



Somnath rose in splendor after every aggressor's atrocity: LG Sinha

Performs Puja on Somnath Swabhiman Parv

Says invaders plundered, razed temple time & again

'It remained guiding light ushering Bharat towards new horizons'

KNO Desk

Srinagar, May 11: Describing Somnath Temple as a guiding light ushering Bharat towards new horizons, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said it was looted and destroyed 17 times by invaders but it rose again each time in full splendor.

LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) performed Puja on Somnath Swabhiman Parv, a celebration of 1,000 years of unbroken faith and unyielding resolve. He also attended a public event organized on the sacred occasion at Lok Bhavan.

The Lieutenant Governor said despite countless atrocities and invasions by aggressors, Somnath has remained a guiding light ushering Bharat towards new horizons.

"From the consecration of the rebuilt Somnath on May 11, 1951, to this day, this center of faith has ignited the deepest spirit in every Indian. I am confident that Somnath's blessings will continue to inspire us to march forward with renewed resolve," the Lieutenant Governor said.



He also stated that Somnath Temple has always awakened new possibilities across the nation and laid foundation of a new India.

"Somnath is a celebration of India's rich spiritual and cultural heritage. Somnath embodies the divinity of our land. Somnath is eternal prayer. Somnath is inseparable from our culture and its sanctity lives in every Indian heart," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that Somnath is the very core of our eternal culture's existence and its purity is intertwined with the | [More on P6](#)

Youth must create their own paths: LG Sinha

Inaugurates national youth festival-Aarohan 2026 in Srinagar



KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 11: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday inaugurated National Youth Festival- Aarohan 2026 in Srinagar. He said the event declares a new vision of 'Rise, Shine, and

Conquer' to our youth which encapsulates a complete philosophy that lights the path to the future, a promise, and a bold challenge to build a developed India @2047.

"National Youth Festival is also a proclamation that the time for | [More on P6](#)

CM Omar meets HM Amit Shah, discusses J&K statehood

Business Rules, rationalization of reservation among other issues discussed

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, May 11: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi and held discussions on a range of issues, including the restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood.

In a post on X, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the CM's office said Omar Abdullah discussed matters related to the restoration of statehood, the Transaction of Business Rules, and the rationalization of reservation with the Home Minister.

"Chief Minister Omar met Hon'ble Union Home Minister @AmitShah in New Delhi today and held discussions on a range of issues concerning Jammu & Kashmir, including restoration of statehood, Transaction of Business Rules, rationalization of reservation, and other key governance and public welfare matters," the post read.

The meeting also covered the prevailing security and economic situation, with emphasis on ensuring sustained peace, stability, and



inclusive growth for the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting assumes significance as the J&K Government is understood to have nearly resolved differences with the Union Government over proposed amendments to the Transaction of Business Rules of the Union Territory.

According to sources, a formal proposal regarding the appointment of an Advocate General has also been initiated by the J&K Government. Under the Transaction of Business Rules, the proposal for

appointment of the Advocate General must be submitted to the Lieutenant Governor through the Chief Secretary and Chief Minister.

The post of Advocate General is currently vacant. It has remained unfilled since October 18, 2024, when the then incumbent D.C. Raina resigned following the formation of the elected government.

The proposal for rationalization of reservation is also awaiting clearance of Union Government. It was sent by the LG to the | [More on P6](#)

Anti-drug campaign

Police make arrests, demolish, attach properties across Kashmir

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 11: Police on Monday said seven alleged drug peddlers were arrested in separate operations in Sopore, Anantnag and Pulwama districts across Kashmir, while contraband substances including charas, codeine phosphate and psychotropic tablets were recovered from their possession.

The action, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), was carried out as part of the ongoing "Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan"

A police spokesman in a statement said that in Sopore two persons were arrested during naka checking at Janwara crossing after they allegedly tried to flee from the spot. Alprazolam tablets were recovered from their possession.

The accused were identified as Faisal Majeed Mir of Janwara and Naseer Ahmad Lone of Hathlangoo, police said.

In another operation in



Sopore, police intercepted two more persons at Malpora crossing and recovered psychotropic substances from them, the statement said.

Police also arrested one person identified as Umar Javid Tugoo of Noorbagh Sopore from Shalimar Colony and recovered codeine phosphate from his possession, it added.

ANANTNAG | [More on P6](#)

LG releases Special Cover on J&K Ranji Trophy Champions 2025-26



KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 11: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday released the Special Cover, a postal envelope, issued by Department of Posts, commemorating the Jammu & Kashmir cricket team's

monumental 2025-26 Ranji Trophy victory.

The Lieutenant Governor interacted with the winning squad and the support staff. He hailed the stellar performance by Jammu Kashmir in the Ranji Trophy Championship as a symbol of a rising sporting

culture in the Union Territory. Sagar Hanuman Singh, Chief Post Master General J&K Circle; Brig. Anil Gupta (Retd.), Member BCCI Sub Committee JKCA; office bearers of JKCA, senior officials of Postal Department also attended the release function at Lok Bhavan.

Sajad Lone slams PDP, NC for 'gifting' Rajya Sabha seat to BJP

Calls outsourcing of jobs 'front-door loot' by NC-led govt

Says Mehbooba creating, giving ruling party escape route on jobs

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, May 11: Peoples Conference president Sajad Lone on Sunday came down heavily on both the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the National Conference (NC) over cross-voting in the Rajya Sabha polls held in 2025, alleging they staged a "fixed match" to help the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) win a seat.

Lone also termed the outsourcing of government jobs by the NC-led government as "front-door loot," while accusing Mehbooba Mufti of confusing people over the issue and giving the ruling party an escape route.

Addressing a news conference here, as per news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Lone slammed the PDP over the non-appointment of an authorized agent during the RS polls.

"We believe that the PDP had mala fide intentions. They intended to do something wrong, which is why they did not appoint an agent," he said.

The PC president questioned Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on whether he was unaware of the PDP's failure to appoint an authorized agent.

"Is it true that a sitting chief minister came to know from the RTI that the PDP had not kept an agent?" he asked.

Slamming both PDP and NC, Lone said the parties that shouted the loudest against the BJP ultimately gifted it a seat.

"One did not keep an agent, the other did not object. And even today, there are diversion tactics. They are diverting," Lone said.

He alleged that both PDP and NC had a tie-up with the BJP in the RS polls.

"The reason they did not appoint an agent | [More on P6](#)

Rain, thunderstorms likely across J&K today: MeT

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 11: The Meteorological Department on Monday forecast light to moderate rain, thunderstorms and gusty winds across Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, while advising people to suspend boating and farm operations during the period.

The MeT department said the weather remained generally cloudy across many places on Monday with intermittent spells of rain and thundershowers.

It said similar weather conditions are likely to continue on Tuesday with one or two spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers at most places.

"There is a possibility of hailstorm, thunder, lightning and gusty winds with speeds of 50-60 kmph at a few places in Kashmir and Jammu divisions, mainly during afternoon, evening and night hours,"

the advisory, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said.

The department advised people to suspend boating and shikara riding during the afternoon and late afternoon hours in view of gusty winds over water bodies.

Farmers have been advised to suspend farm operations till May 13.

According to the MeT office, the weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy with brief showers from May 13 to 17, while light rain and thundershowers are likely at scattered places on May 18. From May 19 to 21, the weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy.

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 24.4 degrees Celsius on Monday, slightly above the normal of 24.3 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature settled at 14 degrees Celsius, | [More on P6](#)

'Invisible illness': Fibromyalgia emerging as silent health crisis in Kashmir

Doctors urge early diagnosis, multidisciplinary care, ending stigma

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, May 11: In Kashmir, where harsh winters, prolonged stress, and mental health challenges shape everyday life, many people continue to silently suffer from a chronic pain condition that often goes unnoticed, undiagnosed, and misunderstood. That condition is fibromyalgia — commonly referred to as the "invisible illness".

Unlike fractures or infections, fibromyalgia does not appear on routine blood tests or X-rays. Yet, for patients living with it, the condition can be physically exhausting, emotionally draining, and deeply disabling.

On the eve of International Fibromyalgia Awareness Day,



pain specialists are urging greater awareness about the disorder, which affects millions worldwide but remains significantly underdiagnosed

in India, particularly in peripheral and resource-limited regions like Kashmir. Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer

(KNO) Dr Afaan Qazi, Clinical Fellow in Pain Medicine at Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre, said that many patients spend years searching for answers while their suffering is repeatedly dismissed.

"As a pain physician, I increasingly encounter patients, predominantly women, who arrive after years of suffering, carrying thick files of normal investigations, yet living with debilitating pain, fatigue, poor sleep, and frustration. Being told 'it is all in your mind' has silenced patients far too long. It is time to change that narrative," Dr Qazi said.

Fibromyalgia is a chronic nociceptive pain disorder in which the nervous system amplifies pain signals abnormally, a process medically known as

"central sensitisation". In such cases, the brain and spinal cord become overly responsive, causing the body to experience pain even without visible tissue injury or inflammation.

Patients commonly suffer from widespread body pain lasting more than three months, persistent fatigue, disturbed sleep, headaches, anxiety, mood disturbances, irritable bowel syndrome, and cognitive difficulties often referred to as "fibro fog".

According to global estimates, fibromyalgia affects nearly 2-4 per cent of the population, with women accounting for nearly 90-95 per cent of diagnosed cases. The female-to-male ratio can be as high as 14:1.

Despite this, | [More on P6](#)

Ministry of Mines to launch 2nd tranche of limestone block auctions



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, 11 May: The Ministry of Mines, Government of India, is set to launch the second tranche of auction of limestone blocks in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir on May 12, 2026, at Srinagar. Building upon the successful initiation of mineral block auctions in the UT, this marks another significant step towards unlocking the region's mineral potential and strengthening its contribution towards the vision of Viksit Bharat and Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Under Tranche II, the Ministry, as per PIB statement, in collaboration with the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, is offering 12 limestone blocks for auction. These blocks are located across the districts of Anantnag, Rajouri, and Poonch, and include both newly identified blocks as well as those being re-auctioned under second attempt, reflecting the Government's commitment towards optimal resource utilization and sustained industry participation.

The launch event will be held at Srinagar and will be graced by Shri Piyush Goyal, Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Shri Ashwani Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Jammu & Kashmir, along with senior officials from the Ministry of Mines and the Government of Jammu

& Kashmir, will also be present during the event, highlighting the Centre and UT Government's shared commitment towards accelerating mineral development, industrial growth, and inclusive economic progress in Jammu & Kashmir.

The blocks are broadly categorized under UNFC G3 and G4 stages of exploration, indicating promising geological potential with substantial industrial-grade limestone deposits. These resources are critical for key sectors such as cement, construction, and infrastructure, and are expected to play an important role in supporting industrial growth and economic development in the region.

The auction is being conducted under the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 (as amended). The process is designed to be transparent, competitive, and aligned with global best practices, with bidding conducted through a digital e-auction platform. The Ministry of Mines remains committed to promoting scientific and sustainable mining practices. The successful auction and operationalization of these blocks is expected to generate significant revenue, create employment opportunities, strengthen industrial growth, and contribute towards the inclusive development of Jammu & Kashmir.

CS reviews Census-2027 preparedness

Emphasises public participation in Self-Enumeration from May 17

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 11: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Monday chaired the 3rd meeting of the UT Level Census Coordination Committee here to review the preparedness for the initial phase of Self-Enumeration and House Listing activities for Census 2027 across the districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Secretary, as per an official statement, took this occasion to emphasize on the need for conducting vigorous and comprehensive training programmes for both Enumerators and Supervisors to ensure the highest standards of accuracy and reliability in data capturing during the Census process. He underscored that well-trained field functionaries would be key to maintaining the integrity and credibility of the entire enumeration exercise.

He further directed that the formation and demarcation of House Listing Blocks (HLBs) be completed well before the commencement of enumeration so that the process remains seamless, exhaustive and free from any lacunae. He stressed upon close monitoring of the progress at district and charge levels to avoid delays and ensure proper ground preparedness.

The Chief Secretary also called for launching effective and coordinated promotional campaigns involving different departments and stakeholders on designated thematic days to encourage citizens to voluntarily participate in the Self-Enumeration process. He observed that active public participation and awareness would play a crucial role in making the Census exercise successful and inclusive.

The Chief Secretary reviewed district-wise preparedness and stressed upon all Deputy Commissioners and concerned officers to ensure seamless coordination, timely completion of preparatory activities and extensive public outreach for achieving maximum participation in Self-Enumeration. He emphasized the importance of regular monitoring at district and charge levels



to ensure smooth conduct of the House Listing phase.

During the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar stressed upon conducting multiple rounds of trainings for Enumerators and Supervisors keeping in view the critical and sensitive nature of the Census exercise. He also emphasized that no household, particularly in remote and hilly areas, should be left out during the formation of House Listing Blocks, calling for meticulous planning and field verification to ensure complete coverage. During the meeting, Director, Census Operations J&K and Ladakh, Amit Sharma, gave a detailed presentation outlining the progress achieved in training of field functionaries, formation of House Listing Blocks (HLBs), appointment of enumerators and supervisors, publicity plans, administrative preparations and fund utilization for the upcoming Census operations.

The meeting was informed that a total of 29 batches for training of Field Trainers had been created across all districts and the training process had substantially been completed by May 10, 2026. Training batches for Enumerators and Supervisors have also been constituted in 17 districts, while training programmes have already commenced in 12 districts.

The Director further informed that all districts and Municipal Corporations have identified the required field staff and the process of appointment and registration on the Census

Management and Monitoring System (CMMS) portal is underway.

It was further informed that the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India (ORGI) has approved deployment of 27,784 field functionaries for the UT, including 23,774 Enumerators and 4,014 Supervisors, excluding reserve staff.

Moreover QR-coded appointment letters and identity cards for registered field staff will be generated through the CMMS portal and distributed along with kit items after completion of trainings here. Regarding House Listing Block formation, the meeting was apprised that more than 24,000 HLBs have been created across Jammu and Kashmir. Out of these, more than half have already been geo-tagged and demarcated. The meeting was apprised that certain districts have sought updation and correction in administrative units, following which related issues have been taken up with ORGI for early resolution. The presentation also highlighted a comprehensive publicity and awareness campaign being planned for Self-Enumeration. As per ORGI guidelines, the campaign would include print, television, radio and digital media outreach, besides outdoor publicity, social media engagement, exhibitions, mobile publicity vans, nukkad natak and community-level awareness initiatives in multiple languages including Urdu, Dogri and Gojri.

The meeting was also informed that Self-Enumeration of VVIPs would

commence on May 17, 2026, the first day of Self-Enumeration, in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures issued by ORGI for encouraging general public. Extensive media coverage and public awareness messaging would also be undertaken during the campaign. A thematic 15-day Self-Enumeration outreach calendar has also been prepared to ensure participation from different sections of society, including elected representatives, educational institutions, judiciary, uniformed services, industries, health institutions, women's groups, senior citizens, media organizations and youth groups.

To achieve 100 percent Self-Enumeration, districts have been advised to involve Panchayati Raj Institutions, Common Service Centres, educational institutions and local bodies for facilitating citizens in the enumeration process free of cost. Various districts have already initiated awareness campaigns through public meetings, school activities, debates, press conferences and Gram Sabha announcements.

The meeting also reviewed the status of updation of administrative units on the CMMS portal. It was divulged that administrative boundaries had been frozen as on December 31, 2025, in accordance with notifications issued by the Government of India and the J&K Government. However the requests for updation of villages, wards and locality names have been received from districts and submitted to ORGI for earlier approval.

VVIP Visit: DC Shopian chairs meeting to finalise arrangements

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, MAY 11: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta on Monday chaired a meeting here at Mini-Secretariat Shopian to review and finalize arrangements for the upcoming VVIP visit to Shopian, scheduled on May 14.

All arrangements including security, transport, participation, parking facilities, water and power supplies, PAS, sanitation, healthcare, and other essential arrangements were minutely discussed and directions given to all to ensure the arrangements well on time.

During the meeting, the DC, as per an official statement, issued strict instructions to all heads of departments to execute their assigned tasks seamlessly with the highest degree of synergy and coordination to ensure smooth and successful conduct of the event.

He directed departments to execute departmental



action plans perfectly while keeping in view the hassle free public movement towards the venue for participation and mobilisation strategy so that the event is organised in the best possible manner.

He emphasized the need for making the event

inclusive and vibrant through broad-based participation from all sections of society.

The event marks a major milestone in the government's push towards engaging youth in sports activities as some of the ambitious and vital sports

infrastructure projects are being dedicated for the public.

The meeting was attended by ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, PO Poshan Abhiyan, GM DIC, ACR, ACD, ASP, district and sectoral officers of departments and other officials

DC Kulgam reviews implementation of Classes of Joy Programme

KT NEWS DESK

KULGAM, MAY 11: A review meeting regarding the implementation of the Classes of Joy programme was held on Monday at Mini Secretariat Kulgam under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Officers of education department, District Coordinators, concerned Resource Persons, and members of the Pratham team.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the performance and progress of the previous year's program in light of the recently conducted baseline assessment of students from grades 3rd to 5th.

Detailed discussions were held on the current learning levels of children and the need for focused interventions to address learning gaps among students.

Emphasizing the importance of improving foundational learning, the Deputy Commissioner directed all stakeholders to adopt suitable solutions through Pratham's Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach to effectively cater to the learning loss among children. It was stressed that the program must be implemented in its true letter and spirit to ensure meaningful learning outcomes.

The meeting also highlighted the need for engaging dedicated teachers for both English and Mathematics in schools, who will be solely responsible for the implementation and smooth

execution of the TaRL approach. Directions were issued to ensure proper academic support, regular practice, and continuous assessment of students to strengthen foundational competencies. Issues related to the availability of teaching-learning material, effective monitoring of schools, and timely supervision were also discussed in detail. The DC instructed the concerned officials to ensure regular monitoring and coordinated efforts at all levels so that the desired learning outcomes are achieved. The meeting concluded with a strong emphasis on collective responsibility and committed efforts from all stakeholders to ensure improved performance and best possible results in the endline assessment scheduled for September and October.

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL GOVT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL BOTINGOO SOPORE.

AUCTIONING NOTICE.

For and on behalf Lt. Governor of UT J&K, it is notified for the information of General Public that a three roomed damaged old building at Govt. Higher Secondary School Botingoo Zone Dangerpora will be auctioned as per Government order No 774 E.U. of 2017 dated 12/10/2017 by the committee constituted for survey and auctioning of dilapidated 03 roomed damaged old building related items as per the order conveyed by the Chief Education Officer Baramulla vide No. CEO/Plg/Bl/10334-38 dated 29-04-2026. The bidder can submit EMD (in the form of CDR) for auction by or before:- 16-05-2026 (up to 03:00 PM) with demand draft at J&K Bank amounting RS 3000/= pledge to Principal Govt Hr. Sec. School Botingoo. Forms and condition document can be had from the office chamber of the Principal Govt. Hr. Sec School Botingoo on working days. Auction will be held in Govt. Higher Secondary School Botingoo on 20-05-2026 at 11.30 AM.

Assessment (Valuation) of unsafe 03 Roomed building at Govt. Boys Hr. Sec. School Botingoo Sopore		No. of Storeys		Age of Building (as per Certificate of Principal) Years		Plinth Area Sft		
		32		946.68				
S.No.	Item	Particulars	Category	Total %age	Existing %age	Rate/sft	Amount	Remarks
2	U/G Foundation	Dry Random rubble stone masonry	D	10%	7%	1263	8.841	
	Plinth	Stone masonry in mud mortar and DPC	D	6%	40%	1263	30.312	
3	Superstructure	2nd class BrickMasonry in Cement sand mortar	D	15%	40%	1263	75.78	
4	Doors/Windows	C class Kail wood chowkats andshutters	D	13%	30.0%	1263	49.257	
5	Flooring	Cement concreting floors	C	7%	30%	1440	30.24	
6	Ceiling	CGI Sheets over poplar frame work	D	10%	30%	1263	37.89	
7	Roofing	CGI Sheets over budloo/Kail wood truss	C	33%	40.0%	1440	190.08	
8	Finishing External	Finishing coat of cement primer over-pointing	NL	1.50%	0	1263	0	Not existing
	Internal	POP/Distempering	NIL	4.50%	1.50%	1263	0.85	
						Total Amount/sft	423.2525	
Plinth Area of building:						946.68		
So Assessment :				423.25	946.68	400684.7		
Add for Cost Escalation				1.2824		513838.06		
Age of the school building:32 years(As per record)years				32				
So Depreciation @1%/Year age of Building				0.32	513838.06	164428.18		
Now net assessment =						349409.88		
So Salvage Value				15%		52411.482		
						Rs 0.52 lacs		

Junior Engineer R&B Sub Div Zaingeer Executive Engineer R&B Div Sopore Assistant Ex. Engineer R&B Sub-Division Zaingeer

The terms and conditions of the auction notice are as under.

1. Each bidder must deposit earnest money of Rs 3000/= as given above in the shape of CDR/FDR from any nationalized bank/scheduled bank pledged to the Principal Govt Higher Secondary School Botingoo. Earnest money deposit(EMD) in the form of a CDR should reach this office by or before 16-05-2026 upto 03:00 PM.

2. The open auction shall be conducted by the auction committee at 11.30 AM on 20-05-2026.

3. Earnest money of the successful bidder and the 2nd highest bidder shall be retained and earnest money of rest of the bidders will be returned within 10 days after auction proceeding are over.

4. The successful bidder shall have to enter into an agreement with the department within two days from the date the sanction of the contract is communicated to him. Failing to execute the agreement with the stipulated period, the earnest money deposited by the successful bidder shall be forfeited in favour of the department and contracts shall be allotted to the second highest bidder. Any loss on this account shall be made good from the first highest bidder in terms arrears of the land revenue rules, besides blacklisting the contractor/bidder participating from future department tenders/auctions.

5. The department reserves the right accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason thereof.

6. An other condition that the department may like to be imposed shall announced on the date of opening of auction and shall binding on the bidders.

No.-HSSB/1048-52

Dated:- 09-05-2026

DIPK-1216/26

DATED: 11-05-2026

Sd/
Principal
Govt Higher Secondary School
Botingoo Sopore

CS chairs NHM, allied healthcare programme review meet

Calls for NABH accreditation, universal NQAS certification

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 11: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the National Health Mission (NHM) and allied healthcare programmes in Jammu and Kashmir and took stock of the achievements, challenges and future roadmap of the Health & Medical Education Department for strengthening healthcare delivery across the Union Territory.

The meeting, besides Commissioner Secretary, Health & Medical Education, was attended by MD, NHM; Director, SKIMS; Principals of Government Medical Colleges; Director, Health Services, Jammu/Kashmir, besides other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary stressed the need for further strengthening healthcare systems and directed that premier healthcare institutions in Jammu and Srinagar should immediately initiate the process for securing NABH accreditation.

He instructed each Medical College in these cities to designate a nodal officer for ensuring institutional preparedness and observed that other Medical Colleges and District Hospitals should subsequently follow the same model to improve quality standards and patient care services across the UT to get accredited under NABH framework.

Emphasizing the need for equitable healthcare access, the Chief Secretary directed the department to ensure posting of at least one Medical Officer in every Primary Health Centre and reiterated that no health institution across Jammu and Kashmir should remain without a doctor.

He also called for expediting the tendering process for establishment of Tele-ICU, Tele-Radiology and BEMMP facilities, stating that these initiatives would significantly strengthen tertiary care delivery and enable patients to avail advanced healthcare services closer to their homes. Reviewing quality assurance measures,



the Chief Secretary directed the Directors of Health Services to ensure certification of all health facilities under the NQAS framework within the current year. He stressed that quality certification and adherence to healthcare standards are essential for improving service delivery and public confidence in government healthcare institutions.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the ongoing screening of the population for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and emphasized intensifying efforts for screening people above 40 years of age. Describing NCDs as silent killers, he warned that these ailments could assume alarming proportions if neglected and underscored the importance of promoting lifestyle modifications and preventive healthcare measures among the general public.

He further called for strengthening Drugs & Vaccine Distribution Management System (DVDMS) to improve availability of drugs under the Essential Drug List across healthcare institutions.

The Commissioner Secretary, Health & Medical Education, M. Raju, during the meeting elaborated upon the steps taken by the department for implementation of the directions issued previously and also

gave a detailed overview of the progress achieved under various programmes being implemented under NHM.

He maintained that Jammu and Kashmir has registered remarkable improvement in major healthcare indicators and has already achieved the Sustainable Development Goal targets for Neonatal Mortality Rate and Under-Five Mortality Rate besides meeting several National Health Policy targets ahead of schedule.

Mission Director, NHM, Akriti Sagar apprised the meeting that significant improvement has been recorded in Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs) and Sick Newborn Care Units (SNCUs), where the successful discharge rate of neonates increased from 76 percent during 2024-25 to 83 percent in 2025-26, while neonatal deaths and referrals to higher institutions have shown a decline.

Reviewing the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), she informed the meeting that more than 18.84 lakh children had been screened under the programme during the current financial year while over 1.51 lakh children requiring treatment were referred to higher healthcare institutions.

The review further highlighted remarkable institutional delivery

coverage in the UT, with nearly 99.82 percent deliveries during 2025-26 taking place in health institutions, reflecting improved maternal healthcare outreach and accessibility. Under Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), more than 1.61 lakh pregnant women were provided free drugs and consumables while over 1.46 lakh women received free diet during hospitalization.

The meeting was also informed that Jammu and Kashmir has emerged as the top-performing region in the country in X-Ray utilization under the TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan 2.0 campaign. A total of 1,518 high-risk villages have been identified for intensified TB screening through special shivirs and the UT has already organized 333 screening camps with participation of more than 30,000 people.

It was informed that five districts including Anantnag, Budgam, Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian have been declared TB-free, while more than 5,500 TB patients are currently undergoing treatment in the UT with all patients linked to designated doctors for regular monitoring and treatment supervision.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

IAS probationers of AGMUT Cadre call on CM Omar



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, May 11: A group of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) probationers from the AGMUT Cadre called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah here on Monday. The probationers included Alfred Thomas, Ruchika Jha, Mohd. Haris Mir, Shagun Singh, and Jitendra Kumar. During the interaction, the Chief

Minister enquired about their current postings in Jammu and Kashmir and discussed the administrative nature of their assignments and general functioning.

Wishing the young officers success in their future endeavours, the Chief Minister urged them to work with dedication and commitment toward the betterment of the people and the nation.

Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan

118 peddlers arrested, 300 kg contraband seized in Anantnag: SSP Nagpure

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, May 11: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Anantnag Amod Ashok Nagpure on Monday said that police have intensified the war against narcotics in the district, arresting 118 drug peddlers and seizing more than 300 kilograms of contraband substances during the first month of the ongoing "Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan".

Addressing a press conference in Anantnag, SSP Nagpure, accompanied by senior police officers, highlighted the major achievements registered by the district police under the NDPS Act



over the past month. The SSP said that Anantnag Police registered 120 FIRs under various provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Govt puts 'breaks' on Rapido Bike Taxi Service



YOGESH

Jammu, May 11: Authorities have imposed a ban on bike and cab service provider Rapido in Jammu and Kashmir due to company functioning without the required permissions.

The Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Jammu, Jasmeet Singh, issued a circular stating that the company was operating without an aggregator certificate, making its services illegal in the Union Territory.

The action follows a statement by Transport Commissioner Vishesh Paul Mahajan, who clarified that Rapido does not hold a licence to operate in Jammu and Kashmir. In a post on X, Mahajan said his office had received multiple complaints regarding the company's services in different parts of the UT and warned commuters against using them.

"Rapido does not have a licence to operate in Jammu and Kashmir. Anybody participating in the service or using it is doing so at his or her own risk," Mahajan said, adding that directions had

already been issued to officials to take action against the "illegal service."

RTO Jasmeet Singh stated that any aggregator company must register with the Transport Commissioner's office and obtain the necessary approvals before starting operations in the region. He further noted that Rapido would be required to establish a local office and set up a control room to ensure proper monitoring of vehicles and passengers. Highlighting security concerns, the RTO said unregulated services could pose risks if misused by anti-social or anti-national elements, making tracking difficult. He emphasized that verification of vehicles, drivers, and related documents is essential to ensure public safety.

At the same time, officials maintained that the government does not intend to inconvenience the public but stressed that all services must comply with regulations to ensure both passenger safety and national security—(KNO)

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

MP Ruhullah slams CM Omar over alcohol remarks



WARIS FAYAZ

Tangmarg, May 11: Member Parliament from Srinagar and National Conference leader, Aga Ruhullah Mehdi on Monday castigated Chief Minister Omar Abdullah over his remarks on alcohol and termed it as "sheer arrogance."

Talking to reporters, Ruhullah launched a sharp attack on CM Omar Abdullah over his recent

statement that "no one is forced to take drugs."

Ruhullah said his (CM Omar's) response was "arrogant, unethical and illogical" and contrary to the promises made by the NC during the election campaign.

He said the National Conference had assured people that liquor shops would be regulated and alcohol consumption restricted for locals. "Instead of assuring people that action will be

taken, people were scolded and labelled. This is not what people voted for," he said.

Ruhullah further accused the Chief Minister of using language that reflected the "tagging and stereotyping" of Kashmiris. He said the people of Jammu and Kashmir had voted against such "arrogance" and expected the elected government to stand for public sentiment and constitutional protections—(KNO)

No Govt can fully stop alcohol consumption through laws alone: Ashok Koul

WARIS FAYAZ

Sopore, May 11: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State General Secretary (Organisation) Jammu & Kashmir on Monday said no government can fully stop alcohol consumption through laws alone.

He defended strict action against drug peddlers, including demolition and attachment of their properties, saying such measures are necessary to protect society and youth from the growing drug menace.

Speaking to reporters, Koul said awareness campaigns were essential to discourage alcohol and drug consumption, adding that legislation alone cannot completely end such practices. "Yes, we don't force anybody to consume alcohol," Koul said while reacting to the ongoing debate over alcohol regulation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Backing the remarks of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on the issue, the BJP leader said governments across the country have struggled to completely prohibit alcohol consumption through laws.

"There should be awareness to stop the consumption of alcohol and drugs. It is not possible for any government to



stop people from consuming alcohol by introducing laws. Wherever such laws have been enforced, the situation has become even worse," he said.

Koul also reacted to remarks made by Minister Sakeena Itoo regarding demolition and attachment of properties linked to alleged drug peddlers.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

NC opposed alcohol consumption, PDP should recall its stand: Tanvir Sadiq

NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIE

Budgam, May 11: National Conference chief spokesperson and Zadibal MLA Tanvir Sadiq on Monday hit back at PDP leader Iltija Mufti over her remarks on a liquor ban, saying those raising the demand should first recall their own party's past position on alcohol consumption.

Sadiq referred to statements made by the PDP's former Finance Minister Haseeb Drabu in the Assembly that alcohol would not be banned during the previous

PDP-led government.

"Those speaking about a liquor ban today are the same people whose Finance Minister had categorically stated in the Assembly that alcohol would not be banned. Some of their leaders have themselves spoken casually about drinking, and now they are trying to lecture others," he said.

Sadiq reiterated that no Muslim supports alcohol consumption and said the National Conference stands firmly against drinking in any form.

"We are Muslims, and no

Muslim supports alcohol consumption. The National Conference is completely opposed to drinking and to encouraging it in any manner. We do not want alcohol to be consumed here," he added.

His remarks came after Iltija Mufti questioned Chief Minister Omar Abdullah over the issue, stating that if states like Bihar and Gujarat could impose a liquor ban, the same could be considered in Jammu and Kashmir. She also said that no religion promotes alcohol consumption—(KNO)



EDITORIAL

J&K Police: The Shield That Never Sleeps

The attestation parade of 4,000 new constables in Srinagar is a reminder of the weight that a police uniform carries in Jammu and Kashmir. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said something important: the world's most dangerous criminals no longer always carry weapons; they now exploit code, data, and encrypted networks. Cybercrime, narco-terrorism, and digital fraud are not future threats. They are stark realities of

the present. This is the battlefield that the new recruits are stepping into. Over the past five to six years, the J&K Police have achieved major successes in counter-terrorism and internal security. Operation Mahadev and the response to the Pahalgam attack showed that the force can strike back with precision and resolve. The synergy between J&K Police, intelligence agencies, CRPF and other security forces has dismantled terror

ecosystems that once seemed untouchable. But the nature of warfare has changed. The enemy now hides behind screens and uses drug money to fund terror. The police force must now fight on multiple fronts: terrorism, narcotics, cybercrime, and organised crime. This requires a new kind of soldier. One who is tech-savvy, mentally sharp, and morally grounded. The Police Chief said something equally significant: a police uniform is a symbol of

discipline, honesty, loyalty, bravery, passion and sacrifice. Most importantly, it represents service to the nation. This is not a job. It is a legacy. Over sixteen hundred personnel have laid down their lives for the country. Each name is a story of sacrifice. Each family has paid a price that can never be repaid. The new recruits are now inheritors of this golden legacy. They will fight terrorism, eliminate crime, and take on the drug menace. They

will also have to win the confidence of the public through honesty and fair play. That is the hardest battle. J&K Police is not just a security force. It is a symbol of people's trust. The new recruits must understand that they are not joining a profession. They are carrying a legacy on their shoulders. The battle has evolved. The enemy has changed. But the duty remains the same: protect the innocent, uphold the law, and never bend.

VB-G RAM G Act, 2025

From ₹95,692.31 crore Central share for FY 2026–27, the total programme outlay is expected to exceed ₹1.51 lakh crore. The Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin), 2025 replaces MGNREGA, 2005, and enhances statutory employment guarantee from 100 to 125 days per financial year.

Press Information Bureau

The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 seeks to transform the rural employment framework by aligning wage employment with sustainable development and the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. The Act enhances the statutory employment guarantee from 100 to 125 days in every financial year for all rural households. The framework prioritises water security, rural infrastructure, livelihood assets, and disaster preparedness through outcome-oriented works and digitally integrated planning. Technology-enabled governance through biometric authentication, geo-referencing, digital monitoring, and time-bound wage payments aims to strengthen transparency and accountability. Mandatory social audits, structured oversight mechanisms, and grievance redressal systems further reinforce implementation. The Act positions rural employment as a productive driver of sustainable village development and durable asset creation.

Historic Operationalisation of the VB-G RAM G Act Across All Rural Areas of the Country

The Government of India has notified the commencement of the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB-G RAM G (विकसित भारत-जी राम जी) Act, 2025 across all rural areas of the country with effect from 01/07/2026. With the coming into force of the VB – G RAM G Act, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005, stands repealed from the same date. This marks a historic transition in India's rural development framework and ushers in a new era of integrated, future-ready, and productivity-oriented rural transformation aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

The Commencement of the Act marks a historic transition from the earlier framework of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA towards a modern rural development architecture that combines livelihood security, durable asset creation, technology-enabled governance, convergence-driven planning, and climate resilience.

The Act establishes a statutory guarantee of 125 days of wage employment in every financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to undertake unskilled manual work. This enhanced guarantee is expected to provide renewed momentum to rural household incomes, livelihood security, village-level infrastructure creation, and sustainable rural development. Simultaneously, it seeks to create durable and productive rural infrastructure that strengthens water security, rural infrastructure, rural livelihoods, local economic growth, and resilience against climate-related challenges.

Background and Need for Reform

For several decades, wage-employment programmes have formed an integral component of India's rural development strategy, providing income support to rural households facing under-employment and livelihood insecurity.

Over time, the rural economy has undergone significant transformation due to expanded social protection, improved physical and digital connectivity, enhanced financial inclusion, and diversification of livelihoods. These developments necessitate a recalibration of the existing rural employment framework to align with contemporary needs and aspirations, as well as with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

In furtherance of this objective, it is proposed to strengthen the livelihood guarantee framework by enhancing the statutory employment guarantee from one hundred days to one hundred and twenty-five days in a financial year. The enhanced guarantee is intended to support the accelerated pace of rural development, provide greater income security, and empower rural households through expanded employment opportunities.

Accordingly, it has been enacted a new legislation titled the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB-G RAM G Act, 2025, to establish a future-ready rural development framework that integrates livelihood security with productivity, convergence, resilience, and sustainable asset creation, in alignment with the Viksit Bharat @2047 vision.

The VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 is a comprehensive legislative reset designed to align rural employment with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. Passed by Parliament in December 2025, the Act replaces the two-decade-old Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005. It shifts the focus from a standalone welfare intervention to an integrated instrument of development and resilient infrastructure.

Enhanced Livelihood Guarantee and Worker-Centric Framework

A central feature of the Act is the enhancement of the statutory employment guarantee from 100 days to 125 days in every financial year for all rural households. The enhanced guarantee is intended to strengthen livelihood security, improve income stability, support rural consumption and provide greater economic resilience to vulnerable households.

The framework has been designed around the principle of "Rozgar Bhi, Samman Bhi" – employment with dignity. The objective is not merely to provide wage

employment, but to ensure that rural workers become active participants in the creation of durable and productive public assets that contribute to long-term village development.

The transition from Mahatma Gandhi NREGA to the new framework has also been designed in a seamless and worker-friendly manner. Existing e-KYC-verified Job Cards shall continue to remain valid until Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Cards are issued. Workers who do not currently possess Job Cards may apply at the Gram Panchayat level for registration and issuance of new cards. Workers shall not be denied employment merely due to pending e-KYC, and facilitation mechanisms have been provided for completion of e-KYC, including at worksites, wherever necessary.

Workers may continue to demand employment orally, in writing through the existing Form-6 framework, or through digital platforms. Employment shall continue to be provided within the prescribed timeframe, failing which workers shall remain entitled to unemployment allowance as per the provisions of the Act. The unemployment allowance shall be payable at not less than one-fourth of the notified wage rate for the first thirty days of the financial year and at not less than one-half of the notified wage rate for the remaining period of the financial year, thereby strengthening the legal guarantee of employment and the accountability of the implementation framework.

Timely Wage Payments and Strengthened Transparency

The Act places strong emphasis on timely, transparent, and accountable wage payments. Wages shall continue to be transferred directly into workers' bank or post office accounts through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), thereby strengthening transparency and reducing delays.

Under the framework, wages are to be paid weekly or, in any case, within fifteen days from the closure of the muster roll. In cases where wages are delayed beyond the stipulated period, workers shall be entitled to delay compensation in accordance with the provisions of the Act. The Act further provides that where payment of wages is not made within fifteen days from the date of closure of the muster roll, wage seekers shall be entitled to receive compensation for the delay at the rate of 0.05 percent of the unpaid wages for every day of delay beyond the sixteenth day after closure of the muster roll. These provisions are intended to strengthen accountability in wage disbursement and ensure timely payment to workers.

Attendance at worksites shall be captured through NMMS-enabled systems and face authentication-based attendance mechanisms. At the same time, suitable exception handling provisions have also been incorporated to ensure that genuine workers are not adversely affected due to technical or connectivity-related issues.

A Seamless Transition: "Rozgar Bhi, Samman Bhi"

The government's primary intention is a smooth transition that protects the interests of the rural workforce under the Act.

Notification for All Rural Areas: The provisions of this Act come into effect simultaneously in all rural areas across the country from the date of commencement. Simultaneously, Mahatma Gandhi NREGA will stand repealed with effect from the same date i.e. 01/07/2026.

Employment under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA will continue in a seamless and smooth manner till commencement of the VB-G RAM G Act.

The Government's highest priority remains ensuring timely availability of employment and prompt payment of wages to workers. In order to ensure uninterrupted employment opportunities, adequate labour budget has been made available to States and Union Territories in alignment with emerging demand patterns and field requirements.

Worker Continuity: Existing Job Cards for workers with completed e-KYC remain valid during the transition until new Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Cards are issued.

Ongoing Works: Ongoing works under MGNREGA as on the date of commencement may continue under the new Act.

New Works: Where ongoing works are insufficient to meet employment demand, new works consistent with Schedule I of the new Act may be taken up.

Historic Budgetary Commitment

The Government of India has made extensive financial provisions for operationalisation of the new framework across the country. For FY 2026–27, a provision of ₹95,692.31 crore has been made as Central share under the programme. This is the largest allocation for a rural employment programme at the Budget Estimate stage to date. This provision clearly reflects the priority, scale and commitment of the Government, through which employment and livelihood opportunities in rural areas are expected to gain new momentum.

Including the estimated State share, the total programme outlay is expected to exceed ₹1.51 lakh crore. The massive financing reflects the Government's credible commitment of driving large-scale transformation in the rural economy, promoting employment generation, creating durable village-level assets and ensuring significant growth in the income of rural households.

Field Functionaries: Capacity, Accountability, and Efficiency

The role of field-level functionaries, such as POs, Mates, and Gram Rozgar Sevaks (GRS) and others, is pivotal in the smooth transition to VB-G RAM G. Under this Act, administrative expenditure has been increased from 6 percent to 9 percent, which will promote capacity building, training, strengthening of human resources, payment of remuneration, and improved implementation at the field level. This systematic reform will ensure that personnel working at the grassroots become more efficient and empowered.

Expanded Scope of Work: New Momentum to Development

Under the Viksit Bharat-G RAM G Act, 2025, the scope of works has been significantly expanded and aligned with the goal of Viksit Bharat@2047. Works are structured into four major thematic areas: water security, core rural infrastructure, livelihood-related infrastructure, and works to mitigate extreme weather events. This enables a more outcome-oriented and cohesive approach in implementation.

Permissible works under the Act are not limited to traditional labour-based activities but also include multi-dimensional works that directly enhance the quality of rural life, while also creating durable assets that generate further livelihood opportunities. This approach is based on the principle of "employment as well as dignity", in which workers are active participants in the development process.

Thematic prioritisation of works has been introduced to ensure that each day of employment contributes towards creation of durable and productive rural infrastructure.

Water security works shall include irrigation support, groundwater recharge structures, watershed development, rejuvenation of water bodies, afforestation and rainwater harvesting structures aimed at strengthening long-term water resilience across rural regions.

Core rural infrastructure works shall include rural roads, public buildings, school infrastructure, Anganwadi centres, sanitation systems, renewable energy infrastructure, housing-related works and works under various Government schemes, thereby improving access to basic amenities and public services.

Livelihood-related infrastructure shall include rural markets, storage infrastructure, food processing units, cold storage facilities, livestock infrastructure, fisheries infrastructure, compost units and skill development centres. These interventions are expected to strengthen local livelihoods, diversify rural incomes and support agro-based economic activities.

The framework also prioritises works related to mitigation of extreme weather events and climate resilience, including flood management structures, embankments, cyclone shelters, post-disaster restoration and forest fire management works.

Through this thematic approach, rural employment is directly linked with productive asset creation, local economic development, and resilience-building.

These works will ensure employment generation, value addition, expansion of agro-based industries and improved service availability, thereby bringing stability to the rural economy and diversifying income sources.

Balance During Agricultural Season: Protection of Interests of Both Farmers and Workers

To facilitate adequate availability of agricultural labour during peak sowing and harvesting seasons, the Act empowers States to notify an aggregated pause period aggregating to sixty days in a financial year (Section 6).

The full 125-day employment guarantee remains intact, to be provided during the remaining period, ensuring a calibrated balance that supports both agricultural productivity and worker security.

Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan (Planning Framework)

In line with the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, rural India is entering a new and transformative phase. The direction of development is no longer limited to wage employment, but is evolving towards an integrated model of "employment, livelihood and the creation of productive assets." The Viksit Bharat-G RAM G Scheme reflects this comprehensive and decentralized approach, placing Gram Panchayats at the centre of development and empowering them with real authority in planning and implementation. Through the preparation of Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans, Gram Panchayats will themselves decide the direction of their development.

Under this framework, the planning process has been structured as a bottom-up approach, wherein Gram Panchayats identify and prioritise works based on local needs through Gram Sabhas, with consolidation at the Block, District and State levels. This system is integrated with PM Gati Shakti, GIS and digital platforms, ensuring scientific and spatial planning.

Worksite Facilities: Emphasis on Dignity and Safety of Workers

Under Schedule II of the Viksit Bharat-G RAM G Act, 2025, worksite facilities have been given a legal guarantee, which elevates it beyond an administrative arrangement and makes it a strong symbol of dignity of labour and human respect. Under this provision, the availability of clean drinking water at every worksite has been made mandatory. Particularly keeping in mind the summer conditions in rural India, adequate arrangements for shade and rest areas have been ensured to protect workers from heat. Additionally, the

availability of a first-aid kit at every worksite has also been ensured, so that the safety and health of workers are prioritised.

To promote the participation of women workers, a key provision has been incorporated in the Act. At worksites where five or more children below the age of five are present, a woman worker will be appointed to take care of the children and will be paid at the prescribed wage rate. This arrangement not only ensures continuity of work for women but also makes the worksite more inclusive and responsive to their needs.

In addition, to ensure the safety of workers, the right to free medical treatment in case of accidents has been provided. If hospitalisation is required, provisions will be made for accommodation, treatment, medicines and a daily allowance equal to half the wage rate. In cases of death or permanent disability, ex-gratia assistance will be payable as per the provisions of the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana. Thus, the Act ensures a comprehensive framework of safety, sensitivity and social security at the worksite.

Transparency and accountability at worksites shall also be strengthened through mandatory Janata Boards displaying details relating to sanctioned works, labour estimates, expenditure and material utilisation. The framework further provides for weekly public disclosure systems, geo-tagging of assets, real-time dashboards, mobile-based monitoring and strengthened social audits to ensure transparency, community participation and effective public oversight at the grassroots level.

Special Exemptions in Implementation

In the event of natural disasters or other extraordinary circumstances, the Central Government will be empowered to grant special exemptions as required. This will ensure that relief and rehabilitation activities in affected areas can be carried out swiftly and without interruption, and that affected communities receive timely assistance.

Salient Features of the VB-G RAM G Act

Alignment of Rural Development Framework with Viksit Bharat 2047:

The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB-G RAM G (विकसित भारत-जी राम जी) Act, 2025 is crafted to align the rural development framework with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047, so that wage employment, asset creation, and public investment together build a more prosperous, resilient and inclusive rural Bharat. Rural works are positioned as a central instrument to deliver better infrastructure, stronger livelihoods and greater climate resilience in villages, ensuring that Viksit Bharat is realised through Viksit Panchayat.

Convergence and Saturation based Approach

To translate this vision into practice, the Act adopts a convergence and saturation-based approach that brings together complementary Government schemes within a single, coherent rural development architecture. Funds, departments and programmes are expected to work in harmony at the Gram Panchayat level, with planning aimed at covering all eligible households and systematically closing critical gaps, rather than supporting scattered or one-off works.

Thematic, Asset Focused Public Works

On this foundation, the Act uses a structured thematic prioritisation of public works so that each day of guaranteed employment creates productive and durable rural assets. All works identified through the Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans (VGPPs) are integrated into the Viksit Bharat-National Rural Infrastructure Stack (VB-NRIS), creating a unified and forward-looking rural infrastructure framework fully aligned with the Viksit Bharat vision.

Four Priority Thematic Areas

Water security: Water related works such as conservation structures, irrigation support, groundwater recharge, rejuvenation of water bodies, watershed development and afforestation will strengthen water security across rural regions.

Core rural infrastructure: Essential civic, social and service-delivery assets—rural roads, public buildings, school infrastructure, sanitation systems, renewable energy facilities and housing work under Central Government schemes—will ensure better basic amenities and improved access to services.

Livelihood related infrastructure: Productive assets for agriculture, livestock, fisheries, storage, markets, skill development, and circular economy models will support sustainable livelihoods, value addition, and diversified rural income opportunities.

Special works for extreme weather events: Disaster preparedness and climate adaptation works—such as shelters, embankments, flood management structures, rehabilitation works, and forest fire management—will help create climate-resilient villages.

Through this thematic focus, the Act ensures that public works simultaneously advance water security, strengthen core rural systems, expand livelihood opportunities and build resilience, thereby supporting empowerment, growth, convergence and saturation in line with the national vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Modern, Technology enabled Governance

The Act establishes a modern, transparent and technology enabled governance architecture to ensure effective implementation, accountability and high integrity

service delivery. In a rural India marked by deeper digital penetration, improved connectivity and expanded public infrastructure, governance systems will be strengthened through digital public infrastructure, real time monitoring and enhanced transparency mechanisms.

The framework provides for biometric authentication, mobile based monitoring, spatial technology enabled planning, real time dashboards, AI enabled analytics and citizen engagement platforms. These systems ensure accurate verification of workers, functionalities and transactions, improve oversight and support timely reporting and corrective action across all stages of implementation.

A strengthened Social Audit mechanism forms a core part of this architecture, enhancing community participation and reinforcing transparency and accountability at the village level. In addition, a National Level Steering Committee and State Level Steering Committees will review, monitor, and evaluate implementation in their respective areas, ensuring coordinated oversight and a whole of government approach.

By embedding this modern, technology-enabled governance ecosystem, the Act enables predictable service delivery, reduces duplication, improves the quality of assets, and supports empowerment, growth, convergence, and saturation. This governance architecture ensures that rural Bharat is equipped with the systems necessary to advance towards the national vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

Key Statutory Provisions

a) Enhanced livelihood guarantee

The principal objective is to align rural development with Viksit Bharat @ 2047 by strengthening the livelihood guarantee framework through 125 days of wage employment per financial year for rural households whose adult members volunteer for unskilled manual work.

b) Integration into VB-NRIS

All works will be aggregated into the Viksit Bharat National Rural Infrastructure Stack, with priority to water security through water-related works, core rural infrastructure, livelihood related infrastructure, and special works to mitigate extreme weather events.

c) VGPP based planning

Planning will be undertaken through Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans, prepared by Gram Panchayats and integrated with national spatial planning systems, including PM Gati Shakti, while factoring in varying local developmental needs.

d) Securing peak agricultural seasons

States will be empowered to notify in advance, a period aggregating to 60 days in a financial year covering peak sowing and harvesting during which works under the Act will not be undertaken, facilitating sufficient farm labour at critical times.

e) Centrally Sponsored Scheme

The scheme will be implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with shared responsibilities between the Centre and States.

f) Normative Allocation

To promote inclusive growth and equitable distribution of financial resources in a fair manner, the Central Government will make Normative Allocation to each State based on objective parameters prescribed in the Rules; expenditure beyond this will be the responsibility of the State. States will ensure transparent and need-based intra-state distribution of funds across districts and gram panchayats, taking into account the category of the panchayats and local developmental needs, thereby strengthening equity, transparency and accountability.

g) Special relaxations

During natural calamities or extraordinary circumstances, the Central Government may make temporary relaxations for timely response and relief.

h) Transparency and accountability

Biometric authentication, spatial technology enabled planning, mobile and dashboard-based monitoring, weekly public disclosure systems and a strengthened Social Audit mechanism will ensure transparency and accountability.

i) Institutional Oversight

The Central Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Council and the State Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Councils shall be constituted for review, monitoring and effective implementation of the provisions of the legislation in their respective areas. Steering committees at Central and State Level shall be constituted to recommend on matters concerning normative allocations, convergence and other such matters.

j) Wage rate specification

Wage rates for unskilled manual work will be notified by the Central Government;

k) State schemes within six months

Every State Government must notify its Scheme, as per the provisions of the Act, within six months of the Act's commencement.

l) Unemployment allowance

If eligible applicants are not provided work within the stipulated period, such workers will be paid unemployment allowance as per the provisions in the Act.

m) Minimum legal guarantees for labour

The Act lays down minimum features and conditions to protect labourers' legal guarantees and rights under the Scheme.

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

Parliamentary panel reviews smart City works in Sgr, says peace key to tourism growth

Magunta Reddy-led 18-member House Committee tours riverfront, Balidan Stambh, Lal Chowk; seeks feedback on urban development projects

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 11: The 18-member Parliamentary Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs, led by Chairperson Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy, on Monday visited Srinagar to review ongoing Smart City initiatives, urban infrastructure development and civic improvement works.

The delegation inspected key development sites across the city, including riverfront beautification projects and other urban renewal works carried out over the past few years under the Smart City programme.

Officials from the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) briefed the committee on progress in sanitation systems, public infrastructure, traffic management and redevelopment of public spaces.

Speaking to reporters here, Chairperson Reddy, said the committee is on a study tour to understand ground-level development and assess the impact of urban projects implemented in recent years.

He said the 18-member delegation includes MPs from different political parties and backgrounds, working together to suggest improvements for



urban and rural development across the country.

The panel first visited riverfront development works, followed by a stop at Balidan Stambh, where members paid homage. Later, the delegation visited the famous Lal Chowk Clock Tower and observed ongoing civic and infrastructure improvements under the Smart City mission.

Reddy said the committee

will hold further discussions in Srinagar and additional meetings in Gulmarg to better understand local issues and development needs.

Stressing the importance of stability, the Chairperson said peace is the most important factor for Kashmir's tourism and economic growth. "Srinagar has strong tourism potential due to its natural beauty and

improved infrastructure, but sustained peace is necessary to ensure steady tourist inflow," he said.

Reddy further said that tourism is the backbone of the local economy, and greater confidence among visitors, especially young tourists, could significantly improve Kashmir's global image and economic activity—(KNO)

Govt committed to timely implementation of public welfare, infrastructure projects: Deputy CM

Conducts extensive tour of Nowshera constituency

KT News Desk

RAJOURI, MAY 11: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary Monday conducted an extensive tour of the Nowshera constituency in Rajouri district to assess the progress of various ongoing developmental projects and review public service delivery across key sectors.

The Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, visited the Sub-District Hospital Sunderbani, where he inspected the healthcare facilities, patient care services and overall functioning of the hospital. He directed the concerned officers to ensure efficient healthcare delivery, adequate medical facilities and prompt public service for the people.

He also inspected the ongoing works at the PWD (R&B) Guest House Kangri and emphasized the need for timely completion of the project while maintaining high quality standards.

At Siot Morh, the Deputy Chief Minister reviewed the progress on the Siot-Kalakote PMGSY Road project. Stressing the importance of improved road connectivity, he directed the executing agencies to expedite the work for the convenience of the local population.

The Deputy Chief Minister, later, visited the under-construction MCH Hospital at Lamberi and assessed the pace of work on the project.



Reviewing the ongoing developmental works on Dhera Road, he reiterated the importance of quality execution and timely completion to enhance connectivity and public convenience.

During his visit to Bagnoti Nallah Bridge, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected the ongoing construction works. He directed the officers to expedite the project while ensuring durability and adherence to safety standards.

He also visited the I&FC Guest House Rajal and inspected the developmental works being carried out there. He stressed for efficient execution and improvement of infrastructure facilities for greater public benefit.

At the PWD (R&B) Guest House Nowshera, the Deputy Chief Minister reviewed several ongoing developmental initiatives in the constituency.

Interacting with the officers, he reiterated the government's commitment towards

timely implementation of public welfare and infrastructure projects.

The Deputy Chief Minister further visited the Sports Stadium Nowshera and inspected the ongoing developmental works at the stadium.

"The government is focused on creation of sports infrastructure and develop better facilities to promote youth engagement and nurture sporting talent in all areas," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister also inspected the facilities and functioning at Sub-District Hospital Nowshera. He directed the authorities to ensure improved patient care, adequate medical infrastructure and better healthcare services for the public.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister visited the bridge project at Masiti Mohalla Nonial and reviewed the ongoing construction works. He stressed the need for timely completion of the bridge to improve connectivity and facilitate smooth movement for local residents.

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

DC Kulgam inaugurates Basketball Tournament at Manzgam



KT News Desk

KULGAM, MAY 11: As part of the ongoing activities under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam Monday inaugurated a basketball tournament at Manzgam aimed at promoting sports and spreading awareness against drug abuse among youth.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC, as per an official statement, highlighted the importance of sports and positive extracurricular activities in steering youth away from substance abuse and encouraging a healthy lifestyle.

He said that such initiatives provide a constructive platform for young people to channel their energy and talent in a positive direction.

He also encouraged active participation of youth in sports and social initiatives to build a healthy and drug-free society.

It was informed that 16 teams are participating in the tournament, reflecting the enthusiastic involvement of local youth in the anti-drug awareness initiative through sports.

SDM Noorabad, Bashir Ul Hassan, Tehsildar D.H. Pora and other officers were present on the occasion.

100 Day Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan

Awareness, outreach events held across Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, MAY 11: Diverse range of awareness and outreach events numbering in hundreds were Monday conducted across district Shopian under the ongoing 100 Day Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, witnessing proactive participation of students, youth, teachers, co-operative societies members, government departments and civil society members.

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

Educational institutions 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,

medical shops, petrol pumps, playgrounds etc.

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

NMBA

Awareness activities, Padyatras continue across Pulwama

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, MAY 11: As part of the ongoing 100-day campaign under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, awareness and outreach activities continued across District Pulwama Monday with various departments and stakeholders organising programmes aimed at sensitising the public about the harmful effects of drug abuse and promoting a healthy and drug-free society.

An awareness camp, as per an official statement, was organised at Panchayat Gadpora of Block Aripal, during which awareness sessions were conducted highlighting the importance of collective efforts in curbing substance abuse. On the occasion, participants also took part in the Nasha Mukht pledge and a padyatra was also organised as part of the programme to spread awareness among the general public regarding the harmful consequences of drug addiction and the need for active community participation in prevention efforts.

Similar awareness programmes were also organised at Namlabal Pampore

and Ashmander Pampore, where participants were sensitised about the objectives of the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan and encouraged to actively support the anti-drug campaign.

Meanwhile, the Social Welfare Department organised a series of awareness and outreach activities at various locations and educational institutions across the district under the campaign.

The activities featured awareness rallies, pledge ceremonies, signature campaigns, pamphlet distribution drives, poster campaigns, debates and discussion sessions focusing on prevention of substance abuse and promotion of healthy lifestyles among youth and students. Short film and video screenings highlighting the ill effects of drug abuse were also conducted during the programmes.

Furthermore, the Education Department organised discussions and interactive sessions across various educational institutions on the theme of "Myths vs Facts regarding Drug Menace" to create awareness among students and to promote informed and responsible behaviour.

Somnath Swabhiman Parv celebrations held at Tirath Raj Kapal Mochan Temple Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, MAY 11: District-level celebrations under the nationwide campaign "Somnath Swabhiman Parv - 75 Years of reconstruction and inauguration of Somnath Temple" was Monday celebrated at the historic Tirath Raj Kapal Mochan Temple at Deegam, Nagbal, Shopian.

The event, as per an official statement, witnessed enthusiastic public participation and devotees and was organised in line with the directions of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, to commemorate the rich spiritual

and cultural legacy associated with the Somnath Temple.

Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta along with ADDC Shopian, Dr.Nasir Ahmad Lone and other officers and officials also participated in the celebrations.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that such programmes serve as a symbol of India's glorious civilisational heritage and strengthen the spirit of unity, faith and communal harmony among the people.

During the event, devotional bhajans, puja rituals, public participation drives, cleanliness campaigns and awareness activities were organised at the Temple.

Central Kashmir Excise Range destroys illegal poppy cultivation at multiple locations

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 11: Central Kashmir Excise Range intensified its crackdown against the illicit cultivation of narcotic crops under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan and destroyed illegal poppy cultivation at multiple locations across the Srinagar-Budgam-Ganderbal Excise Range in collaboration with Police, Revenue and Agriculture Departments.

During the enforcement drive, illegal poppy cultivation spread over different patches of land was identified and destroyed at various locations, including Aulipora Chadoora in Budgam district.

In this connection, Case FIR No.



58/2026 under Section 8/18 of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Chadoora and investigation has been taken up.

All legal formalities, including seizure, sampling and on-spot destruction of the illicit crop, were completed as per procedure.

The Excise Department,

as per an official statement, reiterated its commitment towards curbing the illegal cultivation and trafficking of narcotic substances and ensuring strict enforcement of the law under the supervision of the Excise Commissioner and Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive), Kashmir.

Measures discussed to improve traffic management system in Udhampur Town

KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, MAY 11: Deputy Commissioner Minga Sherpa on Monday chaired a meeting with officers and representatives of the transport unions to review and strengthen the traffic management system in Udhampur town.

Additional District Development Commissioner Jugal Kishore; Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh and

other officers besides representatives from transport unions participated in the meeting.

Detailed discussions were held on key traffic-related issues, including overloading of vehicles, establishment of temporary parking spaces, maintenance of internal roads in and around Udhampur town and improvement of traffic management practices.

Emphasis was laid on

adopting effective measures to decongest city roads and ensure smooth traffic flow.

The Traffic Police were instructed to regulate traffic efficiently, minimize traffic jams and strictly check overloading with the support of the local police to avoid inconvenience to the general public.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, stressed the need for

widespread awareness regarding road safety rules and directed the concerned authorities to take corrective measures for making roads safer for commuters.

Calling for strict enforcement of traffic regulations, the DC asked the Motor Vehicles Authority and Traffic Department to take stern action against violators and emphasized increasing penalties

for offences such as overloading, riding without helmets and speeding.

The ARTO was directed to identify designated stopping points for vehicles, while the Executive Engineer, PHE was instructed to repair leaking water pipes in Udhampur town. The concerned departments were also directed to repair potholes on all roads falling within Municipal Council limits.

PM Modi to visit Norway, attend Nordic-Indian Summit on May 18-19



PTI
London, May 11: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will undertake an official visit to Norway on May 18 and 19, during which he will hold bilateral talks and attend the India-Nordic Summit, the Norwegian government said in a statement on Monday.

This will be the first visit to Norway by an Indian Prime Minister since 1983.

During his two-day visit, Modi is expected to hold talks with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre and meet King Harald V.

"India is the world's largest democracy and the world's most populous country. India plays a central role on climate, technology, trade and international security," Støre said in a statement.

"This visit underlines the importance of cooperation with India, Norway and the Nordic countries in these times of global instability. We stand together in promoting international cooperation and a rules-based world order," he said.

The Prime Minister's visit to the Scandinavian country will coincide with the Nordic-Indian Summit, with a focus on green transition, digitalisation, innovation and trade.

Prime Ministers Modi and Støre will jointly participate in the third Nordic-Indian Summit in Oslo, which brings together India and the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, besides Norway.

"The summit is important for strengthening cooperation on green transition, digitalisation, innovation and trade. It provides closer political dialogue and opportunities for increased economic cooperation between the regions," Støre said.

Modi and Støre are set to interact with Indian and Norwegian business representatives at a Norway-India Business and Research Summit.

"India, Norway and the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries agreed a free trade agreement in 2024, that entered into force last year. This was an important breakthrough for our cooperation and creates significant opportunities for both Norwegian and Indian business and industry," Støre noted.

"Trade between Norway and India has more than doubled over the past ten years, and we expect increased trade, investment and economic cooperation in the years ahead."



A delegation of Civil Society Forum Kashmir Health called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday. The members hailed the Nasha Mukti J&K campaign aimed at eradicating the drug menace from the Union Territory.

Two more passengers evacuated from cruise ship test positive for hantavirus

AP

Omaha, May 11: Passengers from a cruise ship hit by a deadly hantavirus outbreak were being flown home Monday to more than 20 countries and quarantined, including a French woman and an American who tested positive.

Passengers from the ship began flying home aboard military and government planes Sunday after the MV Hondius anchored in the Canary Islands. Personnel in full-body protective gear and breathing masks escorted the travellers from ship to shore in Tenerife, an effort that continued Monday.

Three cruise ship passengers have died, and six people with confirmed or suspected cases of hantavirus are being quarantined, according to the World Health Organization. The lab results of the American who tested positive were inconclusive, WHO spokesperson Sarah Tyler said Monday.

Health authorities say the risk to the broader public is low from the first-ever hantavirus outbreak on a cruise ship. While

there is no cure or vaccine for hantavirus, the WHO says early detection and treatment improves survival rates.

The ship's captain, Jan Dobrogowski, issued a video message Monday praising passengers and crew for their courage and perseverance, and he called for respect for their privacy.

"I could not imagine sailing through these circumstances with a better group of people, guests and crew alike," he said.

New cases in France, United States

The French woman tested positive for hantavirus and her health worsened in the hospital overnight, French Health Minister Stephanie Rist said Monday. The woman was among five passengers who returned to France Sunday. She developed symptoms on the flight to Paris, Rist told public broadcaster France-Inter.

One of 18 passengers evacuated from the ship and flown to the US also tested positive for the hantavirus but is not showing any symptoms, and another had mild symptoms, US health

officials said late Sunday.

After landing early Monday, 16 American passengers — one of them a British-US dual citizen — were taken to the University of Nebraska Medical Center, which has a federally funded quarantine facility and a bio-containment unit for treating people with infectious diseases. They were being assessed to determine if they had close contact with any symptomatic people and their risk levels for spreading the virus.

An American who tested positive for hantavirus on the cruise ship was taken to the Omaha campus' biocontainment unit and will be tested again. The passenger "is doing well and not having symptoms at this time," said Dr. Angela Hewlett, the unit's medical director.

The others taken to Nebraska will be monitored in quarantine for several days. They arrived "in good shape, good spirits," said Dr. Michael Wadman, the quarantine unit's medical director.

Two additional American passengers, a couple, arrived Monday at a medical facility at Emory University in Atlanta.

One of them has mild symptoms and will be tested for hantavirus. "It doesn't necessarily mean, just because someone has symptoms, that they're going to end up having this illness," said Dr. Brendan Jackson of the US Centres of Disease Control and Prevention.

WHO recommends close monitoring of former passengers

The evacuation of passengers from Tenerife was due to wrap up on Monday.

A Dutch plane expected to reach Tenerife Monday afternoon will carry passengers that were previously going to be evacuated on a plane sent by Australia, Spain's Health Minister Mónica García said. On Monday, 54 passengers and crew remained on the ship, of which 22 were expected to disembark, while the remaining 32 will remain on the ship as it returns to the Netherlands.

South African health authorities said on Monday that the condition of a British man admitted to a hospital in Johannesburg and being treated for hantavirus was gradually improving. He

was evacuated from the ship on April 27 after becoming ill.

The Hondius left the southern Argentine port of Ushuaia on April 1 and a Dutch passenger died on board April 11. It wasn't until early May that the World Health Organization said it was reacting to a suspected hantavirus outbreak on the ship, which by that time was off the West African island nation of Cape Verde.

Health officials say risk to public is low

Hantavirus usually spreads from rodent droppings and is not easily transmitted between people. But the Andes virus detected in the cruise ship outbreak may be able to spread between people in rare cases. Symptoms — which can include fever, chills and muscle aches — usually show between one and eight weeks after exposure.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Sunday that the general public should not be worried about the outbreak. "This is not another COVID. And the risk to the public is low. So they shouldn't be scared, and they shouldn't panic."

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Somnath rose

soul of every Indian.

"Somnath is the divinity of India. Somnath is dedication. Somnath is devotion. Somnath is eternal prayer. Somnath is the thirst for truth. Somnath is the radiant light of luminous saints. Somnath is our pride. Somnath is our strength," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said: "No other temple or sacred site looted and destroyed 17 times, only to rise again each time in full splendor."

"The Somnath temple stands alone as the foremost example. Invaders and rulers from Mahmud Ghaznavi to Alauddin Khilji and Zafar Khan, plundered and razed it time and again. Yet, despite repeated destruction, Somnath endured in our collective soul and later rebuilt by countless great kings," he said, adding, "On this occasion, I bow to those great souls who, in various ways, not only preserved Somnath's eternal sanctity but stood firm to defend the temple from invaders. I pay homage to Bhim Dev, Jayapal, Anandpal, and Maharaja Dharsen.

I also offer tribute to the Iron Man, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who, after India's independence, directed the temple's reconstruction on November 12, 1947 and on May 11, 1951, then President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad performed the consecration ceremony."

The Lieutenant Governor said that Somnath Temple's immortality teaches us to channel the nation's entire strength into creation, drawing inspiration from the past to make it the bedrock of life, and build India's golden future.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the rebuilding of Somnath Temple is a symbol of inner victory for every person, a lamp of faith and resolve burning for millennia.

"Somnath Temple is a beacon of the nation. Without Somnath, our society would be lifeless," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Satish Sharma, Minister for Youth Services & Sports; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Nalin Prabhat, DGP; Shaheen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department; Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary Home Department; Shri Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary Culture Department, Administrative Secretaries; senior officials, and prominent citizens from different walks of life also attended the Somnath Swabhiman Parv event. (KNO)

Youth must create

youth has arrived. Through Youth Festival's "Young Leaders Dialogue," we are laying the very foundation and the framework on which the next chapter of India's glorious heritage will stand tall," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that history was never made by those who waited for permission to be extraordinary. He urged the youth participating in 'Viksit J&K Young Leaders Dialogue', 'Hackathon' and 'Cultural Event' to rise up and commit to building a developed India that future generations will take pride in. He said governance can't thrive

without the voice of its youth and inclusive governance means ensuring young people have a real stake in the work happening across every key sector.

"Every young boy and girl has incredible talent. They just need opportunities and faith in themselves. I want India's youth to create their own paths instead of treading well-worn trails, because innovation and invention spring from uncharted routes. What India needs is youth brave enough to shatter pre-made molds," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also stated that culture is our identity and it is the vibrant proof of our existence, revealing who we are and what dreams and aspirations drive us. He said when young people express themselves through music, art, literature, dance, theater, sports, and crafts, they are channeling the soul of India itself.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the youth must embrace their uniqueness instead of copying others and realise their full potential.

"The world doesn't need another copy of someone who already exists. It craves no duplicates. It needs unique youth like you, individuals with one-of-a-kind personalities who don't just shine for themselves, but light the way for those who come after," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said victory isn't about dominating others but about conquering apathy, overcoming inequality, and defeating despair.

"Our youth must remember that humanity's greatest triumphs weren't won on battlefields. The biggest victories emerged from classrooms and labs, achieved by young trailblazers who refused to accept the world as they found it and transformed it through their resolve and grit. We must triumph over darkness. We must conquer the fear of bold new experiments. And we must resolve to build a strong, empathetic, and developed India," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Satish Sharma, Minister for Youth Services & Sports; Ashwani Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department; Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Commissioner Secretary to Government, Youth Services and Sports; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Dr. GV Sundeeep Chakravathy, SSP Srinagar; Anuradha Gupta, Director General, Youth Services and Sports; Young leaders from various parts of the country, senior officials and youth in large number were present. (KNO)

CM Omar meets

Union Government for prior reference. The proposal seeks a three percent reduction in the Reserved Backward Area quota and a seven percent reduction in the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) quota, thereby enhancing the share of open merit by 10 percent.

Before leaving for New Delhi, the CM told reporters that he would raise matters related to the Business Rules, the appointment of the Advocate General, and reservation with the

Union Home Minister.

"Wish we could have got statehood through one meeting—we would have achieved it long back. It is a continuous process, but I raise the demand for statehood whenever I meet him. There are other issues as well, such as our Business Rules, the appointment of the Advocate General, and the reservation issue, which the LG has referred to New Delhi. It is better to discuss these issues, along with other matters, with the Home Minister. Today I will discuss these issues along with other matters," he said. (KNO)

Sajad Lone slams

is because they had a tie-up with the BJP. And the reason NC did not raise the issue is because they also had a tie-up," he said.

The PC president termed the outsourcing of government jobs by the government as "one lakh times worse" than backdoor appointments, calling it "front-door stealing."

"I had asked a question in the J&K Assembly: how many government jobs have you outsourced? The answer came, and they provided all of them separately. I tallied it, and found that about 22000 to 24000 people have jobs outsourced. These companies received about Rs 1000 crores," he said.

Lone described outsourcing of jobs as a "den of corruption" and "poison for society." Referring to former CM Mehbooba Mufti's claim of 30000 backdoor appointments, he said: "If you don't know, call and ask. Don't confuse people. This is not backdoor, this is stealing from the front door."

He accused Mehbooba Mufti of giving the ruling party an escape route by framing the issue as backdoor appointments.

On the liquor ban row, Lone called it "drama" by both NC and PDP. "When NC was in opposition, they brought a bill to ban alcohol. PDP said no. When PDP came to power, NC brought the bill. Both issue permits when in power," he said.

He added that none of them bans liquor when they are in power. "When they are in power, none of them bans it. When they are out of power, you see whether it is PDP's government or this government, how many permits they issued," Lone said. (KNO)

Police make

In Anantnag district, police said a man identified as Jahangir Ahmad Khan of Hallan Nowbugh was arrested during patrolling at Sirgan-Hallan crossing and around 1.442 kilograms of contraband substance in crushed form was seized from him.

PULWAMA

In Pulwama, police said a motorcycle rider was intercepted near Block Office Lassipora and around 204 grams of charas-like substance was recovered from his possession.

Cases under relevant sections of the NDPS Act have been registered at the respective police stations and investigations have been

initiated, police said.

Meanwhile, police in several districts including Budgam, Baramulla, Awantipora and Ganderbal organised anti-drug awareness programmes, rallies and village-level meetings under the campaign to sensitise students and the public about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

In Handwara, police attached property worth around Rs 25 lakh belonging to an accused in an NDPS case and demolished structures allegedly linked to narcotics-related activities at Langate, the statement said.

Police in Anantnag said that during the first month of the anti-drug campaign, 120 FIRs were registered under the NDPS Act, 118 alleged drug peddlers were arrested and more than 300 kilograms of contraband substances were seized across the district.

Properties worth around Rs 13.5 crore linked to narcotics proceeds were either attached or demolished during the period, police said. (KNO)

'Invisible illness':

awareness around the illness remains low, leading many patients to move from one specialist to another without receiving proper treatment.

Medical experts believe Kashmir's unique socio-environmental conditions may increase vulnerability to chronic pain syndromes like fibromyalgia.

Dr Qazi explained that prolonged psychosocial stress, trauma exposure, anxiety, depression, harsh winters, reduced physical activity, and widespread Vitamin D deficiency together create conditions that can worsen chronic pain disorders.

"Many Kashmiri patients spend years moving from orthopaedics to rheumatology to neurology, undergoing repeated MRIs and taking painkillers without relief because the core problem often remains unidentified," he said.

He further noted that social stigma around "unexplained illnesses" often discourages patients from seeking timely psychological and rehabilitative support.

Experts say one of the biggest misconceptions surrounding fibromyalgia is treating it like arthritis or muscle injury.

Since the condition is linked to altered pain processing in the nervous system rather than inflammation, common painkillers and anti-inflammatory medicines often provide little relief.

"The problem is not tissue damage. It is pain amplification by the central nervous system," Dr Qazi explained.

Doctors stress that fibromyalgia cannot be managed through a single medicine alone and requires a comprehensive, personalised treatment approach.

Patient education, they say, is often the first and most important step.

"When patients understand that they are not imagining the pain, that they do not have

a hidden cancer, and that recovery is possible, fear reduces and outcomes improve," Dr Qazi said.

Lifestyle modifications and physical rehabilitation also play a crucial role in treatment. Experts recommend graded aerobic exercises, stretching, walking, and aquatic therapy to improve symptoms gradually.

"In Kashmir, even simple indoor winter exercise programs can make a remarkable difference," he added.

Psychological therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), mindfulness, stress management, and proper sleep hygiene are also considered highly effective, particularly in stress-prone regions like Jammu and Kashmir.

While fibromyalgia itself is widespread and centrally mediated, some patients may also develop localised pain areas that can benefit from interventional pain procedures.

According to Dr Qazi, selected patients may benefit from trigger point injections, ultrasound-guided fascial plane blocks, IV lidocaine infusions, and ketamine infusions in resistant cases.

Advanced neuromodulation techniques such as Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) and Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation (tDCS) are also emerging as promising therapies in specialised centres.

Doctors say there is an urgent need for better physician awareness, dedicated chronic pain clinics, multidisciplinary care models, and reduced stigma surrounding invisible illnesses.

"Although fibromyalgia may not be life-threatening, it significantly affects quality of life, productivity, relationships, and mental well-being," Dr Qazi said.

He said fibromyalgia does not kill, but it steals quality of life, productivity, and hope. As "pain physicians, our responsibility is to validate suffering and restore function. Sometimes the deepest pain is the one nobody else can see — and in Kashmir, it is time we started seeing it," he said. (KNO)

Rain, thunderstorms

3.1 degrees above normal.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 22.6 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 11.6 degrees Celsius, while Pahalgam registered 20.2 degrees Celsius as the day temperature and 10.6 degrees Celsius during the night.

Kupwara recorded a maximum temperature of 24.2 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 11.3 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 15.4 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 5.4 degrees Celsius.

Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 33 degrees Celsius, which was 4.1 degrees below normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 20.2 degrees Celsius.

Banihal recorded 23 degrees Celsius, Batote 22.8 degrees Celsius and Katra 30.6 degrees Celsius as the maximum temperatures, the Met data showed. (KNO)

West Asia crisis

PM repeats call for saving fuel, cutting gold buy; bats for work from home

PTI

Vadodara, May 11: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday reiterated his call for reduced fuel consumption, greater use of public transport and electric vehicles by citizens, and urged people to defer gold purchases amid the West Asia crisis which has caused large-scale disruptions.

Addressing a gathering in Vadodara after inaugurating the Sardar Dham Hostel built by the Patidar community, Modi appealed to people to opt for work from home, a pandemic-era practice, wherever possible and reduce foreign travel.

"The West Asia crisis is one of the worst in the decade; just as we overcame the COVID-19 pandemic, we will come out of this also," the Prime Minister asserted.

Modi noted citizens had always fulfilled their responsibilities whenever the country faced war or any other major crisis.

"Whenever India faced war or any other major crisis, citizens fulfilled their responsibilities upon the government's appeal; we need to do the same today," the PM told the gathering.

The prime minister stressed the need for reduced imports -- India heavily relies on West Asia for crude oil and LPG -- and avoid unnecessary expenditure involving foreign currency.



"We must make every effort to reduce the use of imported products and avoid personal activities that involve spending foreign currency," Modi maintained.

Calling for fuel conservation measures, he urged people to reduce fuel consumption and shift to public transport or electric vehicles.

He appealed to citizens to defer

gold buying in view of the prevailing global situation as a significant amount of foreign exchange goes into importing the precious metal.

Modi had spoken about these austerity measures for the first time in the backdrop of the West Asia crisis while speaking at an event in Telangana on Sunday and reiterated them in Gujarat a day later.

PM Modi performs 'Maha Pooja' at Somnath temple, witnesses air show

PTI

Somnath, May 11: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday performed 'Maha Pooja' and other rituals at the Somnath Temple as part of the Somnath Amrut Mahotsav marking 75 years of the inauguration of the restored shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva. After holding a roadshow here, the prime minister entered the temple and performed 'Maha Pooja' and 'Jalabhishek', the ritual of pouring holy water over the Shivaling amid chanting of Vedic mantras.

Modi also witnessed 'Kumbhabhishek', wherein holy water gathered from prominent pilgrimage sites across the country was sprinkled atop the temple's 'shikhar' (towering spire) using a crane. The Somnath Amrut Mahotsav is being organised to commemorate 75 years since the inauguration of the restored temple by India's first President, Dr Rajendra Prasad, in 1951. The prime minister, accompanied by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and his deputy Harsh Sanghavi, watched an airshow performed by the Indian Air Force's Suryakiran aerobatic team (SKAT) over the temple. Using indigenous smoke pods, the jets of the Suryakiran team released saffron, white and green smoke to create the image of the tricolour in the sky. The prime minister is scheduled to address a public gathering at Sadbhavana Ground later in the day.

EC set to roll out phase III of SIR in 'coming days'; to cover 22 states, UTs



PTI

New Delhi, May 11: The Election Commission is set to roll out phase three of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' list in the next "coming days", officials said on Monday, adding that it could cover the remaining 22 states and Union Territories covering nearly 40 crore electors.

The poll authority had held back its rollout due to assembly elections in Kerala, Assam, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal held last month.

The officials said SIR could be rolled out in the "coming days" as the poll process is now complete.

So far, SIR has been carried out in 10 states and three UTs. They are Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Puducherry, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Goa and Bihar.

A 'special revision' of electoral rolls was carried out in Assam.

Sixty crore of the nearly 99 crore voters have been covered in the clean-up exercises of these voters' list.

The remaining nearly 40 crore electors will be covered in the proposed exercise in 17 states and five UTs.

On February 19, the poll authority had asked 22 states and UTs including Delhi to complete preparatory work related to SIR at the earliest as the exercise is "expected to start from April".

Once the exercise is completed, all states and UTs will be covered.

In a letter to the chief electoral officers of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Haranya, Himachal Pradesh,

Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Ladakh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Delhi, Odisha, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura, Telangana and Uttarakhand, the poll authority said pan-India SIR of voters' list was ordered in June last year.

Due to a variety of reasons, SIR has seen frequent tweaking in schedules.

For instance, in Bihar, political parties had approached the Supreme Court challenging SIR in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

Recently, TMC president and then West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee personally pleaded before a bench of the chief justice of India against the poll roll cleanup exercise in her state.

As the EC was preparing for SIR in Bihar, its officials had claimed that several nationals from Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar were found by its grassroots level functionaries.

But eventually, the poll authority did not share any numbers or proof of such people who were not eligible to be on the voters' list.

Opposition parties had dubbed the EC's claims as a ploy to carry out SIR to target electors not aligned to the BJP and its allies.

The combined voters' list of nine states and three UTs has been pruned by 10.2 per cent following the SIR exercise carried out by the Election Commission, with over 60 lakh dead voters removed, data shared by the poll authority and its state officials shows.

When phase II of the SIR of electoral rolls was announced by the EC on October 27, the voter base across the 12 states and UTs stood at more than 50.99 crore.

TN CM Joseph Vijay, newly elected MLAs take oath in Assembly

PTI

Chennai, May 11: Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, nine other ministers, former CMs including Edappadi K Palaniswami, ex-deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin and the newly elected MLAs on Monday took the oath of office in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

Pro-tem Speaker M V Karuppaiah, praising Vijay's leadership and victory, initiated the proceedings on administration of the oath of office for MLAs in the first session of the 17th Assembly.

The chief minister was the first to take oath as MLA and ministers N Anand, Aadhav Arjuna, KG Arunraj, KA Sengottaiyan, P Venkataramanan, R Nirmalkumar, Rajmohan and TK Prabhu followed suit.

Following this, DMK legislative party leader and former deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin, former CMs Palaniswami and O Panneerselvam (DMK), and other MLAs took oath of office.

Vijay, Udhayanidhi and Panneerselvam were among those who "solemnly affirmed" and took oath. Palaniswami and PMK's Sowmya Anbumani were among those who took oath in the name of God.

Panruti AIADMK MLA K Mohan while taking oath suddenly broke down and hailed late chief minister J Jayalalithaa and with folded hands paid tributes to the portrait of the late AIADMK matriarch in the Assembly hall.

Initially, Minister S Keerthana could not take oath of office as MLA as she did not present her Certificate of Election, a prerequisite for taking oath, an official said.

When the Assembly Principal Secretary K Srinivasan invited Keerthana, announcing her name in the microphone, she walked to the podium, which was right in front of the chair of the CM from one side. Also, MLAs who take oath would face the chair of the pro-tem speaker.

While Keerthana neared the podium, Srinivasan raised his hand and asked her the certificate, which could be seen in the live coverage of the Assembly proceedings.



However, she could not produce the certificate and what she replied to Srinivasan was not known.

Asked what transpired, an official told PTI: "It seems she did not have her certificate of election with her ready. Since she could not submit the certificate, the senior official politely declined to allow her to take oath. She may take oath whenever she submits her certificate of election."

Sometime later, Keerthana brought her certificate to the House and submitted it to the top official and took the oath of office.

The official said that MLAs were told to bring their certificates without fail and the government made this clear even in a press note. While initiating the proceedings on Monday, the pro-tem speaker too announced that certificate of election must be presented for taking oath and Karuppaiah himself submitted his certificate to Srinivasan.

When Velachery TVK legislator R Kumar was about to begin taking oath after submitting the certificate, Srinivasan stopped him. He pointed out to Kumar that the certificate submitted by him featured the name of someone else.

It later emerged that Kumar had brought the certificate of his party colleague seated next to him and had given it to Srinivasan. Immediately, Kumar went back to his seat

and brought his certificate of election and gave it to the official. Kumar collected the colleague's certificate from him and gave it back to his party colleague. Later, Kumar was allowed by the official to take oath.

When Tirunelveli TVK MLA RS Murughan did not specify if he solemnly affirmed or took oath in the name of God, the top official intervened and asked him to either make affirmation "solemnly" or take oath in the "name of God." The MLA's reply appeared to be in a rough tone and he made affirmation in the name of God.

VCK's Vanni Arasu, after taking oath said: "Velga Tamizh (Let Tamil win), Valga Tamil Nadu (Let Tamil Eelam win), Thanthai Periyar Vazhga (Hail Periyar EV Ramasamy), Puratchiyalar Dr Ambedkar Vazhga (Hail revolutionary leader Dr Ambedkar) Eluchi Tamizhar Vazhga (Hail VCK chief Thol Thirumavalavan)."

An official release said AIADMK legislator C Ve Shanmugam (Mailam constituency), took oath at the chamber of the Assembly Speaker on Monday.

TN Assembly's current strength is 233 while the actual full strength is 234. Vijay won from Perambur and Tiruchirappalli East and he has resigned from the latter.

Bengal govt okays land transfer to BSF for fencing border with B'desh: CM

PTI

Kolkata, May 11: West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Monday said his government, in its first cabinet meeting, has granted transfer of land to the BSF for erecting a fence along the Bangladesh border.

The process of transferring land will start from Monday and will be completed within 45 days, he said. He also announced the implementation of the Centre's flagship Ayushman Bharat health scheme and several other schemes of the Union government in the state. "The West Bengal government gave a



Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the poll campaign, he said.

"The Bengal cabinet empowers the chief secretary to take steps to initiate central government training for officers under the national and state cadres," Adhikari said. Alleging that the previous government did not implement the BNS in violation of the Constitution, he said the cabinet decided to implement the criminal law in the state.

"The previous government ignored the June 2025 Census circular from the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Bengal cabinet granted immediate implementation of it," he added.

BJP hits back at Rahul, Oppn for criticising PM's austerity appeal

'Stop politicising global crisis'

PTI

New Delhi, May 11: The BJP on Monday hit back at Rahul Gandhi over his criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for austerity amid the West Asia conflict, saying the politics of Congress has remained confined to power and not nation-building.

The party also launched a scathing attack on the opposition and asked it to refrain from indulging in politics driven by "hostility and prejudice" during a global crisis.

The BJP's response came as Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, attacked Modi after the prime minister on Sunday appealed to citizens to adopt measures to cope with the impact of the West Asia conflict, saying the "compromised PM is no longer capable of running the country".

The Congress leader also said that the prime minister's words were "evidence of failure". In a sharp rebuttal, BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi asked the opposition if it supports securing India's future, while accusing it of advancing its "political interests by creating social and political disorder".

"First, please tell us which region of the world is not facing some kind of economic, strategic or energy crisis at this time - whether it is America, Europe or the Middle East. "Second, we want to



ask the opposition whether it supports securing India's economic and energy security. Third, is it not trying to gain political mileage by creating confusion and instability over issues related to the economy and national security?" Trivedi said. The Rajya Sabha MP said that 85 per cent of India's energy requirements are met through imports, which require foreign exchange, and securing economic and energy security is extremely important for the country's future and that of its citizens.

Questioning the prime minister's intentions reflects the opposition's flawed perception, he alleged.

"Even during a tsunami, if our ship is moving ahead, it is certain to face shocks. If someone says that the problem is not because of the tsunami but because of the captain

of the ship, I believe the fault lies in that person's perception," he told PTI Videos.

"Whatever the prime minister said was the duty of the government. It is somewhat similar to how the government asks people to exercise caution when there is a possibility of a tsunami or a storm. It does not mean that the government is trying to curtail anyone's freedom," Trivedi said.

"Therefore, while supporting the prime minister's appeal, I would like to invoke lines from Atal Ji's poem and appeal to the people of the country, and also to the opposition: 'Come, let us light a lamp together,'" he added.

In a post on X, BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya said Modi did not ask people to make sacrifices but urged them to make conscious choices in the national interest,

such as conserving energy, promoting indigenous products, preserving foreign exchange and strengthening self-reliance.

"But this is precisely the Congress' problem. Any call for public participation in the national interest sounds like 'preaching' to them, because their politics has remained confined to power, not nation-building," he said.

Referring to the impact of the West Asia conflict, Malviya said every global crisis affects the entire world and cited India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, to counter Gandhi's attack.

"If appealing to the public to fulfil its responsibility is considered a failure, was your beloved Nehru also a 'compromised PM'?" he asked.

Malviya also shared a purported video of Nehru in which the former prime minister can be heard saying that the country is impacted when wars take place in nations such as Korea or America.

A responsible leadership tells people the truth and appeals for collective participation in facing challenges, Malviya said.

BJP national spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari, in a post on X, took a swipe at Gandhi, saying those who do not have "country interest" but only "party interest" in mind would never understand the principle of "nation first".

Iran ceasefire at its weakest: Trump



PTI
Washington, May 11: US President Donald Trump on Monday said the ceasefire with Iran was at its "weakest" and on "massive life support", a day after he rejected Tehran's proposal to end the months-long war as "totally unacceptable".
"It is at its weakest... After reading that piece of garbage they sent us... It's on life support, massive life support," Trump told reporters at the Oval Office in response to a question on the ceasefire with Iran in the wake of the rejection of the peace proposal. "They think that I'll get tired of this, or I'll get bored, or

I'll have some pressure, but there's no pressure at all. We're going to have a complete victory," Trump said. Trump received the Iranian proposal on Sunday amid hopes that it could lead to a breakthrough to end the war with Iran that began on February 28, blocking the key sea route for global oil supplies, leading to fuel shortages in several countries.
"I have just read the response from Iran's so-called Representatives. I don't like it," he wrote on his Truth Social platform on Sunday, calling it "totally unacceptable".
The US and Israel's war on Iran started on

February 28, and attacks have been paused since April 8, when the warring sides agreed to a ceasefire.
The US and Iran have been negotiating a deal to end the hostilities for good, but peace has been elusive so far.
The US has been insisting that Iran give a clear commitment to end its uranium enrichment programme in exchange for the lifting of sanctions and release of billions in frozen Iranian funds.
The negotiations also entail both Iran and the US lifting the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, a key passageway for one-fifth of the global crude supplies.

US President Trump to visit China from May 13 to 15

PTI

Beijing, May 11: US President Donald Trump will pay an official visit to China from May 13 to 15 at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson announced on Monday.
This will be the first visit to China by a US president in almost nine years. Trump himself was the last US president to visit China in 2017, during his first term.

The visit comes amid a prolonged war in West Asia involving the US-Israel and Iran, a crisis over the blockade of Strait of Hormuz causing global energy crisis, and increasing tensions between the US and China over a host of issues, including Taiwan.
On Sunday, US principal deputy press secretary Anna Kelly said Trump would arrive in Beijing on Wednesday evening for what she described as a visit of symbolic significance.
According to Kelly, the US leader will attend a welcome ceremony and a bilateral meeting with President Xi Jinping on Thursday, followed by a visit to the Temple of Heaven and a state banquet,



the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.
The two leaders will meet again on Friday for a bilateral tea and working lunch, she said, adding that the US planned to host the Chinese leader for a reciprocal visit later this year.
Both sides announced on Sunday that Vice-Premier He Lifeng will travel to South Korea for trade talks with US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on May 12 and 13 in the final round of negotiations before Trump's visit.
Trump's visit is taking place amid expectations of a trade deal between the world's two largest economies following steep tariffs imposed by the US president. The talks would

be guided by the important consensus reached between the two heads of state at their meeting in South Korea's Busan last year, and in previous phone calls to address economic and trade issues of mutual concern, a Chinese commerce ministry statement said.
Ahead of Trump's visit, China has been flagging Taiwan as its core concern.
Last week, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi told US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, during their telephone talks, that the US should make the right choice about the self-ruled Taiwan.
China claims Taiwan as part of its own and has been ramping up military pressure on the island with

periodic military drills around the island.
"The Taiwan question is at the core of China's core interests and the bedrock of the political foundation of China-US relations," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a media briefing on Thursday.
The US officially recognises Beijing as the sole legal government of China but opposes any unilateral change to the status quo, and maintains informal ties and defence support for Taiwan.
The Iran war – besides a number of economic issues including tariffs, AI chip regulation and critical minerals – is expected to figure prominently in the Trump-Xi meeting.

EU sanctions Hamas leaders, Israeli settlers, but shelves stronger economic pressure

AP
Brussels, May 11: The European Union reached a unanimous political agreement Monday to issue new sanctions on Hamas leaders and the Israeli settler movement, top European diplomats said, after years of deadlock and growing popular pressure sparked by the carnage in Gaza.
EU's foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said in a social media post after a meeting in Brussels on Monday of the 27-nation bloc's foreign ministers that extremism and violence should carry consequences. "It was high time we move from deadlock to delivery," she said.
The group failed to endorse even stronger measures pushed by some European governments and did not immediately release details of the new measures, but French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot said the ministers had decided to sanction Hamas leaders and both leaders and organisations in the Israeli settler movement in the West Bank. "The European Union is sanctioning today the main Israeli organizations guilty of supporting the extremist and violent colonization of the West Bank, as well as their leaders. These most serious and intolerable acts must cease without delay," he said in a post Monday on social media. "It is sanctioning the main leaders of Hamas, responsible for the worst antisemitic massacre in our history since the Shoah during which 51 French people lost their lives, a terrorist movement that must imperatively be disarmed and excluded from any participation in the future of Palestine," Barrot said.

8 boxers move to finals of Asian Boxing U17 C'ships

PTI
Tashkent, May 11: India's U-17 girls continued their strong run at the Asian Championships with eight boxers advancing to the finals here on Monday.
Rakhi (46kg), Khushi Chand (48kg), Navya (57kg), Diya (63kg), Himanshi (70kg), Jyoti (75kg), Vanshika (80kg) and Gurseerat Kaur (80+kg) moved to the finals with contrasting wins.
While four boxers -- Mamta Murlidhar (52kg), Manjunath Lamani (54kg), Ishika (60kg), Harnoor Kaur (66kg) -- lost their respective semifinals to sign off with bronze medals.

Sports ministry show-causes BFI for ambiguous selection policy, other violations

PTI

New Delhi, May 11: The Sports Ministry on Monday issued a showcause notice to the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) for its "ambiguous" selection policy that "does not appear to be transparent" and failure to make critical appointments like the High Performance Director despite reminders.
The BFI has been given a week's time to respond to the notice, a well-placed source told PTI.
The notice was issued a day after the Sports Authority of India (SAI) asked the BFI to suspend an assessment camp in Patiala to pick boxers for the upcoming Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games this year.
The ministry said the criteria governing entry into the national camp



through the "second pathway" of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Cup has not been clearly articulated by the BFI.
The tournament in question took place in April at the Army Sports Institute in Pune where the SAI alleges,

sanction to a camp in which boxers from a "closed" tournament had been brought in under a panel of coaches who did not satisfy the criteria for qualification and experience.
The Ministry said the BFI has also failed to appoint a High Performance Director, despite repeated reminders. Last year, it had been made mandatory for NSFs to set aside Rs 10 crore for this position.
The BFI also stands accused of not including Sports Authority of India's Director General or his nominee in the selection committee for appointing coaches and support staff as mandated by the ministry.
The BFI is also not adhering to timelines prescribed for submission of proposals for international training and competition, according to the Ministry notice.

UK sanctions 12 Iran-linked people, entities

AFP
London, May 11: Britain on Monday slapped sanctions on a dozen Iran-linked individuals and entities accused of involvement in "hostile activities" by Tehran targeting the UK or other countries.
Updating its official sanctions list, the Foreign Office in London imposed the UK travel bans and asset freezes on nine people, two shadow banking exchange houses and the allegedly criminal Zindashti network. The UK government had already sanctioned its alleged leader, Naji Ibrahim Sharifi-Zindashti, in 2024 alongside the United States, labelling him the head of international drug and trafficking cartel. The European Union sanctioned his network last year, with London, Washington and Brussels all claiming it is connected to Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security and accusing it of conducting assassination and kidnapping operations against Tehran's critics.

Nitin Menon remains only Indian in ICC Elite Panel of Umpires

PTI
Dubai, May 11: Nitin Menon remains the only Indian in the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires after the governing body on Monday named an unchanged team of match officials for the 2026-27 international season following its annual review.
Following a comprehensive assessment by its Umpire Selection Panel, the International Cricket Council (ICC) retained the existing group of elite umpires and match referees.
Menon has been part of the Elite Panel since 2020. Former India pacer Javagal Srinath remains the only Indian in the Elite Panel of Match Referees.
"The decision to retain the Emirates ICC Elite Panels for the 2026-27 season reflects the consistency and high standards that have come to define officiating at the international level," ICC CEO, Sanjog Gupta said in a release.
"What stands out is not just the quality of decision-making, but the ability to operate with clarity and confidence in high-pressure situations, across formats and conditions. That consistency provides assurance to players, teams and fans alike."
"On behalf of the ICC, I would like to congratulate all



members of the panels on their re-selection."
The Umpire Selection Panel, comprising ICC General Manager – Cricket Wasim Khan (Chair), former English Premier League referee Mike Riley, former international umpire and umpire coach Peter Manuel, and former international player and commentator Sanjay Manjrekar, considered the performances of umpires and referees from across the international game before deciding to retain the existing panel.
ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees (2026-27): Jeff Crowe (New

Zealand), Ranjan Madugalle (Sri Lanka), Andrew Pycroft (Zimbabwe), Richie Richardson (West Indies), Javagal Srinath (India).
ICC Elite Panel of Umpires (2026-27): Kumar Dharmaseena (Sri Lanka), Christopher Gaffaney (New Zealand), Adrian Holdstock (South Africa), Richard Illingworth (England), Richard Kettleborough (England), Nitin Menon (India), Allahuddin Paleker (South Africa), Ahsan Raza (Pakistan), Paul Reiffel (Australia), Sharfudoula Ibne Shahid (Bangladesh), Rodney Tucker (Australia), Alex Wharf (England).

Movies Schedule

Tuesday, 12th May

01	BHOOTH BANGLA (UA/16+)	Hindi - 10:45 AM, 06:30 PM
02	Michael (UA/13+)	English with English Subtitles 02:00 PM
03	The Devil Wears Prada 2 (A)	English with English Subtitles 03:00 PM
04	Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A)	Hindi - 02:05 PM
05	THE SHEEP DETECTIVES (UA/7+)	English - 04:45 PM
06	DAADI KI SHADI (U)	Hindi - 11:05 AM, 07:05 PM
07	MORTAL KOMBAT II (A)	English Atmos with English Subtitles - 05:00 PM Hindi - 12:30 PM

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