity of farming systems to withstand extreme weather events, including droughts, floods, and heat waves.

Under NICRA, vulnerability assessments were conducted across 651 agricultural districts in accordance with Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) protocols. Of these, 310 districts were identified as highly or very highly vulnerable. District Agriculture Contingency Plans have subsequently been developed, incorporating location-specific climate-resilient crops and management practices. To further strengthen farmers' resilience, Climate Resilient Villages have been established in 448 villages across 151 vulnerable districts spanning 28 States/UTs, where appropriate technologies are demonstrated for wider replication.

Additionally, under the National

Agricultural Research System led by ICAR, 2,996 Climate-resilient varieties of crops released during 2014-2025. Complementary agronomic practices, such as direct-seeded rice, zero-till wheat, stress-tolerant crop adoption, and crop residue management, have also been developed and promoted to mitigate climate-related risks and enhance agricultural sustainability.

Addressing the Food-Water-Climate Nexus through NMSA Interventions

The NMSA supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2030, specifically SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Under SDG 2, NMSA promotes sustainable food production through Rainfed Area Development (RAD), which supports Integrated Farming System (IFS) in improving productivity and stabilizing farmers' incomes. The Soil Health Management (SHM) component encourages balanced nutrient use and maintains long-term soil fertility, strengthening food security.

In alignment with SDG 6, the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) component improves water-use efficiency through micro-irrigation, precision water application, and soil moisture conservation, supporting sustainable water management in agriculture.

With respect to SDG 13, the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) promotes climate-resilient cropping systems, natural resource conservation, and risk mitigation strategies, helping farmers adapt to droughts, floods, and other climate-related stresses.

Through these efforts, NMSA advances sustainable agriculture, efficient water use, and climate resilience in line with the SDG framework.

Conclusion

The National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) provides a consolidated approach to sustainable, climate-resilient agricultural development by integrating water-use efficiency, soil health management, and climate-resilient farming systems. Through targeted interventions such as Rainfed Area Development (RAD), Per Drop More Crop (PDMC), and Soil Health Management (SHM), the mission promotes sustainable agricultural production and efficient use of natural resources.

Supported by knowledge inputs and climate-resilient agricultural technologies under the National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA), these efforts improve productivity, support farmers' income and enhance their capacity. In alignment with SDG 2, SDG 6, and SDG 13, NMSA continues to promote sustainable agriculture while ensuring long-term food and livelihood security in India.

How Strait Of Hormuz Crisis Is Reshaping The Global Economy

The situation now constitutes the most severe stress test the entire global energy supply system has ever known. In economies where most household income is spent on food, the link between energy prices and food security is immediate.

ZAID M. BELBAGI

For decades, the global economy has operated on the assumption that oil will always flow, tankers will move across the seas, prices will fluctuate within predictable limits and the arteries of international trade will continue to support the functioning of the world. The 2026 conflict in Iran has fundamentally challenged this assumption.

The situation now constitutes the most severe stress test the entire global energy supply system has ever known. At the center of this challenge is the Strait of Hormuz, the waterway that is only 39 km wide at its narrowest point yet through which approximately 20 million barrels of oil and liquefied natural gas usually pass every day. This passage accounts for between 20 percent and 25 percent of all global energy trade. The current crisis is more than geopolitical, as it carries profound economic consequences with implications that extend across the entire world.

The geography of the Strait of Hormuz is the first point of vulnerability. Iran understands that it does not need to match the US in terms of conventional military power to pose a serious threat. Instead, it relies on other tactics, such as placing sea mines in narrow shipping lanes — a strategy designed to block or slow and make passage dangerous and costly. Large commercial tankers, which are slow and difficult to defend, are particularly exposed to these threats.

The gap between the military capabilities in the region and the vulnerability of the

ships carrying the world's energy is striking and Iran has long understood how to exploit it. In this conflict, control over the strait is the most effective instrument of influence.

Once the strait was effectively closed, the market reacted immediately and the response was severe. Brent crude surged past \$120 a barrel within weeks, reaching levels not seen since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. There is, however, an important distinction. Unlike previous disruptions caused by a supplier exiting the market, the 2026 crisis involves a strategic chokepoint effectively going dark. This is structurally different and, in many ways, far more difficult to compensate for.

OPEC's position shifted almost overnight. The organization that spent much of 2025 managing a surplus and curbing output to prevent a price collapse now faces a shortfall it cannot fully fill. Alternative pipelines, such as the East-West Pipeline in Saudi Arabia and the Abu Dhabi Crude Oil Pipeline, have absorbed what they can and production increases from major non-Gulf producers have begun. Still, these measures offset only about half of the lost supply. Nearly 130 million barrels of crude are now stuck in floating storage in the Gulf, loaded onto tankers that cannot deliver, while Washington and Tehran remain far from reaching any agreement.

Energy shocks of this magnitude do not remain confined to oil markets. They ripple outward through fertilizer, freight and food. About a third of global fertilizer trade passes through the Strait of Hormuz and disruptions to those shipments are already pushing



up agricultural input costs. The effects on the next growing cycle are only now beginning to emerge. Analysts project a 16 percent rise in global commodity prices. For economies with deep fiscal buffers and diverse import sources, this may appear manageable. For those without such advantages, the consequences are devastating.

Asia has borne the brunt of the crisis. The region receives around 85 percent of all crude shipments from the Gulf and oil imports fell by 30 percent year-on-year in April alone, reaching their lowest level since October 2015. Responses have been improvised and costly.

Japan, which relies on the Middle East for 95 percent of its oil, has turned to American crude, purchasing it at spot market prices inflated by a war premium and shouldering the added shipping costs for a journey that takes twice as long. Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest economy, is seeking alternative suppliers in Africa and Latin America and has

committed to purchasing 150 million barrels from Russia by the end of the year.

Vietnam, which depends on the Middle East for at least 85 percent of its crude imports, is among the continent's most-exposed economies. The irony is acute, as the country's export-oriented manufacturing sector relies on affordable energy to remain competitive. Thailand, which usually imports up to 70 percent of its crude from the Middle East, has introduced government-mandated energy-saving measures, including encouraging remote work to reduce fuel consumption. These responses are real indications of a structural realignment in global energy flows.

The impact on the Global South goes far beyond energy bills. In South Asia and East Africa, higher import costs and currency depreciation are creating serious fiscal stress. Governments are spending billions on duty waivers and fuel subsidies to shield households from the full impact of the crisis

— measures that provide short-term relief but add to long-term debt.

In economies where most household income is spent on food, the link between energy prices and food security is immediate. Fertilizer costs rise, food prices follow and purchasing power falls, leaving little margin for error. In 2026, this dilemma between food and fuel is being imposed on governments that neither caused the conflict nor have any ability to resolve it.

The Middle East and North Africa region is at the heart of this global energy transformation. Gulf states are the world's leading energy exporters, yet they are also directly exposed to the ripple effects of the crisis, with the UAE alone accounting for 18 percent of vessel traffic through the strait. Their wealth provides resilience that neighbors cannot match, but it does not guarantee immunity.

For the broader region, the situation is a defining moment. Some countries, such as Türkiye, could seize this opportunity to establish themselves as hubs for international trade. Buyers are diversifying because the route to market has become uncertain. If that uncertainty persists, it will leave a lasting mark on Gulf export relationships.

The Strait of Hormuz crisis has reminded the world, and the region itself, that geography may not dictate destiny but, in moments like this, it comes perilously close.

Zaid M. Belbagi is a political commentator and an adviser to private clients between London and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Source: Arab News

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

Train, skill students for future-ready jobs: Deputy CM

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 09: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary Saturday stressed the need for skilling and training the students for future-ready jobs to ensure better livelihood opportunities and sustainable growth for the youth.

He made these remarks during his visit to various Government Polytechnic Colleges and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in Srinagar conducted to take first-hand appraisal of academic activities, infrastructure resources and facilities being provided to the students enrolled under different skill development programmes.

During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, inspected the Government Polytechnic College, Gogji Bagh; Government Polytechnic College for Women, Bemina and ITI Bemina. He reviewed the functioning of the institutions, ongoing training programmes, laboratory facilities and infrastructural requirements.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the concerned authorities to equip the laboratories and workshops with modern gadgets and machinery to ensure seamless practical training for the students. He underlined the need for introducing market-oriented courses and aligning skill development programmes with the present and



future industry demands.

Underscoring the importance of industry exposure, he called for establishing linkages between the educational institutions and reputed industries to facilitate training, internships and placement opportunities for the students. "The need is to provide market access and suitable platforms to our talented students for showcasing products and skilled work they produce," asserted the Deputy CM.

During interaction with the students, the Deputy Chief Minister urged them to avail benefits available under Mission YUVA and become self-reliant entrepreneurs.

"Under Mission YUVA, youth can avail loans up to Rs 10 lakh without mortgage or guarantor requirements. Work hard, utilize these opportunities and become successful

entrepreneurs," he said.

At Government Polytechnic College, Gogji Bagh, the Deputy Chief Minister assessed the institution's academic environment and emphasized the need for strengthening technical education and improving the learning facilities for the students.

During his visit to Government Polytechnic College for Women, Bemina, he stressed the importance of equipping the laboratories with the latest machinery and gadgets. He called for imparting modern and innovative skill training to prepare the students for future-ready employment opportunities.

He also inspected the Food Processing Technology Unit and underscored the need to promote products prepared by the students through proper branding and marketing support to enhance their reach and visibility.

The Deputy Chief Minister interacted with the faculty members and students and took stock of the developmental requirements of the institution.

At ITI Bemina, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected various labs and training units including Carpet Technology, Data Operator Training, Plumbing and Shawl Making sections.

Interacting with the students, he emphasized the need for modern infrastructure, advanced machinery and quality skill imparting to enhance employability and entrepreneurship among youth. He was accompanied by Director Skill Development Department, Owais Ahmad; Chief Engineer PWD Kashmir, Narinder Kumar; Principals and Superintendents of Polytechnic Colleges and ITI Bemina; Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers of the concerned departments.

Govt committed to develop unexplored, emerging tourist destinations across J&K: Sakeena Ito

KT News Desk

KULGAM, MAY 09: In a significant step towards promoting tourism and strengthening public infrastructure in the scenic area of Panchanpatri (Humpathri) of Kulgam district, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito Saturday inaugurated several tourism-related facilities in the area to enhance visitors experience.

The Minister, as per an official statement, on the occasion, inaugurated a newly constructed passenger shed at Panchanpatri tourist resort developed by the Rural Development Department (RDD) for the convenience of visitors and tourists. She also dedicated a newly established viewpoint at Panchanpatri (Humpathri) to the public, aimed at enhancing the overall tourism experience and showcasing the natural beauty of the area.

ACD Kulgam, Chief Education Officer, Chief Medical Officer, other senior officers of district administration and large number of locals were also present on the occasion.

Addressing a large gathering, the Minister said that the Government is committed towards developing unexplored and emerging tourist destinations across Jammu and Kashmir and ensuring that modern facilities are created for both tourists and local residents.

She added that Panchanpatri (Humpathri) and adjoining areas possess tremendous



tourism potential due to their scenic landscapes, serene environment and rich natural heritage and our Government is determined to tap this potential to create livelihood opportunities for local communities.

"Omar Abdullah-led Government is working with a focused vision to transform tourism into a major driver of economic growth and employment generation in Jammu and Kashmir. The development of basic infrastructure and public amenities at tourist destinations is essential for attracting more visitors and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities," Sakeena Ito stated.

She further said that the Government is making concerted efforts to improve road connectivity, tourism infrastructure and civic amenities in remote and rural areas so that these regions are brought onto the tourism map of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our aim is not only to promote tourism but also to ensure inclusive development and socio-economic upliftment of the

people living in these areas," she added.

During her visit, Sakeena Ito also interacted with local residents who apprised the Minister about various developmental issues and demands related to infrastructure, tourism facilities and public services in the area. The locals sought augmentation of tourism-related infrastructure, better road connectivity and other public utility services for Panchanpatri and surrounding villages.

Giving a patient hearing to the grievances and demands raised by the people, the Minister assured them that all genuine issues would be examined on priority and necessary measures would be taken for their early redressal. She reiterated that the Government remains committed towards equitable and holistic development of all regions of Jammu and Kashmir with special emphasis on strengthening rural infrastructure, improving public services and creating employment avenues for youth.

UG Admissions 2026-27 begins across J&K Degree Colleges

Online Registration open till 27 May

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 09: Directorate of Colleges, Higher Education Department, Jammu & Kashmir, has announced the commencement of admissions for the Academic Session 2026-27 for Four-Year Undergraduate Programs (FYUGP) and 5-Year Integrated Post-Graduate (IG) Programs with multiple exit options across all 142 Government Degree Colleges of the Union Territory.

The centralised admission portal <https://jkadmissions.in> went live on 09 May 2026 at 11:00 AM. Aspiring students can register and submit their college and programme preferences till 7:00 PM on 27th May 2026. Admissions are being offered in more than 60 major subjects across diverse knowledge domains, strictly on the basis of Class 10+2 merit.

The admission, as per an official statement, process will be conducted in multiple phases. The First Merit List will be published on 30th May 2026, followed by admission and fee payment between 1st and 6th June. The Second Merit List will be published on 9th June, with admission

formalities to be completed between 10th and 15th June. A Spot Round for any leftover seats will be held from 18th to 25th June 2026.

Classwork in Winter Zone Colleges shall commence from 15th June 2026, while Summer Zone Colleges shall begin classes on 15th July 2026.

The Four-Year Undergraduate Programs are aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and offer significant academic flexibility. Students may exit after the first year with a Certificate, after the second year with a Diploma, after the third year with an Undergraduate Degree, or complete the fourth year with a UG Honours / Honours with Research degree. The framework also enables direct PhD admission for students completing the four-year Honours with Research programme, in addition to clear pathways for postgraduate study.

A non-refundable registration fee of 200 has been fixed. Aspirants are required to upload scanned copies (PDF/JPG, not exceeding 1 MB each) of their Class 10th and 12th marks cards, a recent passport size photograph, Aadhaar number, Domicile Certificate (if available) and Category

Certificate (if applicable) at the time of registration.

Aspirants are encouraged to visit the official admission website <https://jkadmissions.in> for complete information regarding programmes offered, college-wise subject combinations, fee details, college helplines, the detailed admission notice, and the registration manual.

Counselling and Facilitation Centers have also been established at all Government Degree Colleges of J&K to assist aspirants with form submission and preference filling, and applicants are advised to make use of these centers in their own interest to avoid mistakes.

Director Colleges J&K, Dr. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, has appealed to all eligible aspirants and their parents to carefully read the detailed admission notice and the registration manual available on the admission portal before filling preferences. He urged aspirants to make full use of the Counselling and Facilitation Centers available at every Degree College.

For real-time updates, aspirants and parents are also advised to follow the Directorate's official WhatsApp Channel for Admissions 2026-27 (<https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VbBYAXd5q08WHz430L2M>).

Samagra Shiksha, other initiatives transforming school education in Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, MAY 9: School Education Department Shopian has emerged as a leading example of educational transformation during the financial year 2025-26 by undertaking wide-ranging initiatives focused on quality education, digital learning, inclusive development and student welfare.

Through sustained efforts under various flagship programmes and schemes, the department has significantly strengthened educational infrastructure, improved literacy outcomes and enhanced access to learning opportunities for all sections of society.

The district, as per an official statement, has witnessed remarkable progress in infrastructure upgradation, smart learning initiatives and welfare support for Children With Special Needs (CWSN), reflecting the Government's commitment towards equitable and modernised education.

As part of digital transformation initiatives, 42 schools were strengthened under Smart School interventions. Further enhancing digital education, 25 schools were covered under the Smart Class Project at an estimated cost of Rs 45 lakh. The project included installation of smart boards, computers,



IT infrastructure and modern teaching-learning equipment aimed at making classrooms more interactive, technology-enabled and student-friendly.

Besides, 74 smart stands were installed across schools to facilitate smart learning practices. Under the Kindergarten initiative, 130 schools were covered with an estimated expenditure of nearly Rs 2 crore for development of child friendly learning spaces and activity-based foundational education infrastructure.

Special focus was also laid on tribal education through establishment of 4 Smart Tribal Schools including UPS Amshipora, Nagbal Tullihalal, Mizpora and Shalidoora.

These schools were provided with smart classroom facilities, uniforms and other educational support to improve learning outcomes and educational accessibility in tribal areas.

The department also recorded notable achievements under

Samagra Shiksha. During the Talaash initiative under ULLAS, a total of 23,137 learners appeared in FLNAT-III examination, enabling the district to achieve 100 percent literacy milestone.

In the field of inclusive education, extensive efforts were made for the welfare of Children With Special Needs (CWSN). Assessment-cum-measurement camps were conducted across the district for identification of support of specially-abled students.

Under the IED component of Samagra Shiksha, 182 aids and appliances were distributed among 146 CWSN students as per their assessed requirements. Additionally, financial assistance amounting to Rs 7,12,500 was distributed among 518 CWSN beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer mode under various components including transport allowance, escort allowance, reader allowance and stipend for girls.

Vice Chairman LCMA reviews functioning of STPs at Brari Numbal, Nallah Amir Khan

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 09: Vice Chairman, J&K Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (JKLCMA), Khurshid Ahmad Shah Saturday visited the Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) at Brari Numbal and Nallah Amir Khan to assess their operational efficiency and functioning.

During the visit, the Vice Chairman, as per an official statement, inspected the 16.1 MLD STP at Brari Numbal and the 5.4 MLD STP at Nallah Amir Khan, both commissioned by JKLCMA. Officials informed the Vice Chairman that both the plants are based on MBR Technology aimed at ensuring effective sewage treatment and improved environmental management.

While reviewing the functioning of the plants, Khurshid Ahmad Shah stressed the need for sustained efforts towards environmental conservation and efficient sewage treatment management to protect water bodies and maintain ecological balance in the region.

He also directed the concerned officials to ensure smooth operation and regular monitoring of the plants for achieving optimum performance and adherence to environmental standards.

NASHA MUKT J&K ABHIYAN

Central Kashmir Excise Range destroys Poppy cultivation

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 09: under the leadership of Excise Commissioner Vaibhav Kohli, and the oversight of Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive) Kashmir, Tabassum Shafat Kamili, the Central Kashmir Excise Range intensified its crackdown against the illicit cultivation of Narcotic crops (Poppy) under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan.

During the drive, as per an official statement, illegal poppy cultivation was destroyed at multiple locations across the Srinagar-Budgam-Ganderbal Excise Range in collaboration with Police, Revenue and Agriculture Department and the FIR was lodged under the relevant sections of NDPS Act at the concerned Police Stations.

All legal formalities including seizure, sampling and destruction were reportedly completed on spot.

The enforcement action exemplifies the commitment of the Excise Department to curbing illegal activities and upholding the rule of law.

Awareness activities organised across Budgam

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, MAY 09: Various awareness and outreach programmes were organised across Budgam district Saturday under the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) with an aim to educate people, especially youth and rural communities, about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of environmental and social responsibility.

Excise Team Sub Range Budgam, as per an official statement, carried out a major awareness programme through Friday Sermon at Batpora Chadoora. During the sermon delivered at Jamia Masjid, the Imam highlighted the ill effects of drug abuse on society and human health and urged people to remain vigilant against the growing menace of narcotics. Farmers were particularly sensitized and advised to refrain from cultivation of illicit narcotic crops such as poppy and cannabis in their farms and orchards.

The programme emphasized the collective responsibility of society



in creating a drug-free environment through awareness and education.

Meanwhile, Raithan Forest Range organised a plantation drive, pledge ceremony and awareness programme under NMBA at Government Middle School Gurwaite Kalan. Students, teachers and locals participated enthusiastically in the programme and pledged to work towards environmental protection and social awareness. Participants were sensitized about the importance of preserving forests, biodiversity and maintaining a healthy and drug-free society.

Further intensifying awareness efforts among students, a slogan writing activity was organised at Government Higher Secondary School Budgam under NMBA.

Padyatras, awareness, outreach activities continue across Pulwama

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, MAY 09: As part of the ongoing 100-day campaign under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, a series of awareness and outreach activities and padyatras were organised across District Pulwama to spread awareness against drug abuse and promote a healthy and drug-free society.

A mega anti-drug awareness programme was organised at Dadasara Tral by administration in collaboration with Civic Welfare Forum Dadasara and Al-Khidmat Dadasara. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from various sections of society including youth, students, civil society members, members of Auqaf Committees and local residents.

The programme, as per an official statement, was

attended by MLA Tral, Rafiq Ahmad Naik, Additional Deputy Commissioner Tral, Sajid Yahya Naqash, officers of civil administration and Police besides Civil Defence and SDRF volunteers, Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers and SHG members.

During the programme, awareness sessions on Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan were conducted by the resource persons and officers. Signature campaign, sports activities, pledge ceremony and Nasha Mukht film screening were also organised on the occasion. The event later culminated with a padyatra aimed at spreading the message of a drug-free lifestyle in the society.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Tral Rafiq Ahmad Naik appreciated the awareness and enforcement activities being undertaken under the campaign and said that

the impact of the campaign is visible on the ground. He urged the public to actively participate in the campaign while spreading awareness regarding the harmful effects of drug abuse.

Similar awareness programmes were organised at Gudoor Pulwama, Tral-i-Payee and at various Anganwadi Centres across the district, where officers and resource persons interacted with participants and highlighted the harmful effects of substance abuse and the importance of collective responsibility in curbing the menace.

Meanwhile, a padyatra was organised at Litter which commenced from Government Higher Secondary School Litter and culminated near J&K Bank Litter. The padyatra witnessed enthusiastic participation from members

of civil society, Auqaf Committees, trade union members, students, youth, local residents and officials of various departments.

Further, an awareness session and padyatra were also organised by SHG members at Arigam Pulwama to sensitise the public about the harmful consequences of drug abuse and promote community participation in the anti-drug campaign.

Besides, the Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Pulwama continued a variety of activities across different zones of the district under the campaign.

In Zone Pulwama, a zonal-level football tournament was organised at HSS Karimabad, while chart exhibitions were conducted at HS Malangpora and UPS Chewakalan. A zonal-level table tennis competition for girls was also organised at GHSS Pulwama.

Person accused of murder or abetting it cannot inherit victim's property: SC

PTI

New Delhi, May 09: The Supreme Court has held that a person accused of committing or abetting the murder of another person cannot inherit the victim's property.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan has said the disqualification from inheriting property would apply to both intestate and testamentary succession. The court has said the bar would apply even if the trial was still on.

Intestate succession takes place according to the rules of personal law governing inheritance, while testamentary succession applies when property



is bequeathed through a will. "A person accused of the murder of one from whom inheritance is claimed is disentitled from asserting rights, not only under section 25 of the Hindu Succession Act, but also on the principles of justice, fair play and equity. Strict proof is not indispensable in civil proceedings if the preponderance

of probabilities points to the commission of the offence," the top court has said.

Referring to section 25 of the Hindu Succession Act, the bench has noted that the provision disqualifies a person who commits murder or abets the commission of the murder from inheriting the property of the deceased.

PM to inaugurate dev projects, address BJP rally in Hyderabad today

PTI

Hyderabad, May 09: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate or lay the foundation stone for development projects worth around Rs 9,500 crore and address a BJP rally here on May 10.

This marks his first public rally in Telangana following his 2024 re-election and historic BJP victories in the West Bengal and Assam assembly elections this month.

In a post on 'X', Modi shared details of his visit to Karnataka and Telangana on Sunday.

"In the afternoon, I will arrive in Hyderabad, where I will inaugurate or lay the foundation stone for development works worth approximately 9,500 crore rupees. These projects are related to several key sectors, including roads, transportation

(logistics), textiles, railways, and fuel," he said.

The PM will also participate in a programme dedicating 'Sindhu Hospital' to the nation.

"In the evening, I will address a BJP gathering in the city. Frustrated by the misuse of the previous BRS and the current Congress government, Telangana is looking toward the BJP. The unprecedented support we are receiving underscores that our party is the top choice for Telangana!" he further said in the post.

Sources said Modi is likely to visit the residences of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and his deputy Pawan Kalyan in Hyderabad.

Kalyan, who underwent a surgical procedure in April following a health complication, is currently recovering at his home here.

Meanwhile, the Telangana

CMO said a Central government official invited Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to attend PM Modi's virtual inauguration of development projects at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC) here.

The projects to be laid foundation by the PM include four-laning of Hyderabad-Panaji Economic Corridor and Zaheerabad Industrial Area. Modi will inaugurate various sections of Kazipet-Vijayawada multi-tracking project of railways, Greenfield POL (Petroleum, Oil, Lubricants) Terminal in Hyderabad and PM MITRA Park at Warangal.

Telangana BJP chief spokesperson N V Subhash told PTI on Saturday that the party sees Telangana as a potential state where it can come to power on its own and that the party's state unit is confident of gaining momentum

following PM Modi's visit.

The state BJP unit is making elaborate arrangements for the rally and about two lakh people are expected to attend the event.

The party has undertaken a "wall writing" campaign in the state ahead of the rally.

Union Ministers G Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar and state BJP president N Ramchander Rao participated in the campaign, inviting people to the public meeting.

Meanwhile, Malkajgiri Police Commissioner B Sumathi said in a release that elaborate security, law and order, and traffic arrangements have been made for the public meeting with deployment of approximately 2,000 police personnel and 620 traffic policemen, along with specialised units, for effective security duties.

DRDO achieves breakthrough in hypersonic missile dev prog: Govt

PTI

New Delhi, May 09: In a major leap for India's hypersonic missile programme, the DRDO on Saturday announced the successful long-duration test of an actively cooled full-scale scramjet combustor.

The "extensive" long-duration test of the "actively cooled full scale scramjet combustor" has put India at the forefront of advanced aerospace capabilities, the defence ministry said.

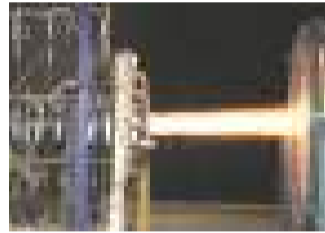
For any hypersonic missile programme, this technology is considered extremely crucial as active cooling allows the weapon to travel hundreds of miles

at incredible speed.

The test, conducted at the Hyderabad-based Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), achieved a continuous run-time of over 1,200 seconds (20 minutes), validating the engine's ability to sustain extreme thermal loads required for hypersonic cruise missiles.

The DRDL achieved a "path-breaking milestone in the development of hypersonic missiles by successfully conducting an "extensive long-duration test of its actively cooled full scale scramjet combustor", the ministry said.

"A run-time of over 1,200 seconds was achieved at the state-of-the-art scramjet connect pipe



test (SCPT) facility in Hyderabad on May 9, building upon the earlier successful test of over 700 seconds conducted in January this year," it said.

DRDL is a premier DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) laboratory.

Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh complimented the DRDO, industry partners and academia on the successful ground-test of the scramjet engine.

He described the achievement as a "solid foundation" for the nation's hypersonic cruise missile development programme.

"This successful test positions India at the forefront of advanced aerospace capabilities and continuously emerging war technologies," the ministry said in a statement.

The ground-tests have successfully validated the design of advanced active cooled scramjet combustor as well as the capabilities of state-of-art test facility, it added.

PTI

New Delhi, May 09: The National Legal Services Authority on Saturday organised the second National Lok Adalat of the year across the country.

According to a release, "A total of 2,07,66,548 cases were amicably settled, comprising 1,87,63,883 pre-litigation matters and 20,02,665 pending cases, involving an overall settlement amount of Rs 3,440.81 crore."

It attributed the comparatively lower figures, vis-a-vis some previous National Lok Adalats, primarily to the staggered schedule in certain states and Union territories and the

ongoing consolidation of data from various jurisdictions.

According to the release, the Lok Adalat was organised across 21 states and six Union territories through thousands of benches constituted at various courts, tribunals, consumer commissions, and permanent Lok Adalats.

"Owing to summer vacations and administrative exigencies, the National Lok Adalat shall be conducted on June 13 in Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal; on June 20 in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Telangana; and on July 11 in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Karnataka," it said.

The matters settled on Saturday included bank recovery

cases, cheque dishonour matters, motor accident claims, matrimonial disputes (excluding divorce), labour disputes, consumer matters, compoundable criminal cases, traffic challans, service matters, land acquisition disputes, arbitration matters, plea bargaining, succession cases, revenue cases, public utility cases and other civil cases amenable to settlement, the release said.

"Special emphasis was placed on long-pending matters identified through the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), reaffirming NALSA's commitment towards reducing pendency and strengthening the justice delivery system," it said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Drug addiction,

always say: drug addiction and terrorism are not separate challenges but they are two faces of the same problem. And I promise all of you that we will not rest until we defeat it."

The Lieutenant Governor called upon police and civil administration to cover every panchayat of Anantnag, and especially reach out to vulnerable areas of the district in next 71 days of campaign.

"A decisive blow is being dealt to the drug smugglers' network in Anantnag district. Since 11th April, the highest number of 108 NDPS cases have been registered in Anantnag. Narcopalaces worth Rs. 3.5 crore, built with the black money from drugs, have been reduced to dust. 22 vehicles have been seized, 8 driving licenses and vehicle registrations have been cancelled. 13 drug stores have been sealed for violating the law.

I assure the people of Anantnag that not a single smuggler will be left untouched, and the entire machinery involved in the drug smuggling will be uprooted from its roots," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that the women and youth are the greatest strength of this war on drugs. He said if a family member or a neighbor's youth is going astray, women and youth club members should bring them back onto the path of correction, and seek the administration's help if needed.

"I appeal to sportspersons, teachers, and all religious leaders to dedicate the next 71 days with wholehearted commitment to the awareness and rehabilitation campaign, and to pledge to make Jammu Kashmir drug-free.

Religious leaders are regarded as the people's leaders and guides. I want them to provide spiritual and moral guidance to the youth and to warn them about the dangers of drugs. I want to reiterate that this battle is not just the administration's. It is a collective battle of society. Let's make a collective promise that we will not allow drug peddlers to thrive in our villages and neighborhoods. We will rehabilitate the youth who are victims of drugs. I firmly believe that when the people stand up for a purpose, their power increases a thousandfold," the Lieutenant Governor said.

BREAK SILENCE TO WIN THE WAR

The Lieutenant Governor appealed to the people to break the silence to win this war against drugs and all sections of society must speak in one voice about the dangers of drug addiction.

"The challenge of drug addiction can be eradicated only through a Whole of Society Approach. From now on, every corner of Union Territory, whether schools, colleges, families, sports grounds, wards, villages, or theater stages, should give a voice to the cause with firm resolve," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that in this war against drugs, administration and society must understand the link between drugs and terrorism and everyone should join hands to defeat it.

The Lieutenant Governor also reiterated his commitment to ensure justice to every terror victim family.

LAYS FOUNDATION STONE FOR VARIOUS SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor

laid foundation stone for various sports infrastructure development projects worth Rs 20.60 crore in the District. These include Khel Gaon Modern Sports Infrastructure and residential facility (Khel Bhawan) Stage-I at Jablpora; Expansion of Sports Facilities at Chaki-Kamal Monghal; Reconstruction of Sports complex at Nillandrusu and development of stadium at Harmohalla Ranbirpora.

The Lieutenant Governor said that these sports facilities will channel the energy of the youth in the right direction and strengthen the spirit of discipline and sportsmanship.

He also felicitated the youth icons and distributed sports kits to the youth.

Artists through traditional Nukad Natak, Baand Pather and a Mime play centered on the Nasha Mukht Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan raised awareness about the dangers of drug abuse, encouraging young people to stay healthy and contribute to a drug-free society. (KNO)

Lt Gen Subramani

are retiring from service.

The government has appointed Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani (Retd) as the Chief of Defence Staff and he will also function as the secretary of the department of military affairs, the defence ministry said on Saturday.

As Chief of Defence Staff, Subramani's primary task will be to implement the theatreisation model by rolling out integrated military commands.

Gen Chauhan, a former Eastern Army Commander, took charge as the country's senior-most military commander in September 2022, over nine months after the first CDS General Bipin Rawat died in a helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu.

In his illustrious career spanning over 40 years, Lt Gen Subramani served across a wide spectrum of conflict and terrain profiles and held a host of Command, Staff and Instructional appointments.

He served as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff from July 1, 2024, to July 31, 2025, and was General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Central Command from March 2023 till June 2024.

The officer is a graduate of the National Defence Academy and the Indian Military Academy.

He was commissioned into the eighth battalion of the Garhwal Rifles on December 14, 1985.

Lt Gen Subramani is an alumnus of the Joint Services Command and Staff College, Bracknell (UK), and the National Defence College, New Delhi. He holds a Master of Arts degree from King's College, London, and an MPhil in Defence Studies from Madras University.

He commanded the 16 Garhwal Rifles in counter-insurgency operations in Assam as part of Operation Rhino, the 168 Infantry Brigade in Jammu and Kashmir, and the 17 Mountain Division in the Central Sector during a challenging operational environment.

He also distinguished himself by commanding two corps, including a premier strike corps of the Indian Army on the Western Front.

The officer possesses insightful knowledge and a deep understanding of operational dynamics on both the Western and Northern borders, according to the Defence Ministry.

As the Navy Chief, Vice Admiral

Swaminathan's focus is likely to be on taking forward the ongoing modernisation of the force.

The Flag Officer was commissioned into the Indian Navy on July 1, 1987, and is a specialist in communication and electronic warfare.

He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla; the Joint Services Command and Staff College, Shrivenham, United Kingdom; the College of Naval Warfare, Karanja; and the US Naval War College, Newport.

A recipient of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM), Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) and Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM), the Admiral has held several key operational, staff and training appointments in his naval career, including the command of missile vessels INS Vidyut and Vinash, the missile corvette INS Kulish, the guided missile destroyer INS Mysore and the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.

Following his promotion to the rank of Vice Admiral, the Flag Officer served as Chief of Staff of the Western Naval Command, Controller of Personnel Services, and Chief of Personnel at Naval Headquarters.

Prior to his current assignment, he served as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff.

Vice Admiral Swaminathan's educational qualifications include a BSc degree from Jawaharal Nehru University, New Delhi; an MSc in Telecommunications from Cochin University of Science and Technology; and an MA in Defence Studies from King's College, London.

He also holds an MPhil in Strategic Studies and a PhD in International Studies, both from Mumbai University.

Over one crore

law enforcement agencies and government departments.

The awareness drive included padyatras, school and college programmes, village-level campaigns, youth engagement activities, seminars, rallies, sports events and cultural programmes aimed at sensitising people about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

Officials said the campaign adopted a "whole-of-government" approach involving departments of health, social welfare, police, education, information and other agencies to tackle drug addiction, rehabilitation and narcotics trafficking simultaneously.

As part of the enforcement drive, Jammu and Kashmir Police registered 614 FIRs under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and arrested 646 persons during the campaign period. Authorities said 435 drug peddlers were apprehended and 160 drug hotspots identified across the Union Territory.

The police and enforcement agencies also seized narcotic substances including 3.8 kg heroin, 32.92 kg charas and 222.31 kg ganja. Illegal poppy cultivation spread over 21 marlas of land was also destroyed during the operation.

Officials said stringent measures were taken against properties linked to drug trafficking networks.

Thirty-seven houses associated with drug peddlers were sealed or demolished, while immovable properties worth around Rs 25.97 crore were seized or attached.

Additional properties worth Rs 3.70 crore

were demolished and movable assets worth Rs 1.67 crore seized.

The administration also acted against alleged misuse of transport and pharmaceutical channels linked to narcotics activities. During the campaign, 252 driving licences and 111 vehicle registrations were cancelled. Authorities also suspended 104 drug store licences and cancelled two others.

The health department said its Addiction Treatment Facilities treated 44,602 patients during the campaign, including 44,263 OPD cases and 339 indoor admissions. A total of 148 patients were cured and discharged after treatment.

Social Welfare Department-run rehabilitation centres received 441 patients and conducted counselling sessions for 742 individuals, while police-run counselling and rehabilitation centres registered 451 patients and counselled 786 persons. Officials said 138 individuals had successfully recovered through the police-supported rehabilitation programme.

Authorities said surveillance and preventive measures were also intensified, with inspections conducted at 3,067 chemist shops and 977 schools and hospitals.

Around 2,815 CCTV cameras were installed at vulnerable locations to strengthen monitoring and enforcement efforts.

The administration reiterated its commitment to making Jammu and Kashmir drug-free through sustained enforcement, public participation and rehabilitation support. (KNO)

Unusual heat

thundershower at many places across Jammu and Kashmir. It said hailstorm, thunder, lightning and gusty winds with speeds of 40-50 kmph are likely at a few places during the period.

The MeT department has also predicted a fall in day temperatures by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius at many places between May 11 and May 13.

Farmers have been advised to continue farm operations till May 10 in view of the expected change in weather conditions. (KNO)

Six-month rainfall

registered a 39 per cent shortfall, Pulwama 38 per cent, Budgam 34 per cent and Srinagar 32 per cent below normal precipitation during the month. Kishtwar reported a 26 per cent deficit, followed by Ganderbal at 23 per cent, while Bandipora and Baramulla each recorded a 13 per cent shortfall.

Officials and weather observers said the falling precipitation levels may lead to a further decline in water levels in the Jhelum river and other streams during the peak summer season.

Some districts in the Jammu region, however, recorded surplus rainfall in April. Samba witnessed the highest increase with a 96 per cent surplus, followed by Rajouri at 46 per cent and Reasi at 40 per cent.

Jammu and Udhampur each recorded 15 per cent excess rainfall, while Poonch received 14 per cent above-normal precipitation. Kupwara, Ramban and Doda also recorded marginal surpluses. (KNO)

Sports council

held in the Kashmir division, where sports students from Kabaddi, Wushu, and other academies pledged to remain free from drugs

and alcohol.

Recognising the importance of confidence and safety in youth development, the Sports Council organised a week-long self-defence workshop at Government College for Women, Srinagar.

Conducted in collaboration with the Women's Study Centre and the Department of Physical Education, the programme drew significant participation and concluded with the certification of trainees. The initiative highlighted the Council's broader vision of empowering young women through sport as a preventive measure against vulnerability and harmful influences.

Under My Youth My Pride, competitive events have been held across J&K, featuring disciplines such as football, volleyball, boxing, and indigenous games. Participation ranged from dozens to hundreds of athletes per event, with spectators contributing to a growing sporting culture. Professional coaching support from Khelo India Centres ensured quality training even in remote and border areas.

The expanding network of Khelo India Centres has emerged as the backbone of the grassroots movement, nurturing talent across disciplines including taekwondo, wushu, football, and gymnastics.

Athletes from these centres have secured medals at the district, national, and international levels, including representation in global competitions and qualification for the Khelo India Youth Games, marking significant progress for the region's sporting ecosystem.

Family support

at treatment facilities in Kashmir. "Nearly 90 to 95 per cent of patients visiting our centre are heroin users," he said, adding that out of around 650 registered patients at the ATF in District Hospital Shopian, almost all are male.

Dr Aadil said the role of parents and guardians extends far beyond simply bringing patients to hospitals or rehabilitation centres. He advised parents to remain actively involved in their children's daily lives by observing behavioural changes, monitoring social circles and paying attention to unusual activities or possessions.

"If parents notice sudden behavioural changes, withdrawal from family interactions or suspicious habits, they should immediately seek professional help instead of ignoring the signs," he said.

The doctor further said that treatment facilities are providing free medical care, counselling and rehabilitation support to addicts, while family counselling sessions are also being organised to educate relatives about handling addiction with patience and empathy.

"These sessions help families understand that addiction is a medical and psychological condition, not merely a moral failing. Supportive behaviour from loved ones significantly improves recovery outcomes," he added.

Experts believe that involving families in the recovery process not only strengthens the patient emotionally but also helps relatives cope with the social and psychological challenges associated with addiction. They said collective efforts by families, healthcare professionals, educational institutions and society are essential to tackle the menace. (KNO)

Suvendu takes oath as Bengal's first BJP CM as Brigade Ground witnesses historic saffron turn

PTI

Kolkata, May 9: Suvendu Adhikari on Saturday took oath as West Bengal's first BJP chief minister at the iconic Brigade Parade Grounds that witnessed the swearing-in of the party's government for the first time since Independence.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the BJP's central leadership and chief ministers of NDA-ruled states seated on the capacious rostrum, Governor RN Ravi administered the oath of office and secrecy to Adhikari amid chants of "Jai Shri Ram", drumbeats and a sea of fluttering saffron flags.

As Modi walked onto the stage, he knelt down facing the crowd and touched his forehead to the dais with folded hands in a mark of reverence to the people's mandate, drawing loud cheers from thousands of BJP supporters packed into the historic venue.

Adhikari, who won from both Bhabanipur and Nandigram constituencies and emerged as the face of the BJP's aggressive campaign, took the oath first.

He was followed by senior BJP leader and its former state unit president Dilip Ghosh, who was inducted into the cabinet as a minister.

BJP legislators Agnimitra Paul, Ashok Kirtania, Kshudiram Tudu and Nisith Pramanik were also administered the oath as ministers.

The six-member ministry reflected the BJP's attempt at social and regional balancing, with representation from Brahmin, OBC, tribal, Matua and Rajbanshi communities.

Adhikari is a Brahmin, Ghosh represents the OBC community, Agnimitra Paul is a Kayastha, Kirtania is a prominent Matua face, Tudu represents the tribal belt of Janglemahal, while Pramanik is seen as an influential Rajbanshi leader from north Bengal.

Two ministers in the BJP's first cabinet are from north Bengal and three from the south, underlining the party's attempts at consolidating its support across regions.

Notably, absent from the first list of ministers was any representative from Kolkata, a city that has historically produced some of Bengal's tallest political figures and chief ministers.

Sources said the remaining ministers of the BJP government are likely to be sworn in at the Raj Bhavan on Monday. The first meeting of the new cabinet may also be held on the same



day. The portfolios of the ministers have not yet been announced.

The Brigade Parade Grounds, once regarded as the ideological fortress of the Left and later appropriated by the TMC as a showpiece of political strength, turned into the stage for the saffron party's biggest breakthrough in Bengal that has been projected by the BJP as the dawn of a "Sonar Bangla" under a "double-engine government".

Thousands of BJP workers, many draped in saffron scarves and carrying flags bearing the lotus symbol, began assembling at the venue from early morning as giant LED screens played campaign speeches of Modi and Adhikari.

Chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" echoed across the Maidan area as the prime minister arrived.

The BJP secured 207 seats in the 294-member assembly in the recently concluded elections, ending the Trinamool Congress' 15-year rule and scripting its most significant electoral breakthrough in eastern India.

The party's rise in Bengal -- long considered one of the toughest frontiers for the saffron camp because of the state's entrenched Left-liberal political culture -- gathered momentum over the past few years through aggressive grassroots expansion, sharp political polarisation, organisational consolidation and high-profile defections from rival parties.

The first batch of ministers reflected the BJP's attempt to reward key social and electoral constituencies that contributed to its victory.

Ghosh returned to the assembly from Kharagpur Sadar, a seat he had first won in 2016. He later entered Parliament in 2019 before losing the 2024 general elections for the Bardhaman-Durgapur seat after a constituency shift.

Fashion designer-turned-politician Agnimitra Paul joined the BJP after the 2019 Lok Sabha polls and quickly rose within the ranks to become the president of the party's women's wing in Bengal. She retained the

Asansol-Dakshin seat that she first won in 2021.

Ashok Kirtania retained Bangaon Uttar, strengthening the BJP's hold over the politically crucial Matua belt bordering Bangladesh.

Kshudiram Tudu, a school teacher by profession, has emerged as a tribal face from the Janglemahal region, winning Ranibandh after earlier electoral defeats.

Nisith Pramanik, who had entered Parliament from Cooch Behar in 2019 and later became a Union minister of state in the home ministry, returned to state politics by winning the Mathabhanga assembly seat.

For the BJP, Saturday's swearing-in was more than a transfer of power; it marked the culmination of a years-long political project to breach Bengal's last major ideological fortress and replace decades of regional and Left dominance with saffron rule from the heart of Brigade itself.

Suvendu reviews law & order, welfare schemes

PTI

Kolkata, May 9: After taking the oath of office on Saturday, West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari held a meeting with Chief Secretary Dushyant Nariala, Director General of Police Siddh Nath Gupta, and other police and civil officials to review the law and order situation in the state.

Kolkata Police Commissioner Ajay Nand was also present at the meeting, sources said.

Adhikari also enquired about the operations of various schemes introduced by the previous Trinamool Congress (TMC) government and directed the chief secretary to ensure that the schemes continue to function smoothly without disruption, the sources added.

He also enquired about the progress of the renovation work being carried out at the Writers' Buildings, which will be the next state secretariat.

Amit Shah calls it 'great day' as BJP assumes office in WB

PTI

Chitradurga (Karnataka), May 9: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said, "Today is a great day as the saffron flag has risen" in West Bengal, the land of spiritual leaders, including Swami Vivekananda, and Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He was referring to the BJP government assuming office in West Bengal following the Assembly poll in the state.

While addressing "Yediyurappa Abhimanotsava", a felicitation for BJP stalwart and former chief minister B S Yediyurappa on his completing 50 years in politics, Shah said that Yediyurappa was instrumental in bringing together pontiffs of various sects in Karnataka. "Today is a great day for all those in this country who regard Mother India as sacred and live their lives in devotion to her. Because on the very land where Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and the pioneer of our ideology, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, were born, the saffron flag has risen there today," Shah said here.

He said the day chosen for the event in Chitradurga coincided with the formation of the BJP government in West Bengal. Congratulating the organising committee of the event, he said he has been visiting Karnataka since 2014 and shared many stages with revered saints. Because of Yediyurappa's personality, today we have before us a stage where Swamis from all faiths and sects are present, Shah told the huge public gathering. "This sends a message to the entire Karnataka and the whole country -- if one lives such a life, then irrespective of sect, denomination, caste, or the caste of the followers, everyone comes together on one stage. This itself is a very great thing," Shah, also a senior BJP leader, said.

NDA gov't's social security schemes bring dignity, financial security: PM



"They reflect our commitment to bring dignity, assurance and financial security into the lives of the people of India,"

PTI

New Delhi, May 9: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his government's social security schemes reflect its commitment to bring dignity, assurance and financial security into the lives of the people of India.

Modi said that on this day, 11 years ago, key social security and pension schemes were launched by the NDA government.

"They reflect our commitment to bring dignity, assurance and financial security into the lives of the people of India," he said in a post on X.

The prime minister said the PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and PM

Suraksha Bima Yojana have had a positive impact at the grassroots. Launched on May 9, 2015, by the prime minister, the Jansuraksha schemes- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) were envisioned to extend affordable financial protection to all, particularly the underserved and vulnerable sections of society.

These flagship schemes aim to broaden the insurance and pension landscape by shielding citizens against life's uncertainties and fostering long-term financial resilience.

TVK gets majority to form its maiden govt



PTI

Chennai, May 9: The uncertainty over government formation in Tamil Nadu finally ended on Saturday after days of drama, with DMK allies VCK and IUML extending "unconditional support," to Vijay-led TVK and enabling it to cross the requisite numbers to form government. Yet, the party only got a thin majority in the 234-member Assembly.

The suspense ended when the Thol.Thirumavalavan-led Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi, which has two seats, finally extended support after keeping the TVK on tenterhooks and the political circles abuzz over its stand. VCK, a long time ally of the Left parties who had extended their support to Vijay on Friday, had earlier announced its decision would be in sync with their stand. Shortly after VCK's decision to back Vijay, another DMK ally, the IUML

also extended support to TVK. IUML has two MLAs. With the two small parties' support, the numbers in favour of TVK rose to 120, just two more than the simple majority mark of 118 in the 234-member Tamil Nadu Assembly. Armed with the support of 120 MLAs, Vijay on Saturday evening set off to the Lok Bhavan to meet Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arelkar, but had to turn back as he reportedly did not get an appointment. CPI state secretary M Veerapandian slammed the governor for "harassing" Vijay.

The Vijay-led Tamila-ga Vettri Kazhagam faced serious allegations when NDA constituent AMMK accused it of alleged bid aimed at horse-trading. MLAs belonging to Congress, which has extended support to the TVK, have shifted to Hyderabad.

While it was expected that the VCK would announce its stand on Saturday morning, the party revealed its decision later in the day. There were unverified reports of some hard-bargaining between TVK and VCK, possibly over ministerial allocations, but there was no official confirmation from either sides.

Vijay, however, has been open to accommodate allies in his cabinet, in sync with VCK's stated position of power-sharing.

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Cong top brass huddle in Delhi over govt formation in Kerala, decide on CM

PTI

New Delhi, May 9: Top Congress leadership on Saturday got into a huddle to decide on the party's government formation in Kerala and select the chief ministerial face in the southern state, where the United Democratic Front (UDF) won with a thumping majority.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge convened a meeting of top party leaders from Kerala, where former party chief Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretary in-charge for Kerala Deepa Dasmunshi

and AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal were also present.

Among others present were Congress Kerala unit chief Sunny Joseph, leader of opposition in the outgoing Kerala assembly V D Satheesan and former Leader of Opposition Ramesh Chennithala.

The top leadership is set to discuss the report from the party observers who were sent to hold talks with all party MLAs on their choice for the chief minister's post, sources said.

The report by party's senior observers Ajay Mak and Mukul Wasnik was

handed over to Kharge on Friday morning, after which the top leadership summoned all leaders from Kerala for a meeting here.

Party's observers for Kerala were also present at the meeting. Joseph told reporters before the meeting that discussions would be held at Kharge's residence and the party high command would announce the decision regarding the chief minister.

Venugopal, a close aide of Rahul Gandhi, has thrown his hat in the race for chief minister, which has led to a delay in selecting the name for the top post, the sources said.

CJI stresses on convergence of legal aid, welfare schemes to ensure last-mile delivery of justice

PTI

Nongpoh (Meghalaya), May 9: Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Saturday stressed the need for convergence of legal aid and welfare schemes to ensure last-mile delivery of justice.

Addressing a gathering after inaugurating an awareness camp in Meghalaya's Ri Bhoi district, Justice Surya Kant, who is also the Patron-in-Chief of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), said healthcare access, educational support, livelihood opportunities and rehabilitation assistance were being brought together through such camps to ensure that benefits reached the grassroots.

The mega camp-cum-awareness

programme on NALSA schemes and government welfare schemes was organised at Marngar in Ri Bhoi district under the theme "Bridging the Gap" by the High Court of Meghalaya and the Meghalaya State Legal Services Authority (MSLSA) in partnership with the state government.

"It is very essential that under one roof all these welfare schemes implemented by government departments, organisations and legal institutions are made available to all," he said, urging all stakeholders to work in tandem to strengthen access to justice.

The CJI also acknowledged the role of para-legal volunteers in delivering legal services at the grassroots level and called for strengthening their recruitment.

Iran keeps US waiting for response on peace plan

AFP

Tehran, May 9: Iran questioned the seriousness of American diplomacy on Saturday in the wake of renewed naval clashes in the Gulf, while keeping Washington waiting for a response to its latest negotiating position.

US President Donald Trump had said on Friday that he was expecting Iran's response to Washington's latest proposal for a deal to extend a fragile truce and launch peace talks — "supposedly tonight."

But if Iran did send Pakistani mediators a response, there was no public sign of it, and Tehran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi called into question the reliability of the US leadership in a call with his Turkish counterpart.

"The recent escalation of tensions by American forces in the Arabian Gulf and their numerous actions in violating the ceasefire have added to suspicions about the motivation and seriousness of the American side in the path of diplomacy," he said, according to an Iranian account of the call published by the ISNA



news agency.

In an incident on Friday, a US fighter jet fired on and disabled two Iranian-flagged tankers that Washington accused of challenging its naval blockade of Iran's ports.

An Iranian military official told local media the country's navy had responded "to American terrorism with strikes" and that "the clashes have now ceased."

The latest incident came after a previous flare-up overnight Thursday to Friday in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital international sea lane that Iran is seeking to control to extract tolls from foreign vessels and wield economic leverage over

the US and its allies.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio reiterated on Friday that it was "unacceptable" for Tehran to control the key oil route.

Washington has sent Iran, via Pakistani mediators, a proposal to extend the truce in the Gulf to allow for talks on a final settlement of the conflict launched 10 weeks ago with US-Israeli strikes on Iran.

Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said Friday that the proposal was still "under review," according to ISNA.

- Oil slick -

Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, met with US Vice President JD Vance

in Washington on Friday and discussed the Pakistani-led efforts to broker a permanent peace. Iran has attacked sites in Qatar during the war, pointing to the wealthy emirate's role as the host of a major US air base.

Meanwhile, satellite images have shown that an oil slick is spreading off the coast of Iran's Kharg Island, a key oil export terminal for the Islamic republic.

It was not immediately clear what had caused the apparent spill, which was off the island's west coast and appeared to cover more than 20 square miles (52 square kilometers), according to global monitor Orbital EOS.

A UK-based non-governmental organization, the Conflict and Environment Observatory, told AFP that by Saturday the slick was "much reduced," and may have been caused by leaking oil infrastructure.

Kharg Island is at the heart of Iran's oil export industry, a lynchpin of its battered economy, and lies in the Gulf far north of the narrow Strait of Hormuz. Following the start of the war on February 28, Iran largely closed the strait,

WHO chief arrives in Spain before hantavirus-hit ship evacuation

AFP

Geneva, May 9: The World Health Organization chief said Saturday he had arrived in Spain and would join government officials to oversee the disembarkation of a hantavirus-hit cruise ship in the Canary Islands.

"I arrived in Spain, where I will join senior government officials in a mission to Tenerife to oversee safe disembarkation of the passengers, crew members and health experts from MV Hondius cruise ship," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on X.

Three passengers from the MV Hondius — a Dutch husband and wife and a German woman — have died, while others have fallen sick with the rare disease, which



continues to actively monitor the situation, coordinate support and next steps and will keep Member States and the public updated accordingly," he said, stressing that "so far, the risk for the population of Canary Islands and globally remains low."

The Spanish prime minister's office said that Tedros would meet Pedro Sanchez at his official residence at 1500 GMT Saturday, before he leaves for the Spanish archipelago.

Tedros will accompany Spain's health and interior ministers to a command post in Tenerife "to ensure coordination between administrations, health control, and the application of the planned surveillance and response protocols," Spanish ministry sources said.

usually spreads among rodents.

The only hantavirus strain that can transmit from person to person — Andes virus — has been confirmed among those who have tested positive, fueling international concern.

The Dutch-flagged vessel, which has around 150 people on board, is expected to arrive at the Spanish Canary Island of

Tenerife on Sunday. Special flights will then take passengers to their home countries.

Tedros said he was "in direct communication with captain Jan Dobrogowski and WHO colleague on board Dr. Freddy Banza-Mutoka, who told me that, at this stage, there are no additional people on board showing symptoms of hantavirus." "WHO

Putin chides NATO in speech at scaled-back Victory Day parade



AFP

Moscow, May 9: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Saturday that his soldiers in Ukraine were fighting an "aggressive force" backed by all of NATO and described his war goals as "just," as he addressed a scaled-back Victory Day parade on Red Square.

Putin has made the memory of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in World War II a central narrative of his 25-year rule. Russian authorities typically mark the parade with pomp and grandeur.

But a spate of Ukrainian long-range attacks in recent weeks prompted the Kremlin to ramp up security measures and downsize this year's celebrations.

The parade was vastly smaller compared to previous years, with no military hardware on display for the first time in nearly two decades and only a handful of foreign dignitaries in attendance — most of them leaders of Russia's close allies.

Both Moscow and Kyiv agreed to observe a three-day ceasefire over the event, announced by US

President Donald Trump. Moscow had threatened a "massive" strike on central Kyiv if Ukraine disrupted the proceedings.

In an address to the parade, attended by Russian military units as well as soldiers from North Korea, Putin invoked the Soviet victory to rally support for his army in Ukraine.

"The great feat of the generation of victors inspires the soldiers carrying out the goals of the special military operation today," Putin said.

"They are confronting an aggressive force armed and supported by the entire NATO bloc. And despite this, our heroes move forward," he said.

"I firmly believe that our cause is just," he added later.

The speech drew a cool reception from some in Moscow, with Internet outages and fatigue over the four-year Ukraine war casting a shadow over the events.

When asked how she felt on Victory Day, which marks the Soviet Union's defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, 36-year-old economist Elena replied: "Nothing."

"I need the Internet, and I don't have it," she told AFP from central Moscow, saying she would not watch the parade.

Australia's Mitchell Starc eyes 2027 ODI World Cup

REUTERS

New Delhi, May 9: Australia fast bowler Mitchell Starc remains driven by the competitive nature of cricket and hopes to extend his 16-year international career for a few more years, he said on Saturday, keeping the door open for a potential appearance at the 2027 World Cup.

The 36-year-old left-arm, Australia's third-highest wicket-taker with 759 across formats — behind only Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath — retired from Twenty20 internationals in September to prolong his career in Tests and 50-over cricket.

The next ODI World Cup is scheduled to be held in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia in October-November 2027.

"I'm pretty competitive, so I just enjoy that aspect of cricket," Starc told reporters. "For Australia, I get to play with some of my best mates. I enjoy the hard work, but I also enjoy competing, and it's still fun."

Starc, who has been managing elbow and shoulder niggles, said his body was holding up well despite the demands of international cricket.

WFI issues showcause notice to Vinesh

Declares her ineligible to compete till June 26

PTI

New Delhi, May 9: The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) on Saturday issued a detailed show-cause notice to Vinesh Phogat, accusing her of indiscipline and anti-doping rule violations, and declared her ineligible to compete in domestic events till June 26, 2026 for failing to complete the mandatory six-month notice period required for athletes returning from retirement under UWW Anti-Doping Rules.

It means that the two-time World Championship medallist will have to wait for her comeback as she was trawling the National Open Ranking event in Gonda, starting Sunday, for her return to competition after quitting the sport in 2024 following her disqualification from the Paris Olympic Games.

In the 15-page notice, the WFI alleged that Vinesh's conduct had caused "lasting damage to reputation

of Indian wrestling" in Paris and violated provisions of the WFI Constitution, UWW International Wrestling Rules and anti-doping regulations.

The federation has sought her explanation on several charges, including her disqualification from the 2024 Paris Games after failing to make weight, alleged whereabouts failures under anti-doping rules, and competing in two weight categories during the March 2024 selection trials conducted by the then IOA-appointed ad-hoc panel.

The federation specifically mentioned that she is not eligible to compete in any domestic event till June 26 this year, including the National Open Ranking Tournament in Gonda.

"The Federation must satisfy itself that you have not committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation that would render you ineligible to represent the Federation in any forthcoming competition," the notice stated.

Indian cricketers Yashasvi, Shafali get NADA notices for missed dope tests



PTI

New Delhi, May 9: Indian cricketers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shafali Verma have been issued notices by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) for not being available for scheduled dope tests last year, leading to their first whereabouts failure.

It is reliably learnt that the two players, who are a part of the NADA's Registered Testing Pool (RTP), did not explain the reasons for the missed tests, leading to the notices.

"Notices have been issued to the concerned athletes, and the same has been intimated to the national federation (the BCCI) and the ICC," a well-placed source told PTI even though NADA declined comment citing confidentiality of the procedure. On being contacted, a BCCI source also confirmed

the development.

"Yes, we have received notification from NADA on missed tests. We will check with them as to how it happened, and will take necessary steps so that such things do not happen in future."

"Cricket is back in the Olympics and we need to adhere to all the protocols so that everything goes on smoothly," the BCCI source told PTI, referring to cricket's inclusion in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games roster.

Yashasvi is currently playing in the IPL for Rajasthan Royals, while Shafali was part of the Indian women's team that recently toured South Africa for a white-ball series.

Athletes in the RTP are required to share their whereabouts with the anti-doping agency and be available for testing in a specified window everyday. Three missed

tests are considered a doping violation and can lead to suspensions.

Currently, 13 cricketers are part of NADA's RTP for the ongoing quarter. The list features 348 athletes in all.

India's T20 World Cup-winning stars Abhishek Sharma and Axar Patel were the most noticeable recent additions to the pool, which is dominated by athletics. Abhishek and Axar replaced Smriti Mandhana and Shreyas Iyer in the latest list.

Test and ODI skipper Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Hardik Pandya, Rishabh Pant, Jasprit Bumrah, KL Rahul, Arshdeep Singh and Tilak Verma are also among those in the group.

From the women's team, which won a historic ODI World Cup last year, all-rounder Deepti Sharma, Shafali and Renuka Singh Thakur are there in the RTP.

Show Timings

Sunday, 10th May

<p>DAADI KI SHAADI (U) Hindi - 07:25 PM</p>	<p>MICHAEL (U/A13+) English with English subtitles 12:00 PM, 02:30 PM</p>	<p>MORTAL KOMBAT II (A) English Atmos with English subtitles - 04:30 PM, 07:00 PM Hindi - 11:30 AM</p>	<p>THE SHEEP DETECTIVES (U/A7+) English - 05:10 PM</p>
<p>BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+) Hindi - 11:15 AM, 07:30 PM</p>	<p>DHURANDHAR: THE REVENGE (A) Hindi - 03:00 PM</p>	<p>THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA 2 (A) English with English subtitles 02:00 PM</p>	

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