



J&K to observe Eid-ul-Adha today

LG Sinha, CM Omar, Dr Farooq, ministers, political, religious leaders extend greetings



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 26: Jammu and Kashmir is all set to observe Eid-ul-Adha, the festival of sacrifice, on Wednesday.

Thousands of people are expected to offer congregational Eid prayers at Eidgahs, mosques and shrines across J&K.

The largest gathering, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), is likely to be held at the revered Hazratbal Shrine on the outskirts of Srinagar city. Large congregations are also expected at Eidgahs in various district headquarters.

Following the prayers, people will sacrifice sheep and other animals to mark the occasion. Eid-ul-Adha, one of the most significant festivals in Islam, commemorates the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) to sacrifice his son in obedience to the command of Allah.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj

Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and others have extended heartiest greetings to the people on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha while extending the greetings said that Eid-ul-Adha symbolizes sacrifice, unity and brotherhood, urging people to embrace compassion, forgiveness and harmony.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah highlighted the teachings of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS), stating that Eid promotes sacrifice, generosity and communal harmony. He also urged people to support the underprivileged.

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah also extended greetings, stressing compassion, equality and responsibility towards the needy, while praying for peace and prosperity in the region.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq extended | More on P6

LG Sinha chairs JKAACL meet Approves affiliation for Calligraphy Course, new Academy logo with 5 official languages

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 26: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting of the Central Committee of Jammu Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), at Lok Bhavan.

The meeting was attended by Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Shailendra Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Dr Mandeeep K Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary Culture; Ram



Niwass Sharma, Commissioner Secretary, Higher Education Department; Harvinder Kour, Secretary JKAACL; Dr Satish Vimal; Prof Bashir Bashir, and Principals of Institute of Music and Fine Arts, University of Jammu and University of Kashmir.

The Central Committee granted in-principle approval to several key proposals, including affiliation for continuing Calligraphy Course, Annual Plan of Expenditure for the FY 2026-27 and the designing of a new Academy logo, which will feature all five official

languages of Jammu Kashmir.

The Lieutenant Governor directed for accelerating the digitization process of all Academy libraries and implementing a well-crafted plan for capacity building of the Academy artists and staff. He instructed the Academy to expedite the process of accreditation of artists and filling the vacant posts.

The LG emphasised that a comprehensive strategy involving the Education, Sports, and Culture departments must be formulated to promote vibrant cultural activities in schools | More on P6

Eid Mubarak



The news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) extends warmest Eid-ul-Adha greetings to all, especially our esteemed readers and subscribers.

Please note, on account of the Eid-ul-Adha, the KNO office will remain closed for three days on account of the festival holidays. The next news bulletin will be released on Saturday (30/05/2026) evening (InshaAllah).

If there is any breaking news or any significant development that will be updated accordingly.

Team KNO

BSF gave befitting reply to Pak during 'Op Sindoor': Amit Shah

'Strong coordination essential for securing borders; anti-drone systems within 6 months'

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, May 26: Praising Border Security Force (BSF) for playing a key role in 'Operation Sindoor,' Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the force gave a befitting reply to Pakistan and ensured safety of the people living in frontier areas.

Addressing BSF personnel at the Sanchu Border Outpost along the India-Pakistan border in Rajasthan's Bikaner district, Shah, according to



the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "I want to appreciate the BSF

personnel for the role they played during Operation Sindoor. | More on P6

MEA dismisses China-Pak remarks on J&K, Ladakh

'India doesn't accept unwarranted references'

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, May 26: The Government of India on Tuesday rejected references to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh made in a joint statement by China and Pakistan, asserting that both regions are integral parts of India.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said India does not accept "unwarranted references" to its internal matters, reiterating that no other country has any locus standi to



comment on issues related to the Union Territories.

"The Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh have been, are and will always remain integral and inalienable parts of India," Jaiswal said, adding that | More on P6

Intensify efforts to dismantle terror ecosystem: DGP

Chairs high level meet, reviews security arrangements for Eid-Ul-Adha, Amarnath Yatra

KNO Desk

Srinagar, May 26: Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat on Tuesday directed the field formations to intensify efforts to dismantle the terror ecosystem and strengthen area domination along the Amarnath pilgrimage routes.

Chairing a high-level meeting here to review security arrangements for upcoming Eid-Ul-Adha and forthcoming Amarnath Yatra-2026, DGP Prabhat, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Field formations should intensify efforts aimed at dismantling the terror ecosystem and strengthening area domination along the Amarnath pilgrimage routes."

"The officers present in then meeting assured the chair that the highest level of coordination, preparedness, and operational efficiency will | More on P6

Budgam minor's rape and murder

CM Omar meets bereaved family; assures justice, speedy trial



For humanity's sake, lawyers should not defend accused: Residents

Naveed Ul Haq Ganaiee

Budgam, May 26: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday visited Galwanpora village in central Kashmir's Budgam district to express condolences with the bereaved

family of the minor girl who was raped and murdered, even as locals demanded a fast-track trial and strict punishment for the accused involved in the crime.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Chief Minister met the family members and assured them of justice. His visit comes following the killing of the 12-year-old girl whose body was recovered | More on P6

Quad backs action against terrorism, condemns Pahalgam attack



Sajid Raina

New Delhi, May 26: The QUAD grouping, comprising India, the United States, Japan, and Australia, on Tuesday strongly condemned the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror attack and reiterated its commitment to a "free and open Indo-Pacific," while expressing concern over coercive actions and rising tensions in key maritime regions.

In a joint statement issued after the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi under India's chairmanship,

the grouping — comprising India, the United States, Japan and Australia, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO),—called for adherence to international law and peaceful resolution of disputes in the Indo-Pacific region.

The ministers said peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific depended on respecting sovereignty, maintaining freedom of navigation and resolving disputes without the use of force.

The statement criticised attempts to alter the status quo through coercive | More on P6

Ahead of Eid

J&K Bank records 12.22 cr transactions worth Rs 15,035 cr

Highest-ever single-day performance on May 25

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, May 26: Jammu & Kashmir Bank witnessed a surge in digital banking activity during the festive week leading up to Eid-ul-Azha, processing over 12,22,98,022 (12.22 crore) transactions worth Rs 15,035.86 crore between May 19 and May 26, 2026.

According to official data available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Bank recorded its highest-ever single-day performance on May 25, when customers carried out 1,69,49,767 (nearly 1.69 crore) transactions worth Rs 2,848.62 crore, marking a new benchmark in its digital banking history.

On the peak day, mPay Delight Plus handled 52.34 lakh transactions worth Rs 1,149.65 crore, while | More on P6

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

Wishing The People of Jammu and Kashmir

Eid-ul-Azha Mubarak

Omar Abdullah
Chief Minister, J&K

DIPK-1656/26 | Dated: 26. 05. 2026

Deputy CM extends Eid-ul-Adha greetings



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 26: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Tuesday,

extended warm Eid-ul-Adha greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. On the auspicious occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the occasion

holds immense religious and cultural significance for Muslims across the world and is celebrated with the highest fervour and gaiety across Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the festival symbolizes sacrifice, discipline, devotion and complete surrender to the will of the Almighty, while also inspiring the people to uphold the values of compassion, generosity and brotherhood. The Deputy Chief Minister observed that Jammu and Kashmir has always been a shining example of mutual understanding, communal harmony and respect for all faiths, adding that its people have consistently upheld the spirit of brotherhood, love and togetherness. He prayed for peace, prosperity and progress for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sakeena Itoo, Javed Rana, Javid Dar extends Eid-ul-Adha greetings

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, MAY 26: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar Tuesday extended warm greetings on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Adha.

As per an official statement, in her message, the Minister conveyed heartfelt wishes to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, praying that the blessed occasion brings peace, prosperity, happiness and good health to every household.

Sakeena Itoo said that Eid-ul-Adha symbolizes the spirit of sacrifice, compassion, brotherhood and selfless service to humanity. She expressed hope that the festival would further



strengthen the bonds of communal harmony, unity and togetherness across J&K for which our region is known. The Minister also prayed for continued peace, progress and wellbeing of the people and wished everyone a joyous and blessed Eid-ul-Adha. In his message, the Minister Rana said that Eid-ul-Azha reflects the values of benevolence, generosity and devotion, inspiring the people to strengthen the spirit of mutual respect and brotherhood in society.

"I hope that this auspicious occasion further enhances the atmosphere of harmony and togetherness

and serves as a beacon of peace, prosperity and development for the people of Jammu and Kashmir," the Minister said.

Javed Rana prayed for lasting peace, progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed hope that the festival would reinforce communal harmony, amity and social cohesion among all sections of the society. The Minister also urged the people to celebrate the festival with a spirit of unity, compassion and care for the underprivileged, in keeping with the true essence of Eid-ul-Azha.

The Minister, Javid Dar, expressed hope that the

festival would further enthrone harmony, compassion and strengthen the fabric of peace in the society. In his message, the Minister said that Eid-ul-Adha is a sacred occasion that symbolizes the timeless values of sacrifice, generosity, empathy and devotion. He said the festival offers an opportunity to reflect upon the importance of unity, brotherhood and mutual respect while fostering a spirit of togetherness among people from all walks of life.

"May this blessed festival usher in peace, prosperity and happiness in every home and illuminate our lives with hope, positivity and compassion," the Minister said. The Minister also wished for the well-being, good health and continued success of the people. He urged the people to celebrate the festival with a spirit of love, sharing and compassion while remembering the less privileged sections of society and extending support to those in need.

MLA Beerwah, DC Budgam inaugurate multipurpose playfield at Watalpora

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, MAY 26: MLA Beerwah, Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani, and the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Tuesday inaugurated a state-of-the-art multipurpose playfield at Watalpora in the Beerwah sub-division.

The project, as per an official statement, was spearheaded by the Department of Rural Development (RD) & Panchayati Raj, ensuring high-quality asset creation for the local community.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Beerwah, said that sports infrastructure plays a vital role in channelizing the energy of youth towards constructive and healthy activities. He emphasized that the newly established playfield will provide a much-needed platform for local talent to flourish and promote a culture of sports and discipline among the younger generation.

The Deputy Commissioner Budgam, while addressing the gathering, said that District administration is focused towards equitable development and youth empowerment.

He emphasized that such facilities will go a long way in fostering sportsmanship and keeping local youth away from negative influences.

He further stated that the administration remains focused on creating quality public assets that directly benefit the community.

The event witnessed a massive gathering of local residents and prominent citizens of the area.

Among others present on the occasion were Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Beerwah, Toufeeq Gazi; Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD); Tehsildar Magam; Block Development Officer (BDO); alongside several other senior officials from the line departments.

Public outreach programme held at Magam Budgam

DC focuses on Civic Development, Public Welfare, Grassroots Governance



KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, MAY 26: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Tuesday chaired a Mega Public Outreach Programme at Town Hall, Magam.

The outreach programme, as per an official statement, witnessed enthusiastic participation from prominent citizens, traders, Ex-PRI members, former councillors and residents from Kanihama, Watamagam, Shippora, Makhama, Burden, SK Pora, Panchas, Narbal, Mazhama, Batapora and several adjoining areas, who projected a range of developmental concerns and public grievances before the district administration.

During the interaction, the participants highlighted several pressing issues related to infrastructure development, civic amenities and public welfare. Among the major concerns raised were drinking water scarcity. Some localities, immediate macadamization of roads, to improve

connectivity and commuter safety, and the need for uninterrupted power supply along with installation of dedicated electricity meters for better load management.

The locals also demanded establishment of designated parking spaces to decongest the main market area, installation of additional streetlights to facilitate smooth business activities during evening hours, construction of public washroom facilities for tourists and shopkeepers, and strengthening of sanitation and drainage systems.

Concerns regarding the increasing stray dog menace were also brought into notice during the programme.

Addressing the gathering, the DC said the District administration is committed towards the holistic and planned development of Magam Town and adjoining areas.

He assured the participants that all genuine grievances and developmental demands would be addressed in a phased and time-bound manner.

He further stressed the importance of coordinated efforts between the administration and the public for effective execution of developmental works.

The DC urged the citizens to actively cooperate with line departments in maintaining cleanliness, proper waste disposal practices and safeguarding public assets for sustainable development of the area.

On the occasion, the DC also Calls for Collective Efforts towards building a drug-free society. He further called upon parents, teachers, religious leaders, civil society members and community representatives to join hands with the administration in building a drug-free society.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

NO: T-1/EEA/1452-56

Email: rb-awantipora@jk.gov.in

Dated: 26/05/2026

Extension Notice

Subject: -

1. Repairing/Maintenance of FCI Godown at 110 BN CRPF Lethpora Premises under SANJY -2026-27.

Reference: -

1. This office e-NIT No. 17/EEA/R&B of 2026 -27/1317-27 Dated 20-05-2026.

The critical dates for the above noted Work is hereby extended as under:

1 Bid Submission End Date 04-05-06-2026 up to 4.00 P.M.
2 Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online) 05-05-06-2026 up to 12.00 P.M.

All other terms & Conditions shall remain same as per above mentioned NIT.

Sd/-
Technical officer

DIPK-1623/26

Dated: 26-05-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Awantipora

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR UT OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) MECHANICAL DIVISION NORTH KASHMIR BARAMULLA

(NOTICE INVITING TENDERS)

e-NIT No: - R&B/MDNK/NIT/07 of 2026-27 Dated: 25-05-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited in two-cover system (Technical and Financial) from OEM/ Turnkey Solution Providers, Experienced firms having sufficient experience in the management of Municipal Waste Water and duly registered with J&K State Govt./ CPWD/ Railways/ other State/Central Governments for the below mentioned work: -

S. No.	Name of work	Cost of Tender Doc. (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Lakhs)	Est. cost (in Lacs)	Time of Completion (in months)	Tender Opening Authority	Position of Funds
1.	Detailed Design, Drawing, Construction, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 100 KLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) based on MBR Technology to be Installed at Transit Accommodation Natnusa Kupwara on Turnkey Basis with DLP of 2 years and subsequent Comprehensive Maintenance of the Plant for 03 Years along with the operation of the Plant during the 05 Years.	5500	Rs 4.76	Rs 238.00	06	Superintending Engineer, R&B Circle Kupwara	Available with intending department

Position of AAA: Authorization conveyed vide no. 13030/21/2022-S (JKL) (Vol.II), Dated:- 05.08.2024 and No: 13030/21/2022-S (JKL), Dated: 08.08.2024 by the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Affairs.

Position of TS: Accorded by Chief Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Engineering Department, Kashmir vide order no. MHED/KTS/174 Dt: -18.02.2026

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per below schedule.

S. No.	Particulars	Critical Dates	
	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	25-05-2026	
	Pre bid meeting	30-05-2026 (1100 Hrs)	
	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From	25-05-2026 (18:00 Hrs)
		To	15-06-2026 (18:00 Hrs)
3.	Bid Submission Start Date	From	04-06-2026 (10:00 Hrs)
	Bid Submission End Date	To	15-06-2026 (18:00 Hrs)
	Date and time of opening of technical bid (online)	16-06-2026 (14:00 Hrs) in the office of Superintending Engineer, R&B Circle Kupwara	

DIPK-1644/26

Dated: 26-05-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Mechanical Division
North Kashmir

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR Department of Animal Husbandry, Jammu

E-mail: director-andj@jk.gov.in Ph.0191-2505552,2505247,2502252(Fax)Gole Pully, TalabTilloo, Jammu -180002

FINAL NOTICE

Mr.Skinder Paul,

S/o Sh. Satpaul Sharma,

R/o Kalaspur, Kathua.

No:- DAHJ/Adm-125/2024-05/2340-43 - Dated:- 22-05-2026

Sub:- Appointment of Veterinary Pharmacist (Division/District Cadres) in Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu - Cancellation of appointment thereof.

Whereas, you were appointed as Veterinary Pharmacist (District Cadre, Udhampur) in Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu vide Order No:- 105-DAHJ of 2026 dated:- 07.04.2026; and

Whereas, you were supposed to report to Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu within the stipulated period of twenty one (21) days from the date of issuance of appointment order; and

Whereas, you fail to report/join in the Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu within the stipulated period of twenty one (21) days.

Now, therefore, through the medium of this Notice, you are directed to report to Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu, within seven days from the date of issuance of this notice, failing which your appointment order will be cancelled ab-initio.

DIPK-1614/26

Dated: 26-05-2026

Dr. Sanjay Gupta
Animal Husbandry Deptt., Jammu

CS reviews digitization, modernization of land records progress

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 26: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Tuesday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress achieved under the ongoing digitization and modernization of land records across Jammu and Kashmir, with a strong emphasis on ensuring accurate, transparent and technology-driven revenue administration in the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Revenue; Secretary, Revenue; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir; Commissioner, Survey & Land Records; Inspector General, Registration; State Informatics Officer (SIO), NIC and other senior officers, while all the Deputy Commissioners participated through video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the significance of correct and updated land records for the effective implementation of welfare schemes and facilitating quick access to institutional credit through integration with the Unified Lending Interface (ULI) and AgriStack initiatives.

He observed that the successful digitization of land records would play a transformative role in strengthening governance, improving service delivery and empowering farmers through seamless access to benefits and financial services.

The Chief Secretary directed the concerned Tehsildars to certify that no backlog mutations remain pending in their respective jurisdictions. He



further called for the freezing of Jamabandis by the Tehsildars, Sub-Divisional Magistrates and eventually the Deputy Commissioners in the coming days to ensure that the authentic and reliable digitized records are put in public domain for its utilization by citizens here.

To accelerate the process of rectification and updation of records, the Chief Secretary directed for designation of Prabhari Officers in consultation with the Financial Commissioner (Revenue). These officers would be entrusted with exclusive responsibility of handholding districts and ensuring timely correction and validation of records.

Emphasizing the need for a clear roadmap for implementation of AgriStack components, the Chief Secretary directed that the exercise should be taken up immediately after completion of digitization in the identified areas and linked with the RBI's ULI platform to facilitate easy credit access for farmers. He urged the Settlement Commissioner to lead the capacity building programme

for field staff across districts and ensure completion of the process in a time-bound manner.

The Chief Secretary also stressed upon transitioning fully towards digital crop surveys during the upcoming agricultural seasons for effective implementation of AgriStack. He further directed the Financial Commissioner (Revenue) to evolve a mechanism for tracing the chain of custody of missing Mussavisi and revenue records and initiate strict action against officials found responsible for any tampering or disappearance of records.

Commending the Revenue Department for undertaking the monumental task of digitization and achieving substantial progress, the Chief Secretary advised the officers to make concerted efforts to complete all components within the stipulated timelines. He also assured full support in resolving genuine issues being faced by the field functionaries engaged in the exercise. Regarding grievance collection and rectification of records, the meeting was informed that more than

14.49 lakh grievances have been received till date, out of which over 14.27 lakh non-quasi judicial grievances have already been resolved.

Reviewing the progress in incorporation of backlog mutations, the Chief Secretary was informed that nearly 95 percent of the target has been achieved with more than 6.47 lakh backlog mutations completed so far.

The meeting also reviewed the functioning of the JK Zameen Sudhaar Portal aimed at modernization and digitization of land records and enhancing public access to revenue records and grievance redressal services.

Regarding ULPIN generation, it was given out that there has been a substantial increase in generation of Unique Land Parcel Identification Numbers between March and May 2026, with over 25 lakh ULPINs generated so far and coverage extended to thousands of villages across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the implementation of the Farmer Registry and Digital Crop Survey initiatives being carried out under

the AgriStack framework for creation of dynamic and continuously updated Records of Rights and authenticated farmer databases. He emphasized the importance of Aadhaar-linked verification and accurate field-level validation for ensuring reliability of data.

While reviewing the progress under the SVAMITVA scheme, the meeting was informed that drone surveys and GIS-based mapping of rural abadi areas had been carried out on a large scale and property cards are being generated and distributed among beneficiaries in a phased manner.

The Chief Secretary directed all Deputy Commissioners to personally monitor locking and freezing of Jamabandis, disposal of grievances, verification of digitized records and completion of pending targets within the prescribed timelines. He also stressed upon maintaining high standards of data accuracy and ensuring seamless integration among all digital land governance platforms for efficient public service delivery in a hassle-free manner.

Gulmarg Gondola to remain shut for around a week: Dir Tourism

RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, May 26: Following the technical snag in the Gulmarg Gondola service, Director Tourism Kashmir, Syed Qamar Sajad, who also holds the additional charge of Managing Director of the J&K Cable Car Corporation, on Tuesday said the Gondola operations will remain suspended for around a week to ensure the safety and security of tourists.

He said a technical fault developed in the primary gearbox at the Kondori station, commonly referred to as "G2", forcing authorities to suspend operations and launch a rescue mission for stranded tourists.

"With regret, we announce that the Gondola will remain closed for around a week in the interest of tourists' safety. Once restoration work is completed, operations will resume. There will be no compromise on safety and security," Director Qamar said.

He said authorities were left with two options after the snag surfaced — either to repair the faulty gearbox or carry out an emergency vertical rescue operation to evacuate tourists stranded mid-air.

"After detailed discussions, our priority was to safeguard the lives of tourists. We decided to immediately launch the rescue operation through the vertical rescue system," he said.

He said six specialised rescue teams were constituted and deployed across the uphill, middle and downhill sections of the



Gondola line. "The operation was conducted in coordination with J&K Police, SDRF and other agencies."

"All tourists were evacuated safely and are back enjoying their stay in Gulmarg," he said.

Sajad further said the damaged gearbox weighs around 3.6 tonnes and replacing it with a spare unit available with the corporation may take nearly five to seven days. He added that an internal technical committee has also been constituted to investigate the reasons behind the fault and examine whether any other technical issues contributed to the incident.

"We will try our best to restore the service at the earliest, but it may take around four to seven days to get operations back on track," he said.

Calling the Gondola one of Kashmir's biggest tourist attractions, especially during winter, Sajad said the administration remains committed to maintaining the highest safety standards for visitors—(KNO)

KCC&I hails swift multi-agency rescue after mid-air snag

KNO

Srinagar, May 26: The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCC&I) on Tuesday appreciated the Jammu and Kashmir administration and multiple agencies for the swift and coordinated rescue of over 300 tourists stranded in the Gulmarg Gondola after a technical snag halted operations mid-air.

KCC&I President Javid Ahmad Tenga said the seven-hour evacuation reflected strong emergency preparedness and effective inter-agency coordination, reinforcing confidence in Kashmir as a safe tourism destination.

In a statement, the chamber said the successful evacuation highlighted the preparedness, efficiency, and commitment of the Jammu and Kashmir administration in safeguarding visitors and managing emergencies at key tourist destinations.

Tenga said the operation

underscored the coordinated efforts of multiple agencies, including the NDRF, SDRF, J&K Police, the Indian Army's Chinara Corps, district administration and the Tourism Department, whose timely intervention ensured the safe evacuation of all stranded passengers.

He also appreciated the on-ground presence of senior officials, police leadership, and ministers who supervised rescue efforts and ensured smooth coordination during the emergency.

"The successful rescue operation reflects the administration's preparedness and reinforces confidence in Kashmir as a safe and responsible tourism destination," Tenga said.

He added that tourism remains the backbone of Kashmir's economy, stressing the need for continuous technical assessments and preventive measures to strengthen safety standards across tourism infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

Eid-ul-Adha Schools in Kashmir to remain closed till Friday

DSEK announces special holiday on May-29

RIYAZ BHAT

Srinagar, May 26: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday announced that all schools in Kashmir region will remain closed from Wednesday to Friday on account of Eid-ul-Adha. Education Minister Sakina Itoo stated that schools will observe a three-day holiday for the occasion.

In the meantime, Director of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) in an

order said, "In view of celebrations on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, all Government schools as well as recognized Private Schools of Kashmir Division shall observe special holiday on 29-05-2026." Meanwhile, the General Administration Department has also sanctioned one-day Special Casual Leave for employees of the UT in view of Eid-ul-Adha.

The leave can be availed by those wishing to observe the festival—(KNO)

Budgam horror is a foundational fracture in our society: MLA Pathania

KNO

Jammu, May 26: Senior BJP leader and MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia Pathania on Tuesday termed the alleged rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl in Budgam a "barbaric and unimaginable" crime, demanding capital punishment for the accused and swift justice through fast-track courts.

He said the incident was not merely a crime against a single family, but a devastating commentary on the moral decay creeping into society. He urged collective efforts to ensure Jammu and Kashmir remains safe for women and children.

In a statement, Pathania said, "My heart bleeds and my head hangs in absolute, unmitigated shame. A twelve-year-old child—an innocent soul who left her home not to wander into danger, but to seek spiritual



solace at a religious sermon—has been subjected to the most barbaric, unimaginable horrors of rape and murder."

He added, "This is not just a crime against one family; this is a foundational fracture in our civilization. It is a devastating, sickening commentary on the moral decay creeping into our

society. How have we fallen so low? How have we become a society where a child cannot find safety even on a path leading to God?" While commending law enforcement agencies for swiftly apprehending a primary suspect, Pathania emphasized that routine procedures are not enough. "Justice delayed in a case of this magnitude is justice denied," he noted.

"On behalf of every conscientious citizen of Jammu and Kashmir, and indeed the entire country, I demand nothing less than capital punishment—the gallows—for the perpetrators of this demonic act. The fast-track courts must act with unprecedented urgency. The punishment must be swift, it must be severe, and it must serve as a chilling deterrent."

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

DLSA Budgam orders removal of victim's photos from social media

NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIEE

Budgam, May 26: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Budgam on Tuesday directed all social media platforms to immediately remove photographs of the minor victim in the recent Budgam rape and murder case, warning of strict legal action against violators.

According to an order issued by the Secretary/Sub Judge, DLSA Budgam, authorities observed that photographs of the victim from Gulwanpora, Budgam, were being uploaded and circulated on various social media platforms, in violation of provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act and the victim's right to privacy.

The order stated that revealing the

identity of the victim is a punishable offence under law.

"As such, all social media platforms and the general public are informed through this order to refrain from revealing the identity of the victim or circulating her photographs, failing which violators shall be booked under the law," the order reads.

The DLSA further directed all social media platforms to remove the victim's photographs immediately.

Meanwhile, the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Budgam has been directed to register FIRs against individuals who continue to upload or circulate the victim's photographs despite the order—(KNO)

Cherry harvesting in full swing in Ganderbal

RAJA SYED RATHER

Ganderbal, May: Cherry harvesting has begun across several orchard-rich areas of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district, including Gutlibagh, Chanduna Wari, Surfraw and nearby villages, bringing fresh activity to orchards as growers and labourers remain busy plucking, sorting and packing the fruit for markets.

Cherry cultivation continues to be one of the main sources of livelihood for hundreds of families associated with the horticulture sector in the district. However, this year's harvest season has been partially affected by continuous rains and recent hailstorms, which damaged cherries and tree branches in several areas.

Growers said that they were expecting a bumper crop this season after taking all necessary measures, including timely spraying of pesticides and use of fertilisers, but the untimely weather caused significant losses.

"We suffered losses after the hailstorm damaged a portion of the cherries, but we are hopeful that the remaining crop will mature properly and fetch good prices in the market," said Bashir Ahmad, an orchard owner

from Gutlibagh.

Another grower, Ghulam Ahmad from Waliwar, said weather conditions during the coming weeks would play a crucial role in determining the quality of the harvest. "The cherries are now ripening quickly, and if the weather remains stable, we expect a much better outcome compared to the initial fears after the storm," he said.

Mohammad Shafi, a farmer from Surfraw, said harvesting activities are currently underway in full swing across orchards. "Labourers are working from morning till evening. This season may not be perfect because of the hailstorm, but the quality of the remaining fruit looks promising," he added.

Farmers said only a limited quantity of cherries is reaching Valley markets due to the crop damage, while many orchard owners are struggling to meet labour expenses because of reduced production.

The affected growers have appealed to the horticulture department and district administration to assess the losses and provide timely compensation and better market facilities for orchardists affected by weather-related damage—(KNO)

NOTICE

I, Muneeb Ahmed Dar, S/o Abdul Gaffar Dar, R/o Old Barzulla, hereby state that my name and my father's name has been incorrectly mentioned in my Driving Licence bearing No. JK-0420090001312 as:

Incorrect Name: MUNEEB AHMAD DAR
Correct Name: MUNEEB AHMED DAR
and Incorrect Father's Name: DAR AB GAFFER

Correct Father's Name: ABDUL GAFFAR DAR

That the above correction pertains only to spelling/typographical errors and not to any change of identity.

Henceforth, I shall be known and identified by the corrected name mentioned above for all official purposes and records.

If any person has any objection regarding this correction, the same may be conveyed within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Place: BARZULLA
Date: 27-05-2026

Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) Last Sermon

Mount Arafat reaches about 70 m (230 ft) in height, and is also known as the "Mount of Mercy" (Jabal Ar-Ramah). According to some Islamic tradition, the hill is the place where the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stood and delivered the Farewell Sermon on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah 10 AH

This sermon was delivered on the Ninth Day of Dhul Hijjah 10 AH in the 'Uranah valley of Mount Arafat' (in Mecca). After praising and thanking Allah, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"O People, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and TAKE THESE WORDS TO THOSE WHO COULD NOT BE PRESENT HERE TODAY.

O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your LORD, and that HE will indeed reckon your deeds. ALLAH has forbidden you to take usury (interest), therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. Allah has Judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to



Abbas ibn 'Abd'al Muttalib (Prophet's uncle) shall henceforth be waived...

Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People, it is true that you have certain

rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind

to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with any one of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.

O People, listen to me in earnest, worship ALLAH, say your five daily prayers (Salah),

fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves.

Remember, one day you will appear before ALLAH and answer your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People, NO PROPHET OR APOSTLE WILL COME AFTER ME AND NO NEW FAITH WILL BE BORN. Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the QURAN and my example, the SUNNAH and if you follow these you will never go astray.

All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O ALLAH, that I have conveyed your message to your people".

Third India-Nordic Summit

Advancing Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership

Press Information Bureau

India and the Nordic countries launched a multidimensional partnership during the First India-Nordic Summit in 2018. The partnership focuses on innovation, green technologies, clean energy, and sustainable development. It aims to support India's economic growth, promote sustainable development pathways, strengthen skilling and talent development, and foster a vibrant innovation ecosystem. India can also leverage Nordic expertise and technology transfers through cooperation in renewable energy and climate action initiatives. The Third India-Nordic Summit, held in Oslo, on 19 May 2026, further advanced this strategic partnership. The summit strengthened cooperation in trade, investment, digital innovation, and emerging technologies. Both sides also expanded collaboration in the blue economy, maritime cooperation, STEM research, resilient supply chains, and defence partnerships. Besides economic partnerships, India engages Nordic countries through the soft power tool of diplomacy.

India's Arctic Policy
Alliance with the Nordic nations is an essential component of India's Arctic Policy. Climatic changes in the Arctic, especially the melting of Arctic ice, can hugely impact weather conditions and rainfall patterns including the monsoons. These changes can be highly disruptive for India's economic, food and water security, and the sustainability of over 1300 island territories and maritime features.

India's Arctic policy titled 'India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development' is structured around six pillars: strengthening India's scientific research and cooperation, climate and environmental protection, economic and human development, transportation and connectivity, governance and international cooperation, and national capacity building in the Arctic region.

India's Evolving Engagement with Nordic Countries

India's engagement with the Nordic region has evolved beyond traditional diplomacy into a future-oriented strategic partnership. Shared priorities in green growth, clean technologies, innovation, and sustainable development are driving this transformation. Nordic countries bring advanced technological expertise, while India offers scale, markets, talent, and manufacturing capabilities. Together, the partnership is emerging as a key pillar of India's green transition, digital expansion, Arctic engagement, and resilient economic growth strategy.

Denmark:
The bilateral trade in goods between India and Denmark was USD 2.05 billion in 2025.

India's exports in goods to Denmark was valued at USD 1.06 billion and imports at USD 0.98 billion in the same year. Bilateral trade in services reached USD 4.25 billion; exports from India reached USD 1.9 billion and imports USD 2.3 billion in 2025.

The total value of Indian investments in Denmark is about USD 560 million.

Around 40 Indian companies are present in Denmark in various sectors, including IT, renewable energy and engineering. And around 200 Danish companies have invested in India in sectors such as shipping, renewable energy, environment, agriculture, food processing and smart urban development.

The cumulative direct investment inflows from Denmark to India till 2024 was USD 1.413 billion.

India and Denmark strengthened cultural cooperation through a Cultural Exchange Programme (2022) and initiatives such as the "Silver Treasures from India and Denmark" exhibition.

Major cultural outreach activities during Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav included flag-hoisting, festivals, school programmes, sports workshops, and wide diaspora participation across Denmark reflect the soft power approach.

The International Day of Yoga is widely celebrated across Danish cities, with large-scale participation and flagship events like "Yoga for All" in Copenhagen.

The Indian community of around 21,000 in Denmark actively contributes across professions. Public spaces like Gandhi Plaene (Gandhi Park), Indiakaj (road named after India) and Nehru Road near Aarhus University in Aarhus Denmark reflect the strong people-to-people and cultural ties between the two countries.

In 2026, leaders of India and Denmark discussed strengthening the mobility, partnership and expanding people-to-people exchanges.

Finland:
The volume of bilateral trade in goods with Finland was USD 1.017 billion in 2024-25. India's exports to Finland were valued at USD 356.37 million and imports at USD 660.70 million in the same year.

Bilateral trade in services was USD 1.9 billion in 2025. Investment flows from India to Finland is over USD 2 billion, driven by several significant acquisitions and partnerships. Over 100 Finnish companies have operations in India. Finland's Investments in India has increased to USD 4 billion.

Indian culture has strong visibility in Finland, with yoga centres, performing arts, Indian dance schools, and cultural associations promoting regular events in music, dance, and festivals, supported by the Embassy of India. The Embassy holds regular interaction with Indian students under 'Terve-Namaste' series.

The Indian community in Finland is around 33,000, with a strong presence in the IT sector and around 2,400 students engaged in higher education. Tourism and travel links are growing, with Finnish tourists increasingly visiting destinations like Goa, Kerala, and the Golden Temple, supported by e-visa facilities and direct flights between Helsinki and New Delhi.

In 2026, India and Finland acknowledged the significant contribution of Indian professionals to its technology and innovation ecosystem.

Iceland:
The volume of bilateral trade with Iceland was USD 77.06 million in 2024-25.

India's exports to Iceland were valued at USD 66.01 million and imports at USD 11.05 million in the same year.

Indian culture especially in yoga, classical music, dance, paintings, films and food is popular in Iceland. There are around 600 Indian nationals in Iceland.

In 2026, India and Iceland reviewed cooperation and emphasised strengthening people-to-people contacts, expanding cultural and tourism exchanges and enhancing cooperation in Arctic research.

Norway:
Bilateral trade between India and Norway was USD 1.05 billion in 2024-25.

India exported goods worth USD 630 million and imported goods worth USD 420 million in

the same period.

Trade in services has been around USD 1 billion.

The Government Pension Fund Global (GPGF) of Norway has invested close to USD 28 billion (till December 2025) in Indian capital market

In addition, FDI inflows from Norway during April 2000 to September 2025 was USD 764 million.

India and Norway share close people-to-people ties through an Indian community of around 30,000 people.

Indian students, researchers, and over 40 Indian associations contribute actively to cultural and social life in Norway.

Events like Turbandagen and Oslo Colour Festival reflect the growing influence of Indian culture and soft power in Norway.

Sweden:
Bilateral trade between India and Sweden was USD 6.96 billion in 2024.

The cumulative FDI equity inflows from Sweden from April 2000 to December 2024 was USD 2.596 billion.

Around 280 Swedish companies have business presence in India while number of Indian companies with business presence has increased to 75 in 2024.

Indian cultural traditions like Indian classical music and dance, Yoga, Ayurveda, Indian festivals and cinema, are widely appreciated in Sweden.

The celebration of the International Day of Yoga across Swedish cities demonstrates India's growing cultural influence.

The annual cultural festival Namaste Stockholm attracts thousands of visitors and promotes Indian arts and intercultural exchange.

There are active partnerships between Indian and Swedish universities. Indology studies at Uppsala date back nearly 200 years, showing deep scholarly engagement with Indian civilization.

Sports and cinema also contribute to bilateral ties. In 2021, Indian women's football team visited Sweden, Indian Davis Cup team visited in 2024. Swedish filmmaker Levan Akin received the ICFT-UNESCO Gandhi Medal at International Film Festival of India in 2024.

The Indian diaspora of around 88,000 people plays a major role to help preserve and promote Indian culture.

India and the Nordic countries are building a partnership shaped by innovation, sustainability, and strategic trust. The relationship now extends across clean energy, digital transformation, resilient supply chains, research, and maritime cooperation. Nordic expertise combined with India's scale and talent creates strong opportunities for long-term collaboration. With growing institutional, economic, and cultural linkages, the partnership is gradually emerging as an important model for inclusive, technology-driven, and sustainable global cooperation.

Third Nordic Summit: Future Steps towards a long-term strategic partnership

The Third Nordic Summit, witnessed discussions between India and the Nordic countries. Acknowledging the quadrupling of bilateral trade flows during the last decade, a nearly 200% increase in investment inflows and the positive impact on India's economic growth, India and the Nordic countries have agreed to transform their relationship into a Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership. Under

the initiative, India plans to,

Collaborate with Iceland in geothermal energy and fisheries,

Partner with Norway in the blue economy and Arctic cooperation, and

Engage with Nordic nations in maritime and sustainability sectors.

Besides this, cooperation in advanced manufacturing, defence, telecom, digital technologies, cyber security and health-tech, research and innovation and Arctic and Polar research was also discussed. The partnership supports sustainable development while creating opportunities for economic expansion, technological advancement, and job creation in both India and the Nordic region. The countries also underlined the need for urgent reforms in multilateral institutions and reiterated a united stand against terrorism. The recent India - European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) would usher in a "new golden era" in India-Nordic relations.

Key Outcomes of the Summit

At the Summit, India and the Nordic countries agreed to elevate their ties into a Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership focused on renewable energy, green hydrogen, digital innovation, sustainable manufacturing, and climate action. They also committed to expanding trade, investment, research collaboration, resilient supply chains, and people-to-people exchanges while supporting a rules-based international order and sustainable development goals.

Outcome 1: India-Nordic Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership

The Green Technology and Innovation Strategic partnership will pave way for the use and adoption of sustainable technologies in future, sustainable growth and management, resource use optimisation, and innovation. A strengthening of digital infrastructure will further impact governance and the seamless delivery of services. The outcome will have positive impact on climate change mitigation and the energy security of the country. Besides this, it will also create green jobs, strengthen governance, and enhance trade and investment linkages with Nordic countries. Collaboration in the sustainable use of water, its recycling and better water management will increase the quality of life and support long-term economic growth. Collaborative research and education will also give greater exposure to Indian students, researchers and faculty, as well as enhance the quality of research.

Outcome 2: India-EFTA TEPA: Impact on India-Nordic Relations

The India EFTA TEPA will help to improve market access, reduce trade barriers, encourage trade and investment flows and integrate value chains. The TEPA, along with a strong alliance with the Nordic countries, will support employment creation, innovation and sustainable development.

Outcome 3: Initiatives in Climate Action

The initiative in the space of climate change, is centred on mitigation. Cooperation in this field will not only help address climate-related challenges but also generate green employment opportunities, enhance bilateral trade, and attract greater investment. As a result, it will contribute to building a more sustainable economy and support long-term economic growth.

Outcome 4: India-Nordic Cooperation in the Arctic

The cooperative initiative forms part of India's Arctic policy. Collaboration in polar research has long-term implications for climate systems, environmental protection, sustainability, and on the islands. Addressing climate change and ensuring a stable Arctic are crucial for safeguarding India's monsoon patterns, environmental balance, sustainability, and, most importantly, agricultural productivity.

Outcome 5: Research Collaboration in STEM Areas

The research initiative will contribute to the creation of new employment opportunities, expansion of research and development (R&D), promotion of technology transfer, and strengthening of academic cooperation and research quality. Advancing research in next-generation communication technologies, including 6G, will further boost the digital economy and enhance the country's digital infrastructure.

Outcome 6: Cooperation in Blue Economy

Cooperation in a strong blue economy strengthens economic growth while ensuring sustainability, creating jobs, enhancing trade, and supporting long-term environmental and climate resilience. Blue economy focuses on the sustainable use of ocean and marine resources. Cooperation in the blue economy also contributes to ensuring a stable and secure Indo-Pacific region by promoting sustainable use of ocean resources, strengthening maritime connectivity, and enhancing regional maritime security among partner countries.

Outcome 7: Mobility of Talent:

Collaboration in research and education will provide Indian students, academics, students and researchers with new perspectives and greater exposure to global learning environments. Increased cooperation in research will also enhance the quality and quantity of research output. It will also help to enhance skills, boost economic growth, encourage innovation and businesses and start-ups.

Outcome 8 Collaboration in Defence Production

Developing Defence Industrial Collaboration by allowing 100% FDI in the Indian Defence Industrial Sector will help in technology transfer, research and innovation, will boost domestic defence production, create more employment, increase exports and efficiency of defence production. Moreover, it will help to strengthen defence preparedness.

Towards a Stronger India-Nordic Partnership

The relationship between India and the Nordic countries is evolving and strengthening steadily. It has been reinforced through several bilateral initiatives in recent years. The outcomes of the Summit aim to further elevate this partnership into a Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership. The Summit has provided a strong impetus to deepen cooperation in areas such as long-term energy partnerships, climate change mitigation, trade and investment linkages, digital innovation, the blue economy, maritime cooperation, STEM collaborations, and defence. This growing engagement is further strengthened by the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), which is expected to enhance two-way economic relations between India and the Nordic region while also promoting sustainable economic development. Besides initiatives to strengthen economic partnerships, the soft power approach has further helped in deepening and reinforcing ties.

RAMP Initiative JKEDI Srinagar concludes Management Development Programme-9

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MAY 26: Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Srinagar, successfully concluded the 9th Management Development Programme (MDP-9) under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Initiative at its District Office, Srinagar.

The programme, as per an official statement, focused on building entrepreneurial and managerial capacity among 22 women entrepreneurs from Srinagar. Through structured training modules, participants were equipped with essential skills in business planning, financial management, marketing, and regulatory compliance to establish sustainable and growth-oriented enterprises.

The valedictory ceremony was graced by Shabir Hussain Shah, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Srinagar, and Manager, JKEDI Syed Miftah Andrabi.

Addressing the participants, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI appreciated their active



involvement and enthusiasm throughout the programme. He urged the trainees to leverage the knowledge and skills gained to build scalable businesses and contribute to local economic development. He further emphasized that such capacity-building initiatives under RAMP are crucial for promoting grassroots entrepreneurship and empowering women.

The JKEDI course team provided continuous academic and mentoring support during the training period. Participants expressed deep gratitude to JKEDI for its guidance and for creating a platform that strengthens women-led enterprises in the region.

The RAMP initiative, supported by the Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India, and the World Bank, aims to enhance the performance and competitiveness of MSMEs across J&K.

A detailed discussion was also held regarding arrangements required for the smooth and peaceful conduct of processions and majalis during Muharram-ul-Harram.

The DC reviewed various aspects including scheduled power and water supply, repair and surface levelling of key roads and link roads, timely distribution of ration, LPG and firewood, sanitation measures, installation and restoration of street lights, healthcare facilities, transport and traffic

Eid-ul-Adha, Muharram-ul-Harram arrangements reviewed in Budgam

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, MAY 26: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Tuesday chaired a follow-up review meeting of officers from various departments to assess the arrangements being put in place across the district for Eid-ul-Adha and the ensuing holy month of Muharram-ul-Harram.

During the meeting, the DC, as per an official statement, reviewed preparations related to transport, sanitation, uninterrupted water and power supply, healthcare services, market regulation and availability of essential commodities to ensure smooth observance of the religious occasions.

The DC directed concerned departments to ensure all necessary arrangements are put in place well in advance to facilitate the public and avoid inconvenience during Eid-ul-Adha and Muharram-ul-Harram.

The Health Department was directed to ensure smooth and scheduled power supply, while the Jal Shakti Department was instructed to maintain uninterrupted drinking water supply and ensure availability of water tankers across all subdivisions of the district.

Municipal authorities and Urban Local Bodies were instructed to undertake



management, besides other essential services.

comprehensive sanitation drives around mosques, shrines, Eidgahs and major congregation points in coordination with local committees.

Executive Officers of Municipal Committees were also directed to ensure proper installation and maintenance of street lights well ahead of Muharram.

The Health Department was asked to keep ambulances and medical teams available at major congregation points and during processions and gatherings.

Forest Department was asked to ensure adequate supply of firewood, while the FCS&CA Department was directed to ensure advance distribution of

ration. Cooperatives Department was instructed to make rice, sugar and other essential commodities available through temporary outlets across the district.

Animal and Sheep Husbandry Departments were instructed to ensure adequate availability of poultry and sacrificial animals at notified locations and approved rates for the convenience of the public.

Directions were also issued for proper disposal and scientific management of ofal and animal waste to maintain hygiene and cleanliness.

R&B Department and Urban Local Bodies were directed to complete road repairs, drainage clearance and related works in advance. ARTO Budgam was instructed to formulate a comprehensive transportation plan for major centres across the district.

Emphasising strict market regulation, the DC directed joint market checking teams comprising officials from Revenue, Food Safety, FCS&CA, Municipal Council, Legal Metrology and Police departments to intensify inspections to ensure quality and fair pricing of essential commodities including mutton, poultry, vegetables, fruits, bakery and confectionery items.

Mission YUVA DC Udhampur chairs DLIC meeting, 279 loan cases approved

KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, MAY 26: Deputy Commissioner Mingsha Sherpa Tuesday chaired a meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee under Mission YUVA scheme to evaluate and screen applications submitted under various categories, including Nano Enterprises and MSMEs, for financial assistance.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Jugal Kishore, General Manager DIC Kishore Singh Katoch, Assistant Director Employment Priyanka Gupta, representatives from the banking sector and other concerned officers.

After detailed scrutiny and deliberations, the committee approved 279 cases for financial assistance under Mission YUVA.

While reviewing the progress achieved under the scheme, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to accelerate its implementation through enhanced coordination among all line departments. SDMs were directed to ensure a substantial increase in the number of applications, improve performance and achieve the assigned targets in a time-bound manner.

The DC further instructed the concerned officers to prepare action plans and submit daily progress reports for effective monitoring of the scheme. He also directed the departments and banking institutions to expedite the processes related to approval, sanction and disbursement of loan cases to ensure timely financial support to aspiring entrepreneurs under Mission YUVA.

DC Rajouri conducts surprise inspection of XEN REW Office, reviews tendering process

KT News Desk

RAJOURI, MAY 26: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma Tuesday conducted a surprise inspection of the office of the Executive Engineer Rural Engineering Wing (REW), Rajouri, to review the functioning of the department and assess the progress of developmental works and tendering procedures being undertaken in the district.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, carried out a detailed review of the tendering process and emphasized the need for ensuring complete transparency, accountability and strict adherence to codal formalities at every stage of execution of works.

He directed the concerned officers to formulate proper Bills of Quantities (BOQs) and ensure that tenders are floated and allotted within



the stipulated timelines so that developmental works are initiated without unnecessary delay. He further stressed that all works should be started promptly and completed within the prescribed timelines to ensure timely public benefit and effective utilization of resources.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed the officers to maintain close monitoring of all ongoing works and

ensure that quality standards are strictly maintained during execution.

While interacting with the officers and officials, the Deputy Commissioner reiterated the importance of efficient project management, timely completion of works and transparent implementation for strengthening public trust and improving service delivery at the grassroots level.

DC Kathua reviews District Capex Budget, MLA-CDF, MPLADS works

KT News Desk

KATHUA, MAY 26: Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma Tuesday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of works being executed under the District Capex Budget 2026-27, MLA Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) in the district.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal of the ongoing developmental works across various sectors, including Health, School Education, Rural Development Department (RDD), JPDCL and other departments. He also reviewed the status of works being undertaken under DDC, BDC and PRI grants.

Emphasising the need for timely execution of projects, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, directed all executing agencies to prioritise the completion of ongoing works by ensuring both physical and financial progress within the stipulated timelines. He stressed that the developmental benefits of these projects should reach the public without delay.

During the meeting, it was informed that under the MLA Constituency Development

Fund, a total of 748 works have been accorded administrative approval. Of these, 727 works have been tendered, 713 allotted and 699 works have been started, while 542 works have already been completed during the current financial year.

Reviewing the progress under MPLADS, the meeting was informed that against 47 works sanctioned under the 2023-24 allocation, 37 works have been completed. Similarly, under the 2024-25 and 2025-26 allocations, 140 works have been completed out of a total of 160 sanctioned works. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the progress of preparation of estimates for works proposed under the current fiscal.

The Deputy Commissioner exhorted the executing agencies and concerned departments to ensure creation of quality assets and maintain strict adherence to prescribed standards. He directed the officers to closely monitor the performance of contractors and take appropriate action against those failing to meet quality benchmarks or timelines.

Among others, ADC, Mahima Madan, CPO Ranjeet Thakur, ACD Akhil Sadotra, XEN REW, CEO Kathua and other concerned officers attended the meeting.



Tehsildar Drugmulla reviews arrangements for Annual Urs at Muqam Shahwali

KT News Desk

KUPWARA, MAY 26: on the direction of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, Tehsildar Drugmulla, Syed Basharat Rasool Tuesday conducted a visit to the revered shrine of Hazrat Zeti Shah Wali Sahib (R.A) at Muqam Shahwali Anderhama to review the arrangements being put in place for the smooth observance of the annual Urs scheduled to be held on 30th and 31st May.



During the visit, the Tehsildar was accompanied by officials

of various line departments including PDD, Jal Shakti, Wakf, Rural Development Department (RDD), FCS&CA, Fire & Emergency Services and other concerned departments.

A joint inspection, as per an official statement, was conducted to assess the preparedness and ensure adequate arrangements for the devotees expected to participate in the annual religious congregation.

On the occasion, the Tehsildar took stock of the overall preparations and issued necessary

instructions to the concerned departments for ensuring uninterrupted power and drinking water supply, sanitation measures, availability of essential commodities, fire safety arrangements and other public conveniences for the smooth conduct of the Urs.

The concerned departments were directed to work in close coordination and ensure timely completion of all arrangements to facilitate devotees and ensure the peaceful and successful observance of the annual Urs.

Awareness programme on emotional well-being, mental health, counselling held at GDC Magam

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, MAY 26: SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW), Mission Shakti Budgam, under the supervision of Bilal Ahmad Mir, District Social Welfare Officer, Budgam, organized an awareness programme on Emotional Well-Being, Mental Health and Counselling at Government Degree College (GDC) Magam to promote mental wellness, stress management and psychosocial support among students.

The programme, as per an official statement, commenced with an introductory session by Afroza Ahad, District Mission Coordinator, Mission Shakti Budgam, who elaborated on the objectives and components of Mission Shakti. She highlighted its two major components—Sambal and Samarthyaa—which



focus on the safety, security, empowerment and rehabilitation of women. Afroza Ahad also sensitized the participants about various women-centric schemes and services being implemented under Mission Shakti, including One Stop Centre, Women Helpline

181, Shakti Sadan, SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.

Addressing the gathering, Mutina Rashid, Social Worker, Mental Health Unit, District

Hospital Budgam, delivered an insightful session on emotional well-being and stress management. She emphasized the importance of maintaining emotional balance, adopting healthy coping strategies and seeking timely support during periods of stress and emotional distress.

The technical session on mental health, counselling and stress management was conducted by Aijaz-ul-Asad, who highlighted the importance of mental health awareness among youth. He discussed common mental health concerns, the role of counselling in overcoming psychological challenges and the need to break the stigma associated with seeking professional help. He also shared practical techniques for managing stress and promoting overall psychological well-being.

Awareness programme on Social Welfare Schemes organised in Bhandarwah

KT News Desk

BHANDARWAH, MAY 26: The Social Welfare Department, in collaboration with the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Tuesday organised an awareness programme at Bhandarwah to educate women about various social welfare schemes, particularly those aimed at the welfare, upliftment and empowerment of women.

The programme, as per an official statement, was conducted under the supervision of the Tehsil Social Welfare Officer Bhandarwah, with the objective of spreading awareness among women regarding different government-sponsored welfare initiatives and ensuring wider outreach of beneficiary-oriented schemes at the grassroots level.

A large number of women, participated enthusiastically in the



programme and raised queries regarding various schemes being implemented by the government for women, children, senior citizens, widows and other vulnerable sections of society. Detailed information was provided to the participants regarding eligibility criteria, benefits available under different schemes and the necessary documentation required for availing the benefits.

During the interactive session, participants were encouraged to take maximum advantage of the welfare schemes

and to disseminate awareness among other eligible beneficiaries in their respective areas. Officials stressed the importance of timely registration and proper documentation to ensure smooth access to government assistance.

The programme aimed to strengthen awareness among women about the various welfare initiatives of the government and to ensure that deserving beneficiaries are able to avail the benefits in a timely, transparent and effective manner.

CM Omar Abdullah meets delegations at Raabita

Discussions held on banking, youth development, heritage conservation

KT News Desk

Srinagar, May 26: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday met several delegations at his Public Services and Outreach Office (Raabita) here and held discussions on matters relating to banking, youth development, heritage conservation, and the promotion of art and culture in Jammu and Kashmir.

Managing Director and CEO of J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, called on the Chief Minister during a courtesy meeting. Various issues concerning the banking sector, financial outreach and customer services were discussed. The MD & CEO briefed the Chief Minister on efforts to further strengthen the Bank's operations across Jammu and Kashmir for improved customer experience and service delivery.

Director General of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), Lt. Gen. Virendra Vats, accompanied by Additional Director General,



NCC Directorate J&K and Ladakh, Maj. Gen. Anupinder Bevi, also met the Chief Minister. The delegation discussed matters relating to NCC activities, youth engagement and the expansion of cadet initiatives across Jammu and Kashmir.

A delegation from the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), led by its Convener and Head, Saleem Beg, and Principal Architect, Sameer Hamdani, gave a detailed presentation to the Chief Minister on the

preservation and restoration of heritage assets in Kashmir.

The delegation also highlighted concerns regarding water management in the Mughal Gardens of Kashmir in the context of climate change and stressed the need for sustainable conservation measures.

The Chief Minister assured the visiting delegation that the government remains committed to the preservation, protection and promotion of the rich artistic, cultural and architectural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.

Improper animal waste disposal during Eid-ul-Azha risks public health crises, water contamination: Experts

Call for scientific management, coordinated municipal action, public awareness

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, May 26: With Eid-ul-Azha being celebrated tomorrow, health and environmental experts in Kashmir have expressed serious concern over the improper disposal of animal waste during the festival, warning that unhygienic practices could trigger public health crises, contaminate water sources and damage the fragile environment.

They have called for scientific waste management, coordinated municipal action and greater public awareness to ensure that the religious occasion is observed in a clean, safe and environmentally responsible manner.

Dr Tariq Ahmad Padder, an environmental expert, said Eid-ul-Azha is a sacred occasion that should reflect spiritual values and social responsibility rather than become a source of pollution and disease.

"The sacrifice must be carried out hygienically, and all by-products, including blood, offal

and hides, should be disposed of in a scientific and sanitary manner, especially during the summer season when the risk of infections and disease outbreaks increases," he said.

Dr Tariq warned that scattered animal waste and open dumping create ideal breeding grounds for flies, mosquitoes and stray animals, increasing the risk of water-borne, food-borne and vector-borne diseases. "When animal waste is dumped into drains, streams or open spaces, it contaminates surface and groundwater and poses a major public health threat. Such practices can lead to gastrointestinal infections and other communicable diseases," he said.

He urged people to maintain cleanliness at slaughtering sites and use disinfectants to ensure hygiene. "Municipal authorities are making arrangements for waste collection, but citizens must cooperate and follow the guidelines strictly. Cleanliness is an essential part of our faith

and should be reflected in our actions during Eid," he added.

Dr Padder called for adopting environmentally sustainable practices throughout the year. "Our environment is already under immense stress due to pollution and irresponsible human behaviour. Eid should also become an occasion to promote eco-consciousness and responsible waste management," he said.

According to environmental experts, improper disposal of animal remains not only damages the environment but also affects the overall quality of life in urban and rural areas alike.

Dr Umar, Assistant Professor of Environmental Sciences in Srinagar, said indiscriminate dumping of animal waste contributes significantly to pollution, foul smell and the spread of infections.

"Strict waste management protocols need to be implemented during Eid-ul-Azha. Municipal committees and civic bodies must establish designated

disposal sites and strengthen waste collection mechanisms to avoid accumulation of waste in residential areas," he said.

He stressed the importance of awareness campaigns and public participation. "People should use biodegradable waste bags and avoid throwing remains in open spaces or water bodies. Community participation in cleanliness drives can play a major role in protecting public hygiene and local ecosystems," Dr Umar added.

Dr Bilal Ahmad, a JKAS officer, said coordinated efforts between the administration, local bodies and residents are essential to manage the huge quantity of animal waste generated during Eid.

"Civic authorities must ensure timely lifting of waste, while people should also act responsibly and avoid dumping remains in public places. Environmental protection is a collective responsibility and requires active community involvement," he said.

J&K records 887 crimes against children in 2024, NCRB data shows slight decline

Charge-sheeting rate stands at 55.4%; over 2,600 cases pending before courts

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, May 26: Jammu and Kashmir reported 887 cases of crimes against children in 2024, registering a marginal decline from 910 cases in 2023 and 920 cases in 2022, according to

the latest "Crime in India 2024" report issued by the National Crime Records Bureau.

According to the report, published under Chapter 4A – "Crime Against Children (States & UTs)", the Union Territory recorded a crime rate of 18.1 cases per lakh child population during 2024.

Kidnapping and abduction remained the most reported offences against children in Jammu and Kashmir, with 243

cases registered during the year, the report accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveals.

Cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act also formed a major share of the crimes reported against children. The NCRB recorded 308 POCSO cases in 2024, including 228 cases under Sections 4 and 6 related to penetrative sexual assault, and 65

cases under Sections 8 and 10 pertaining to sexual assault.

The report further revealed that seven cases were registered under Section 12 of the Act relating to sexual harassment of children, while five cases were recorded under Sections 14 and 15 involving the use of children for pornographic purposes. Three additional cases were registered under Sections 17 to 22 concerning abetment and other

offences under the Act.

Besides cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, Jammu and Kashmir also reported nine rape cases involving minors in 2024, including seven cases registered under the IPC and two under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Authorities also recorded three cases of assault on minors with intent to outrage modesty

during the year.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau report, the Union Territory further witnessed eight cases related to the kidnapping or abduction of girls for forced marriage, four cases linked to foeticide, and eight incidents of infanticide and allied offences in 2024.

The report stated that a total of 1,339 cases of crimes against children remained

under police investigation in Jammu and Kashmir during the year. This figure comprised 449 cases carried forward from previous years, 887 newly registered cases, and three reopened investigations.

Police completed investigation or disposal in 802 cases during 2024, while 537 cases continued to remain pending by the end of the year, pushing the pendency rate to 40.1 per cent.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

J&K to observe

Eid greetings while expressing grief over the Budgam incident involving a minor girl, calling it deeply distressing and a reason for societal introspection. He said Eid was being observed in a sombre atmosphere.

People's Conference President Sajad Gani Lone also conveyed Eid greetings, wishing peace, prosperity and well-being for the people.

Former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti extended Eid greetings, praying for peace, joy and blessings for all.

Apni Party President Altaf Bukhari called for introspection over what he termed a decline in moral and social values, citing rising crime, drug abuse and the recent Budgam tragedy as a moment for collective reflection.

Meanwhile, several ministers also extended greetings on the occasion.

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies, IT, Youth Services & Sports, Transport, and Science & Technology Satish Sharma said Eid-ul-Adha symbolizes sacrifice, devotion and compassion, adding that festivals strengthen unity, mutual respect and communal harmony. He urged people to support the underprivileged and promote togetherness.

Minister for Health, Social Welfare and Education Sakeena Itoo said Eid promotes sacrifice, brotherhood and selfless service, praying for peace, prosperity and good health for all households.

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs Javed Ahmed Dar described Eid-ul-Adha as a symbol of sacrifice and selflessness, saying it strengthens communal harmony and social cohesion, while urging people to celebrate with unity and compassion.

Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department Javid Ahmad Dar said Eid inspires values of sacrifice, generosity and empathy, and called for strengthening peace, harmony and support for the underprivileged.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary said Eid carries immense religious and cultural significance and symbolizes discipline, devotion and surrender to the Almighty. He noted that Jammu and Kashmir has always reflected communal harmony and brotherhood, praying for peace and progress.

Leaders across party lines expressed hope that Eid-ul-Adha would further strengthen peace, stability, brotherhood and communal harmony across Jammu and Kashmir.—(KNO)

LG Sinha chairs

and colleges to boost youth engagement. He also applauded the Culture Academy's performance in the Vande Matarang initiative.

Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary, Culture Department, gave a detailed presentation highlighting JKAAC's recent milestones.

The committee was informed that the Academy successfully organized over 470 events across Jammu, Kashmir, and other parts of the country, engaging 14,117 artists and writers. Major commemorative events included 150 Years of Vande Matarang celebrations, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, Har Ghar Tiranga Yatra, Nukkad Natak under Nasha Mukta J&K Campaign, Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas, Birth Anniversary of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, and Constitution Day.

It was further informed that The Jammu & Kashmir Tableau was a major attraction during the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations at Ekta Nagar, Gujarat, on 31st October 2025. Furthermore, the J&K Tableau clinched the Second Prize at the Republic Day Parade 2026 in New Delhi, a historic national achievement for the Union Territory after 24 years.

The Committee also reviewed the Action Taken Report from the previous meeting which was held in 2021.

On the occasion, a Shina-Urdu dictionary and Annual Report of the Academy were also released.

BSF gave befitting

Wherever the force was deployed, it stood firm and gave a befitting response whenever required. Along with guarding the border, the BSF also ensured that the morale of people living in border districts remained high."

Shah said the Sanchu border post occupies an important place in India's military history and recalled its role during past conflicts with Pakistan.

"This outpost is written in golden letters in the history of India's wars. It is a matter of pride for me to stand here and interact with BSF personnel," he said.

'Operation Sindoor' was launched in response to the Pahalgam terror attack and targeted infrastructure linked to terror outfits Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba. During the operation, Indian forces carried out strikes on nine locations, including sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The Union Home Minister said the Centre was taking steps to strengthen border security against emerging threats, particularly the smuggling of narcotics and weapons through drones.

He said anti-drone systems would be installed within the next six months to counter such activities.

"It is our responsibility to remain alert against smuggling attempts through drones and other modern equipment. The government is working on installing anti-drone systems within six months," Shah said.

He, however, stressed that technological measures alone would not be sufficient and called for coordination among security forces, local administration and citizens.

Shah said a "four-point security grid" involving the BSF, armed forces, civil administration and border residents was necessary for effective border management.

"Unless there is coordination among security forces, local administration and citizens, the objective of a fully secure border cannot be achieved," he said.

The Minister said meetings were being held with border states, including Gujarat, Bihar, Tripura and West Bengal, to improve coordination and strengthen security arrangements.

Referring to internal threats, Shah said authorities must also identify people inside the country who assist cross-border smuggling and infiltration attempts.

He said strict legal action should be taken against those involved in aiding anti-national activities.

Shah paid tribute to more than 2,000 BSF personnel who have lost their lives in the line of duty since the force was raised.

He said BSF personnel have served in deserts,

forests and snow-bound areas under difficult conditions while safeguarding the country's borders.

"The nation is proud of the sacrifice and dedication shown by BSF personnel," he said. Shah also inaugurated women's barracks at the border outpost and said infrastructure for women personnel in the force would continue to be expanded in the coming years. (KNO)

MEA dismisses

India's position on the matter is consistent and well known.

His remarks came after a joint statement issued following talks between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif referred to Jammu and Kashmir as an "issue left over from history" and called for its resolution in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions.

India also objected to references related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), parts of which it maintains pass through territory under what it describes as illegal occupation.

Jaiswal said India "resolutely opposes and rejects" any attempts by other countries to legitimise such projects, adding that concerns have been conveyed to both Beijing and Islamabad on multiple occasions.

The MEA also dismissed references to so-called trans-boundary water cooperation between China and Pakistan, stating that the two countries do not share a boundary and such framing is not acceptable.

India has consistently maintained that any discussion on Jammu and Kashmir by third countries is not valid, and has reiterated that all issues pertaining to the region are internal matters of the country.

The joint statement, issued after high-level talks between China and Pakistan, had reiterated opposition to unilateral actions and called for resolution of disputes through dialogue and existing international frameworks. (KNO)

CM Omar meets

from a field near her village on Sunday.

During the visit, emotional scenes were witnessed as residents, relatives and local youth raised slogans demanding exemplary punishment for the accused and speedy justice for the victim.

Locals appreciated the police for solving the case within a short span of time and termed the investigation "professional and swift".

One resident, speaking to media persons, appealed to lawyers not to defend the accused in court.

"For humanity's sake, I request lawyers not to fight the case of this person. If anyone needs money, we are ready to help, but please do not defend someone who has committed such a heinous crime. He deserves the strictest punishment," the resident said.

Another local demanded stringent action against the accused, saying the authorities should deal with him the same way properties of drug peddlers are seized and demolished.

"As the properties of drug addicts and drug peddlers are being sealed and destroyed, similar action should also be taken against this accused so that such crimes do not happen again," he said.

Police on Monday arrested the accused, identified as Mudasar, in connection with the rape and murder case, while the investigation into

other aspects of the crime is still underway.

The incident has triggered outrage across Jammu & Kashmir, with political parties, civil society groups and religious organisations demanding strict punishment for those involved. (KNO)

Intensify efforts

be maintained to ensure the peaceful, secure, and successful conduct of the Amarnath Yatra-2026," an official said.

The DGP also issued directions for the deployment of anti-sabotage teams and the use of advanced surveillance systems and real-time monitoring mechanisms to enhance threat detection and response capabilities.

Emphasizing the importance of peaceful Eid celebrations, the DGP directed officers to ensure comprehensive crowd management arrangements at mosques and key congregation venues across the Valley.

DGP Prabhat stressed the necessity of strengthening security measures, safeguarding public movement, and deploying personnel at sensitive locations to prevent overcrowding. He further instructed field officers to enhance surveillance, carry out random inspections at vulnerable areas, and intensify patrolling to effectively address any potential security concerns during the festive occasion.

During the meeting, the participating officers presented detailed briefings on the proposed security and logistical arrangements, as well as preparedness measures for the smooth conduct of Amarnath Yatra-2026. Officers from the CAPFs and other security forces also shared their assessments and underscored the need for seamless coordination and synergy among all agencies involved. Additionally, the officers briefed the chair regarding the administrative and logistical arrangements made for the incoming CAPF companies.

The DGP issued directives for the smooth induction of CAPF companies and emphasized that district heads must ensure proper arrangements for incoming units and their efficient ground deployment. Emphasizing the importance of robust security management, DGP J&K directed officers to ensure strict implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and adopt proactive strategies to counter potential threats. He stressed the need for heightened vigilance to safeguard pilgrims and maintain a secure environment throughout the yatra period.

The meeting witnessed participation from senior officers of the J&K Police, CRPF, ITBP, Traffic Police, Railways, and various security agencies. Among those present were the IGP Kashmir Zone; IG BSF Ftr Hqrs Srinagar, IG CRPF Srinagar Sector; all range DIsG of Kashmir Zone; DIG Railway; DIsG of BSF SHQ Srinagar; Ops BSF FTR HQ Kashmir; and BSF SHQ Bandipora; DIG SSB Srinagar; DIsG of CRPF KOS, CRPF South/North Srinagar, CRPF Anantnag, CRPF SKOR Awantipora, CRPF NKR Baramulla, and CRPF Bandipora; DIG CISF; DIG ITBP Srinagar; all district SSSP/PDs of Kashmir Zone; SSSP of PCR Kashmir, Railways Kashmir, Traffic Rural Kashmir, and APCR Kashmir; Col GS (IS) 15 Corps; Asst. Commandant CISF Airport Srinagar, and other senior officers. (KNO)

Quad backs action

or unilateral measures and underlined the importance of maintaining stability in international waters.

The Quad also stressed the need to ensure uninterrupted maritime trade through crucial sea routes, including the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea.

The grouping condemned attacks on commercial shipping vessels and opposed measures that could hamper free navigation and trade in violation of international law, including provisions under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Without naming any country directly, the Quad expressed serious concern over developments in the East China Sea and South China Sea, referring to dangerous manoeuvres and aggressive actions in disputed waters.

It cited incidents involving obstruction of vessels, unsafe maritime conduct and the use of water cannons and flares, and called for all disputes to be settled peacefully and in accordance with international law.

The ministers also reaffirmed the significance of the 2016 arbitral tribunal ruling on the South China Sea, describing it as an important basis for peaceful dispute resolution.

On terrorism, the Quad condemned terror activities in all forms, including cross-border terrorism, and specifically referred to the April 22, 2025, terror attack in Pahalgam.

The grouping also condemned the December 14, 2025, attack at Bondi Beach and called for stronger global cooperation against terrorism.

"We call for sustained and coordinated international action against terrorists, terror organisations, their sponsors, financiers and affiliated networks," the statement said.

The Quad further raised concerns over the rise of organised cybercrime and online scam centres operating in parts of Southeast Asia.

It said such networks were linked to human trafficking, financial crimes, cyber fraud and online exploitation, and stressed the need for closer law enforcement cooperation among countries.

On maritime security cooperation, the Quad welcomed India's operationalisation of maritime monitoring initiatives under the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) through the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region in Gurugram.

The grouping said efforts were underway to strengthen information-sharing mechanisms and develop a common operational picture across the Indo-Pacific region to improve maritime surveillance and coordination.

The statement also reiterated support for ASEAN centrality and regional organisations, including the Pacific Islands Forum and the Indian Ocean Rim Association.

The Quad additionally expressed concern over the continuing conflict in Myanmar and its impact on regional peace and stability. (KNO)

J&K Bank records

UPI (excluding mPay UPI) emerged as the leading channel with 1.11 crore transactions worth Rs 1,002.61 crore.

ATMs, debit cards, e-banking and kiosk banking together ensured uninterrupted services amid heavy festive demand.

Overall, more than 95 per cent of total transactions were executed digitally, reflecting a continued shift towards cashless and technology-driven banking in the region.

Customers and traders across Kashmir appreciated the smooth functioning of banking services during peak shopping days. (KNO)

Centre forms high-level panel on demographic change to tackle infiltration

PTI

New Delhi, May 26: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday announced that the Centre has constituted a high-level committee under retired Supreme Court judge Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar to assess demographic changes across India due to "illegal immigration and other unnatural causes".

In a message on 'X' in Hindi, he said infiltration and other reasons are causing "unnatural" demographic change, which poses a significant challenge to the present and future of any nation.

"To address this very challenge, on August 15, 2025, Prime Minister @narendramodiji had announced the 'high-level committee on demographic change'. I am delighted to inform you that the government has now constituted this committee," Shah said.

The home minister said the committee will be chaired by Justice Naolekar (retd) and will also include the census commissioner, along with retired IAS officer Durga Shankar Mishra, ex-IPS officer Balaji Srivastava and Dr Shami-ka Ravi as members.

"The joint secretary (foreigners-1), Ministry of Home Affairs, will serve as the member secretary of this committee," he said. Shah emphasised that demographic change is a serious issue linked not only to the country's sovereignty but also to national security, law and order, profound changes in social



structure and the preservation of tribal society. "This committee will conduct a comprehensive assessment of demographic changes occurring across India due to illegal immigration and other unnatural causes, analyse patterns of abnormal population shifts at the levels of religious and social communities, and present a planned and time-bound solution for the same," he said.

Speaking from the ramparts of the Red Fort in his Independence Day speech last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced a high-powered demographic mission to tackle the problem.

Modi had said there was a "pre-meditated conspiracy" to change the country's demography through illegal

infiltration. "Today I want to alert the country about a concern, a challenge. Under a well-thought out conspiracy, the demography of the country is being changed. Seeds of a new crisis are being sown. These 'ghuspaithiye' (infiltrators) are snatching the livelihood of the youth of my country, these 'ghuspaithiye' are targeting the sisters and daughters of my country, this will not be tolerated," he had said.

The prime minister had also said that 'ghuspaithiye' are misleading the innocent tribals and grabbing their land. Modi had warned that when demographic changes take place, especially in the border areas, they create a national security crisis.

Quad unveils energy, critical minerals, maritime surveillance initiatives

PTI

New Delhi, May 26: Seeking to inject fresh momentum into the grouping, the Quad on Tuesday announced energy security and critical minerals frameworks to mitigate supply chain disruptions and unveiled major measures to upgrade maritime surveillance and port infrastructure across the Indo-Pacific, even as clarity remained elusive on the timing of the next summit of the grouping.

While all measures except the energy security initiative are widely viewed as efforts to counter China's expanding Indo-Pacific footprint, the Quad explicitly voiced serious concerns over the situation in the East and South China Sea and denounced "coercion" threatening regional peace and stability.

The new steps to address pressing challenges were announced following a meeting of the grouping's foreign ministers in New Delhi, chaired by External



Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and attended by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi.

The foreign ministers called for an uninterrupted flow of global commerce through the Strait of Hormuz and criticised the imposition of tolls on commercial shipping in the region, while seeking a peaceful resolution of the West Asia crisis. "We

reaffirm our commitment to defending the rule of law, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. We recognise the immense potential of innovation, emerging technologies, and trusted partnerships to drive economic prosperity across the Indo-Pacific and beyond," the Quad foreign ministers said in a joint statement.

On the situation in the East China and South China seas, the ministers expressed serious concerns regarding "dangerous and

coercive actions", including interference with offshore resource development and the "dangerous manoeuvres" by military aircraft, coast guard and maritime militia vessels.

External Affairs Minister Jaishankar, in his media statement, said a free and open Indo-Pacific has many dimensions and facets. "Our meeting today took stock of the progress in many of them, while encouraging exploration in others," he said.

'Urban heat island effect key reason behind power demand rise'

PTI

New Delhi, May 26: The Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect, which raises city temperatures between two and 10 degrees Celsius above surrounding areas, is one of the key reasons behind the rise in power demand in the country, according to a new analysis.

It states that while industrial power demand has remained relatively stable in several regions, residential demand has surged sharply because cities are becoming significantly hotter, especially during evenings and nights.

This forces households to rely more heavily on cooling appliances such as air-conditioners (ACs), coolers, and fans, according to the analysis, released by Climate Trends, a Delhi-based climate research organisation, on Tuesday.

"Rising temperatures alone do not explain why cities and

towns are becoming increasingly unlivable during summers. Rapid urbanisation is significantly amplifying heat stress, turning Indian cities into giant heat traps and driving a sharp rise in electricity demand," said the analysis.

The power demand in India has been skyrocketing in recent days. It touched 257.3 GW on May 18, 260.4 GW on May 19, 265 GW on May 20, and ultimately reached a record 270.8 GW on May 21.

The main factor driving UHI is rapid urbanisation, which leads to more concrete, roads, bricks and metal in the area. These objects absorb heat during the day and radiate it at night when the Sun is absent.

The situation is exacerbated by the use of ACs, which emit hot air outside and contribute significantly to UHI.

UK targets Russian crypto networks in latest sanctions

REUTERS

London, May 26: Britain on Tuesday targeted Russian-linked cryptocurrency platforms, banks and financial networks it said were used to bypass sanctions, freezing their assets and barring UK firms from processing payments or maintaining correspondent banking ties.

The measures focus on what London described as "shadow financial systems" underpinning Russia's war economy, including the Kremlin-backed A7 network, which it said has been used to route funds, finance procurement and exploit foreign banking systems to evade restrictions.

The package also targets crypto exchanges and entities operating Russia-focused platforms, alongside individuals tied to the network.

Britain said it was "tracking down and shutting off" payment routes fueling Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Is 5G slicing compromising net neutrality for pre-paid customers: Par panel asks

PTI

New Delhi, May 26: A parliamentary committee on Tuesday sought answers from the Department of Telecommunications and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India to review the impact of 5G network slicing services in Singapore, the UK and a few other nations.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, headed by BJP leader



Nishikant Dubey, noted that the priority post-paid plan of certain telecom operators could compromise net neutrality of crores of pre-paid mobile users. It asked

the DoT and the TRAI to get back their responses in 25 days when the panel will meet again, parliamentary sources told PTI.

The members of the

committee were learnt to be of the view that major digital and social media platforms, including Meta, X, Google and Amazon, should also be called to make their stand clear on net neutrality and preferential treatment for certain categories of customers.

A member of the committee, after the meeting, said that while only 10 per cent mobile users are in the post-paid category, a majority 90 per cent avail pre-paid services.

Iran accuses US of breaking truce after new strikes



AFP

Tehran, May 26: Iran accused the United States of breaching their ceasefire Tuesday after overnight US strikes targeting Iranian missile sites and mine-laying boats threatened diplomatic efforts to strike a deal to end the war.

The Brent benchmark oil price jumped up by almost three percent after US Central Command announced the new wave of bombings, and China urged both sides to respect the truce and to resolve their dispute peacefully.

According to the maritime safety monitor UKMTO, a blast damaged a tanker on the waterline off Oman — although the crew and vessel were reportedly safe after what was described as an "external explosion."

Iranian state media reported overnight blasts in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, near the Strait of Hormuz, and the country's Revolutionary Guards Corps said its forces

had downed a US drone entering its airspace and had fired at an F-35 fighter jet.

"The US terrorist army, continuing its illegal and unjustified actions since the ceasefire... has, in the past 48 hours, committed a gross violation of the ceasefire in the Hormuz region," the Iranian foreign ministry said.

It added that Tehran "will not leave any evil unanswered and will not hesitate to defend the Iranian nation," without elaborating.

In a statement marking the start of the Eid Al-Adha holiday, Tehran's supreme leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei declared that Washington was losing its influence in the Middle East and warned countries in the region to stop hosting bases from which the US could launch attacks.

The United States, he said in a written statement, "in addition to no longer having any safe haven in the region for aggression and the establishment of military bases, is moving

further and further away from its former position with each passing day."

Tim Hawkins, a spokesman for US Central Command, said: "US forces conducted self-defense strikes in southern Iran today to protect our troops from threats posed by Iranian forces."

"We'll see" He gave few details of the attacks and said only that the targets included missile launch sites and boats trying to "emplace mines."

Despite the strikes, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Tuesday that a deal remained within reach.

But he remained firm on the Strait of Hormuz, the key oil and gas shipping route out which Iran is seeking to control.

"There were some talks going on in Qatar today, so we'll see if we can make progress. I think it's a lot of talking back and forth going on about specific language in the initial document, so it'll take a few days," Rubio told reporters, during a visit to India.

He said the strait was "going to be open one way or the other," adding: "What's happening there is unlawful, it's illegal, it's unsustainable for the world, it's unacceptable."

Tasnim news agency said Tehran's negotiators are seeking the release of frozen assets, with half to be made available once an initial memorandum of understanding is signed.

Movies Schedule

Wednesday, 27th May

BHOOTH BANGLA
U/A16+

Hindi - 02:40 PM, 06:00 PM

PATI PATNI AUR WOH DO
UA16+

Hindi - 03:00 PM

CHAND MERA DIL
U/A16+

HINDI ATMOS - 02:00 PM, 04:45 PM, 07:30 PM

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U/A16+

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