



SRINAGAR-NALANDA DIALOGUE

Our goal to revive great inheritances of knowledge, spirituality: LG Sinha

'Kashmir shared knowledge with Arab world; Sharada Peeth was major centre of learning; Sanskrit texts shaped global intellectual traditions'

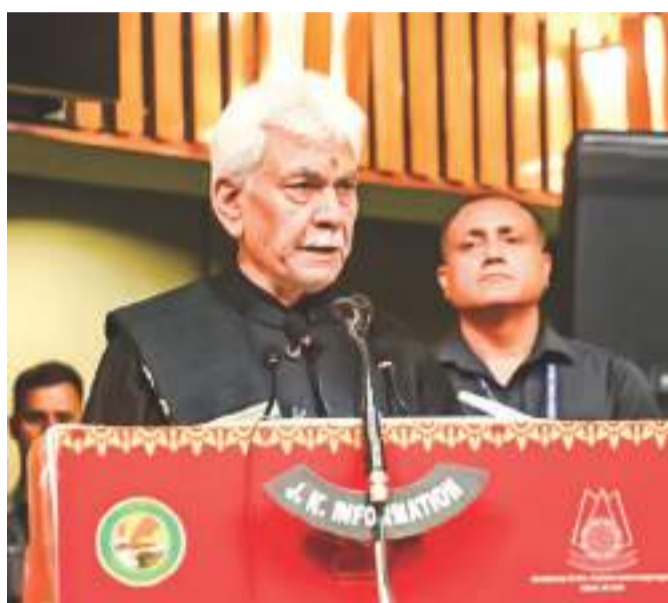
Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 20: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said our goal is to revive great inheritances of knowledge and spirituality, strengthen India's civilizational traditions, and shape a future-oriented education that connects our youth to both the past and modern tech.

Delivering the keynote address at Srinagar-Nalanda Dialogue here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Together, the scholars of Jammu Kashmir and Nalanda shaped one of the world's oldest living civilisations. This heritage is our guiding light. The Srinagar-Nalanda Dialogue is our opportunity to carry that light forward with wisdom, courage, and a new vision for Viksit Bharat."

"Our goal is to revive our great inheritances of knowledge and spirituality, strengthen India's civilizational traditions, and shape a future-oriented education that connects our youth to both the past and modern tech."

Pertinently, Srinagar-Nalanda Dialogue was organised by



the Ministry of Tourism, Department of Culture, J&K, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), National School of Drama and Nava Nalanda Mahavihara University.

The Lieutenant Governor called for strengthening India's soft power and promotion of cultural diplomacy. "Centuries ago, India's knowledge unified the globe. Today, we can be the

bridge the world needs. The world is watching. Let us lead with confidence and compassion," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that youth have inherited a rich legacy of languages, beliefs, artistic traditions, philosophical schools, and varied ways of life. He said this diversity is our greatest strength. "From Bihar to Jammu | More on P6

Yoga invaluable treasure of Indian heritage: LG

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 20: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has extended his greetings to the people on the eve of 12th International Day of Yoga, which will be celebrated on Sunday.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor said, "Heartiest greetings to all on the occasion of 12th International Day of Yoga. On this auspicious occasion, I call upon the citizens of Jammu Kashmir to actively participate in Yoga events and champion the movement toward a healthier lifestyle. This year's International Yoga Day theme is 'Yoga for Healthy Ageing'. Yoga stands as an invaluable treasure of our ancient Indian heritage, which harmonizes | More on P6

Under PM Modi, India's security landscape underwent significant transformation: HM Shah

'Security agencies have established dominance over terrorism in J&K'

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jun 20: Reiterating that India's security landscape has undergone a significant transformation over the past 12 years in PM Narendra Modi's tenure, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said security agencies have established dominance over terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and peace has returned to large parts of North-East.

Addressing a public rally in Ichalkaranji in Maharashtra's Kolhapur district, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said regions that were once affected by violence and instability have witnessed substantial improvements in the security situation.

He said the Centre's policies and the efforts of security forces had helped curb terrorism in Kashmir, while peace had returned to large parts of the North-East.

Shah also stated that the decades-old challenge of Left-wing extremism had been largely overcome.



The union Home Minister said that stability has been strengthened across several regions of the country, including Ladakh, Punjab and the North-East, as a result of sustained security and development initiatives undertaken by the Narendra Modi government.

Highlighting the government's focus on defence preparedness, Shah said India's armed forces have been modernised and equipped with indigenous capabilities.

He noted that the country, which once relied heavily on imports for defence requirements, is now manufacturing advanced military equipment, including missiles, under the push for self-reliance.

The senior BJP leader also referred to key political decisions taken during the Modi government's tenure, including the

abrogation of Article 370 and the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Shah said the Prime Minister had simultaneously focused on strengthening the cooperative sector and promoting technological and scientific advancements. Referring to India's space achievements, he said the successful landing of Chandrayaan near the Moon's south pole demonstrated the country's growing capabilities in space exploration.

On welfare measures, the home minister said farmers have received direct financial assistance through central government schemes.

He said funds have been transferred directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries under various programmes aimed at supporting the agricultural sector. | More on P6

'Nation first, always': VP Radhakrishnan

Salutes armed forces at Hall of Fame War Memorial in Leh

KT News Desk

Leh, Jun 20: Vice-President of India, C P Radhakrishnan on Saturday visited the Hall of Fame War Memorial, Sindhu Ghat, Pashmina Goat Farm at Upshi, and the first rock check dam on the Sindhu River during the second day of his official visit to the Union Territory of Ladakh.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, accompanied the Vice-President during the visits.

At the Hall of Fame War Memorial in Leh, the Vice-President paid homage to the brave soldiers of the Indian Armed Forces. He lauded the unwavering commitment of the armed forces to the nation and said that their spirit of "Nation First: Always and Every Time" inspires every citizen with a deep sense of patriotism and gratitude.

The Vice-President appreciated the Indian Army for establishing and maintaining the memorial, which preserves the legacy of courage, valour and sacrifice

of India's soldiers. He also visited the galleries depicting operations during the Indo-Pak and Indo-China wars and noted that they stand as enduring testimonies to the dedication and heroism of the Armed Forces.

Later, the Vice-President visited the sacred Sindhu Ghat near Leh and offered prayers on the banks of the revered River Sindhu. He observed that the Sindhu River remains a timeless symbol of Bharat's civilizational heritage and cultural unity, inspiring generations through its enduring legacy.

The Vice-President also visited the Pashmina Goat Farm at Upshi and was briefed on the initiatives being undertaken to preserve and promote Ladakh's unique Pashmina heritage. Appreciating the efforts of the institution, he noted that the Changthangi goats and the world-renowned Pashmina they produce reflect the rich traditions and ingenuity of the people of Ladakh.

He commended the farm's contribution towards sustainable livestock management and the | More on P6

Ensure foolproof Amarnath Yatra arrangements: Union Home Secy

Chairs review meeting in Sgr; discusses deployment, convoy, intel with security top brass

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 20: Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Saturday directed the security top brass to ensure foolproof arrangements for the forthcoming 57-day Amarnath Yatra, slated to commence on July 3.

A top official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the Union Home Secretary chaired a high-level security review meeting here to review the preparations for the annual pilgrimage. "The security review meeting was held at the Police Headquarters at Haiderpora in Srinagar. It was attended by the top brass of Police, Army, CRPF, BSF, intelligence agencies and top officials of the civil administration" he said.

The official said that during the meeting the security top brass briefed the Union Home Secretary about readiness along both the Pahalgam and Baltal routes. "Security forces have intensified area domination exercises, route sanitization and counter-terror



surveillance measures across Kashmir Valley, particularly in districts connected to the annual pilgrimage," officials told the meeting.

Sources told KNO that the review meeting also discussed deployment plans, convoy security, emergency response mechanisms, intel-

ligence coordination, disaster management preparedness and arrangements for pilgrims at various transit camps and base camps. "The Union Home Secretary also took stock of infrastructure and facilitation

measures put in place for devotees, including healthcare, communication, transportation and rescue arrangements."

The Union Home Secretary was also briefed about emergency response, healthcare facilities, communication networks, and transportation services, sources added.

KASHMIR SITUATION REVIEWED

Sources said the overall security situation in the Kashmir was also reviewed. "The Union Home Secretary was briefed about the steps | More on P6

LG announces reopening of historic Naranag temple

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 20: The administration has decided to reopen the historic Naranag Temple in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district for devotees and tourists following a comprehensive security review.

In a post on X, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the decision was taken after a

thorough assessment of the security situation.

"After thorough security review, decision has been taken to open the Naranag Temple at Ganderbal for devotees and tourists," the Office of the LG, J&K, said in the post.

The reopening is expected to facilitate pilgrimage and tourism activities in the beautiful Naranag area, known for its ancient temple complex and scenic surroundings. (KNO)

J&K records lowest student dropout rate in 'High-Burden' category

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Jun 20: Jammu and Kashmir ranks near the bottom of the 'high-burden' secondary school dropout list, recording a dropout rate significantly lower than most of the states in its category.

According to the official documents available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jammu and Kashmir had a dropout rate of 12.9 percent at secondary level.

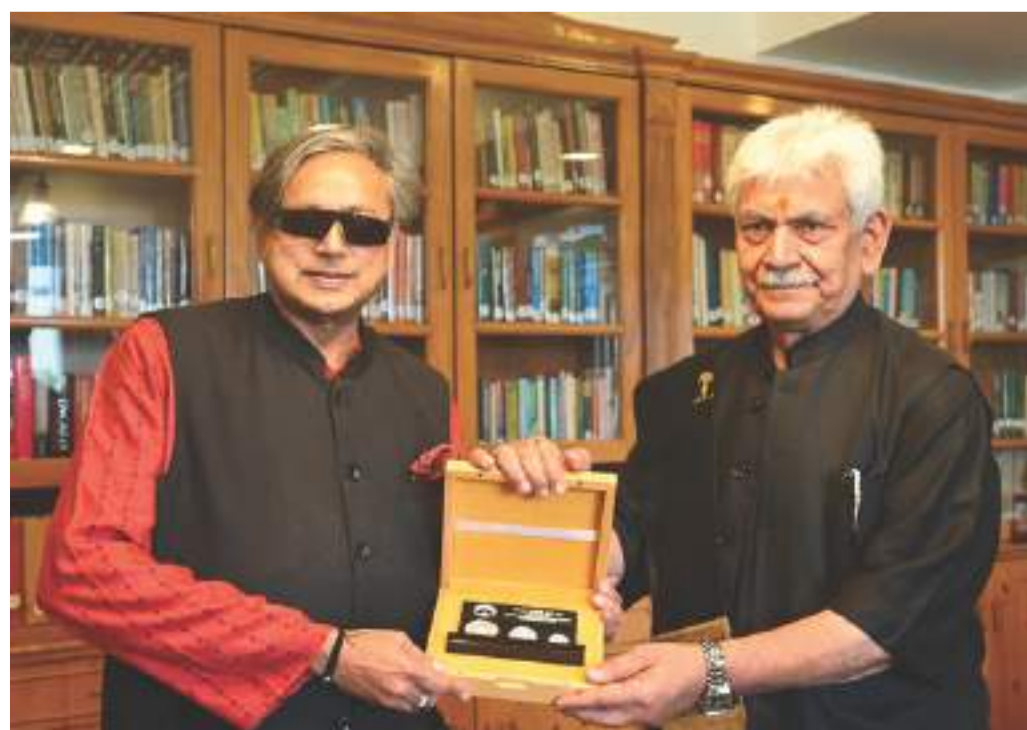
"High rates are further observed in Telangana with 13.2 percent, Jammu & Kashmir with 12.9 percent, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu at 12.5

percent each, and Nagaland with 12.1 percent. Maharashtra 11.5 percent, Sikkim with 11.4 percent, and Tripura at 11.3 percent mark the lower end of this high-burden group," it reads.

In March-2025, KNO reported that Jammu and Kashmir in the previous two years was facing an increase in dropout rate at primary, upper primary and secondary school levels.

At that time primary level J&K was facing a dropout rate of 3.89 percent in the year 2022-23 at primary level that further increased to 8.87 percent in the year 2023-24.

The previous | More on P6



Dr Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan on Saturday

Rain, hailstorm in J&K parts; temps below normal

MeT predicts rain, thunderstorms, hailstorms till Jun 22

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jun 20: Several parts of Jammu and Kashmir were hit by rain, thunderstorms, hailstorms and gusty winds on Saturday, while day temperatures remained below normal across most stations in the Valley.

According to the Meteorological Centre, Srinagar, rain and thunder-shower activity affected many areas of the Kashmir division and parts of the Jammu division, including Ramban, Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Rajouri, Reasi, and Udhampur.

The Sonamarg-Baltal-Holy Cave axis and the Pahalgam-Holy Cave axis also witnessed brief intense showers accompanied by thunderstorms, hailstorms and gusty winds.

Weather data, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), showed Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 27.2 degrees Celsius, two notches below normal, while Qazigund settled at 24.8 degrees Celsius, Kupwara at 24.7 degrees Celsius and Pahalgam at 21.5 degrees Celsius. Gulmarg recorded 16.6 degrees Celsius. Jammu city registered 37.6 degrees Celsius, which was normal for this time of the year.

During the past 24 hours, Pahalgam received the highest rainfall of | More on P6

J&K Lok Bhavan celebrates West Bengal Foundation Day

West Bengal vibrant expression of Indian culture: LG Sinha

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 20: Jammu Kashmir Lok Bhavan on Saturday hosted the cultural evening to mark the West Bengal Foundation Day. The event brought together officials, security personnel, students and the people of West Bengal currently living in J&K UT.

Addressing the gathering, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha conveyed his greetings and best wishes to the people of West Bengal on the occasion. He prayed for the happiness, well-being and prosperity of the people of West Bengal.

"West Bengal is a vibrant expression of Indian culture. Its folk arts, musical traditions and festivals symbolize social harmony and cultural richness. West Bengal's unparalleled contributions to literature, art, music and science, have offered a fresh perspective to society. The region has served not only as a hub of political awakening but also as a major center of spiritual and cultural consciousness," the LG said.

The Lieutenant Governor paid tributes to the freedom fighters and great revolutionaries from West Bengal. "West Bengal's contribution to India's freedom struggle and nation-building has been truly glorious. This land has always been a focal point for patriotism, social awakening and ideological leadership. | More on P6

BharatNet Programme CS takes stock of progress under 4G saturation

‘Clear pending tower sites on a fast-track basis, directs Information Technology Department to obtain district-wise status reports’

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 20: The 11th Meeting of the State Broadband Committee (SBC) of Jammu and Kashmir was Saturday held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo to review the progress of key digital connectivity initiatives aimed at ensuring universal access to high-speed telecommunications and internet services across the Union Territory.

The meeting, as per an official statement, besides ACS, PDD and ACS, PWD was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology (IT); Secretary, RDD; CGM, BSNL; MD, JPDCL/KPDCL; Representatives from DoT and other concerned officers.

Reviewing the progress of land allotment and statutory clearances, the Chief Secretary impressed upon all Deputy Commissioners to clear the pending tower sites on a fast-track basis. He directed the Information Technology Department to obtain district-wise status reports and timelines for every identified site proposed for installation of telecom towers in far-flung and uncovered habitations. He further instructed that weekly progress reports be sought regarding feasibility assessments, land identification, statutory clearances and transfer of land to the executing agencies so that project implementation proceeds without delay.

The Chief Secretary also emphasized that all uncovered habitations identified across the Union Territory should be incorporated in the fresh list of sites prepared jointly by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and BSNL. He stressed that every eligible habitation must be brought under mobile network coverage to eliminate connectivity gaps and ensure that no village remains off-air in any part of Jammu and Kashmir.

He further directed the Power Development Department, including KPDCL and JPDCL, to ensure timely provisioning of on-grid electricity connections to all feasible telecom tower locations. He also reviewed the implementation of the Call Before u Dig (CBuD) platform and the compliance of Standard Operating Procedures governing road cutting and excavation works by various departments and agencies. He stressed the importance of strict adherence to the prescribed procedures to safeguard critical infrastructure and minimize



disruptions. Reviewing the implementation of the Amended BharatNet Programme, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned agencies to closely monitor the operationalisation of BharatNet infrastructure at the Gram Panchayat level. He asked the local telecom authorities together with the RDD to ascertain the status of BharatNet Udyamis (BNUs) in all Gram Panchayats already commissioned through the State Network Operations Centre (S-NOC) network.

He emphasized that the ultimate objective of the programme is not merely to establish broadband infrastructure but to extend high-speed internet connectivity to households through Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) services. He directed that all commissioned Gram Panchayats should be progressively enabled through BNUs so that aspiring households in rural areas can avail reliable broadband services.

The Commissioner Secretary, IT, Saurabh Bhagat took this occasion to apprise the meeting about the implementation status of the flagship 4G Saturation Project, Amended BharatNet Programme (ABP), preparedness for 5G infrastructure deployment, and the progress under the Call Before u Dig (CBuD) initiative.

He further gave out that substantial progress has been achieved under the Government of India's 4G Saturation Project, which seeks to extend reliable mobile connectivity to remote, border,

hilly and underserved areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was informed by the CGM BSNL that out of the total 847 mobile tower sites planned, 566 sites have already become operational, marking a significant increase from 506 operational sites reported during the previous State Broadband Committee meeting.

He added that work is presently underway on the remaining sites, with tower foundations completed at 128 locations out of whom tower erection had been completed at 97 sites, and passive infrastructure works completed at 82 sites.

It was elucidated that work orders have already been issued for 775 sites, and BSNL has been tasked with ensuring the completion of the remaining sites under the current work orders by December 31, 2026. The meeting highlighted the transformative impact of the project in improving communication facilities in border villages. Out of 1,419 identified border villages, 1,402 villages have already been covered under mobile network connectivity, leaving only 17 villages yet to be connected. Of these, 10 villages have already been included under the ongoing 4G Saturation Scheme.

The meeting was informed that electricity connectivity has been completed for 647 telecom tower sites, while power meter connections have been provided to 581 sites. The remaining cases are being actively pursued for early completion.

The Committee also reviewed progress under the Border Out Post (BOP) and Border Infrastructure Project (BIP),

under which 30 sites have been planned to provide enhanced communication facilities in sensitive and strategically important areas.

Reviewing the progress under the Amended BharatNet Programme (ABP), the Chief Secretary was informed that the project covers 285 blocks and 4,299 Gram Panchayats across the Union Territory. It was apprised that the physical surveys have already been completed in 2,401 Gram Panchayats, while 282 Gram Panchayats have been commissioned on the State Network Operations Centre (S-NOC). Work orders have been approved for 107 blocks covering 1,599 Gram Panchayats, while additional approvals are under process.

The meeting was informed that approximately 744 kilometres of Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) have already been laid under the programme. Upon completion, the initiative will provide reliable broadband access, facilitate digital governance, strengthen online education and health-care services, support entrepreneurship and enable greater participation in the digital economy in rural areas.

Concluding the Chief Secretary reiterated the Government's commitment to ensuring seamless digital connectivity across Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in remote, border and rural areas. He emphasized that reliable telecommunications infrastructure has become a critical enabler for governance, education, healthcare, security, economic growth and citizen services.

Water Supply during Muharram, SANJY-2026 Commissioner SMC flags off 4 high-capacity water tankers



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 20: In a significant initiative aimed at strengthening water supply infrastructure and enhancing civic service delivery, Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, Saturday flagged off four newly inducted high-capacity water tankers for the Water Works Division at the SMC Headquarters, Karan Nagar.

The newly added tankers, each with a carrying capacity of 10,000 litres, have been procured to augment the Corporation's water distribution network and improve its capacity to respond effectively to water supply requirements across the city. The induction of these tankers marks a major step towards ensuring reliable access to potable water, particularly in areas facing supply constraints and during periods of heightened demand.

Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner, as per an official statement, said that the provision of safe and adequate drinking water remains one of the core responsibilities of the Corporation. He noted that the addition of the new tankers would significantly enhance the operational efficiency of the Water Works Division, enabling

quicker response to public needs and ensuring timely water supply to residents across Srinagar.

Highlighting the importance of the initiative, Faz Lul Haseeb stated that the strengthened fleet assumes special significance in view of the ongoing Muharram observances and the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026. He said that these major religious occasions witness large congregations and increased demand for civic amenities, particularly drinking water. The newly inducted tankers will play a crucial role in ensuring uninterrupted water supply along procession routes, congregation venues, transit camps, and other important locations associated with these events.

The Commissioner further emphasized that the initiative reflects SMC's proactive and citizen-centric approach towards improving urban infrastructure, strengthening emergency preparedness, and delivering efficient public services. He reiterated the Corporation's commitment to ensuring that all necessary arrangements are put in place to facilitate smooth conduct of major religious events while maintaining uninterrupted civic services for the general public.

DC Srinagar visits Mir Behri Dal, Khushipora HMT

Takes stock of developmental needs of area, arrangements for smooth conduct of Muharram processions

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR JUNE 20: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Saturday conducted a comprehensive visit to various areas of the City and Imambargahs in interior localities of Mir Behri Dal and Khushipora HMT to review the arrangements made for the smooth and peaceful observance of Muharram processions and to also take stock of the developmental needs of the area.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz; PO, ICDS, Bureeda Majeed; Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid; IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Superintending Engineer R&B, Shabir Ahmad; SDM

East, Zubair Ahmad; CEO, Ghulam Mohi Din; BMO Hazratbal, Dr Ab Majeed; Executive Engineers R&B, Farid Khan; Executive Engineer R&B, Arif Hazari; Executive Engineer, KPDCK, Abrar Ahmad; Secretary LCMA, Mohammad Altaf Bhat; Executive Engineer PHE, Muzamil Ahmad; DSWO, Mohammad Yousof and senior Officers from the Departments of Health, Fire & Emergency Services, Forest and other line departments.

During the visit, the DC held a series of meetings with local representatives and community members at Mir Behri Dal, Nandpora, Moti Mohalla, Zaldar Mohalla and Khushipora HMT. In the presence of Officers from all concerned departments, the DC reviewed the preparations made for Muharram and inspected facilities related to sanitation, electricity, drinking water supply, healthcare and other essential services.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT ZAINGEER

NOTICE INVITING RATE QUOTATIONS

Sealed rate quotations are hereby invited from registered Cooperative Societies/Cooperative Super Bazaars/Consumer Cooperative Stores and other Cooperative Institutions registered under the Jammu & Kashmir Cooperative Societies Acts and engaged in supply of food commodities for supply of food items required under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) and Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) under POSHAN Project Zaingeer for the financial year 2026-2027. The food items and specifications shall be as per the approved Recipe Committee/ Formulated Menu, enclosed as Annexure A.

This notice is being published and circulated for ensuring maximum participation, transparency and fairness in the procurement process.

Interested Cooperative Societies/Institutions shall submit their sealed rate quotations indicating item-wise rates per unit (Kg/Litre, as applicable) along with self-attested copies of the following documents:

1. Registration Certificate.
2. PAN Card.
3. GST Registration Certificate, if applicable.
4. Latest Renewal Certificate, wherever applicable.
5. Declaration regarding capacity to ensure uninterrupted supply of food items as and when required by the department.
6. Any other document supporting eligibility and supply capability.

Any quotation accompanied by false, misleading or incomplete information/documents shall be liable to rejection. The quotations shall be submitted in a sealed envelope superscribed "Rate Quotation for Supply of SNP/SAG Food Items under POSHAN Project Zaingeer" and shall reach the office of the undersigned within 10 (Ten) days from the date of publication of this notice. The quotations shall be opened on 30/06/2026 at 10:00 AM in the office of the undersigned in the presence of the participating representatives who may wish to attend. The selection shall be made on the basis of the lowest evaluated aggregate rate of the approved SNP/SAG food basket, subject to fulfillment of eligibility conditions and reasonableness of rates. Rates found unreasonable with reference to prevailing market rates may be rejected. The approved rates shall remain valid up to 31.03.2027 or till revision/modification of the approved menu, procurement policy, Government instructions, financial rules, treasury procedures or directions issued by the competent authority, whichever is earlier. The rate contract/supply arrangement shall be subject to the prevailing Government instructions, procurement policies, financial rules, treasury procedures, directions of competent authorities and orders of competent Courts, as applicable from time to time. Actual quantities to be procured shall depend upon beneficiary strength, approved menu and availability of funds from time to time. The rate contract and placement of supply orders shall be subject to availability of funds, admissibility of expenditure, fulfillment of all codal formalities and compliance with applicable financial and treasury procedures/instructions in force from time to time. The department shall not be liable for any procurement or supply in the event of non-release of funds, non-admissibility of expenditure, change in procurement policy, modification of Government instructions, judicial directions, or any other administrative or financial restrictions imposed by the competent authority. The department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations, wholly or partly, and to cancel, modify or curtail the rate contract at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

Child Development Project Officer
POSHAN Project Zaingeer.

No: CDPO/POSHAN/2026/239-48

Dated: 20-06-2026.

DIPK-2388/26
Dated: 20-06-2026

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT.

GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR BAGHI-ALI-MARDAN, NOWSHARASRINAGAR.

E-mail:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in

Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

Re-Tender Notice/ Corrigendum.

Subject: 1. Construction of 200mm dia Production Well by ODEX Method at Kasnard Pannard Sangnard Well No. 2 District Anantnag.
2. Construction of Production Bore Well at Kharbatpora Ratnipora District Pulwama.

Reference: 1. This office Extension Notice 5th issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/2377-93, dated: 11-05-2026.

2. This office e-NIT No. 04/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2026-27, issued vide endorsement No. JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/64-76, dated: 03-04-2026. Bearing Tender ID No. 2026_PHE_307406_1 & 2.

Due to "NO Response" for the above mentioned work's advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 19-06-2026 Up-to 02:00 PM.

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Bid Submission Start date & Time	20-06-2026 Up-to 04:00 PM
2.	Last date & Time of submission of bids	01-07-2026 Up-to 02:00 AM
3.	Date & Time of opening of tenders	02-07-2026 02.00 PM

NOTE: All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endst: nos.

No:-JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp./ 2893-2909
Dated: 19-06-2026.

Sd/=
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

DIPK-2402/26
Dated: 20-06-2026

Govt timed ATD, teacher rationalization during summer vacations



Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Jun 20: The government has said that Annual Transfer Drive (ATD) and rationalization process of teachers shall be initiated and completed during summer vacations in Jammu and Kashmir.

The government however further said that the special focus of the drive shall be for the Jammu division.

Secretary School Education Department, Ram Niwas Sharma in a recent

meeting said, "ATD is to be notified so that Annual transfer drive and rationalization shall be initiated and completed during summer vacations particularly for the Jammu Division to ensure the availability of teaching staff for new academic session."

Sharma in the meeting further directed that all the HODs shall furnish a two page note on AI initiatives and use and its further scope for Ease of Living.

"Both the Directors of Jammu

and Kashmir regions shall analyse the enrolment and results for the last three years and share the district-wise analysis report with the Administrative Department," he said.

Sharma further nominated Project Director, Samagra Shiksha as the Nodal Officer for celebration of International Yoga Day falling on June-21-2026. "Both the Director shall also nominate the Nodal officer for their respective division and extend full cooperation to the Nodal officer for successful conduct of the events on the IYD."

Secretary SED in the meeting also directed the Project Director, Samagra Shiksha to share the deployment list of JEEs and AEs engaged by Samagra Shiksha with both the directors of Jammu and Kashmir divisions so that their services may be utilized for monitoring the execution of civil works taken up under capex budget.

About the de-freezing of teacher posts, Sharma said that the proposal needs to be followed in the GAD for its approval from the Council of Ministers.

Regarding the internet connectivity, Project Director, Samagra Shiksha has been directed to take the issue with the BSNL and GoI with regard to providing internet connectivity in uncovered schools—(KNO)

Delegation calls on LG Sinha

KT News Desk

Srinagar, June 20: A delegation of All J&K Christian Sabha, led by its President Ashu Peter Mattoo, called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday to discuss various issues and developmental needs concerning the Christian community in the Union Territory.

During the meeting, the delegation presented the 5-Year Souvenir Magazine of All J&K Christian Sabha, which was formally released by Lieutenant Governor. The souvenir highlights the activities, achievements, and contributions of the Christian community and the Sabha over the past five years.



Kashmir's intellect key to India's global edge: DG Tourism

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 20: Kashmir's centuries-old tradition of intellectual debate, free exchange of ideas and scholarly excellence remains relevant in shaping India's future as a global knowledge leader, Director General (Tourism), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Suman Billa said on Saturday.

Addressing a gathering here, Billa said Kashmir and Nalanda shared a common heritage as historic centres of learning where diverse streams of thought were encouraged, and intellectual discourse thrived.

Referring to remarks made by Padma Shri Shafi Shauq, Billa said the strength of great civilisations lies in their ability to accommodate differing viewpoints and challenge established ideas.

"Kashmir has historically been a fertile ground for discussion, debate and the free flow of ideas. Like Nalanda, it stood as a confluence of intellectual traditions that advanced human understanding and enriched society," he said.

The DG Tourism said the dialogue between Kashmir and Nalanda was not



said greater people-to-people engagement helps build mutual respect and strengthens social harmony.

Billa also said the world was entering an era where creativity, culture and knowledge would become more important than industrial advancement alone. "In a rapidly changing world driven by artificial intelligence and the democratisation of knowledge, India can stand tall by drawing strength from its intellectual heritage, including institutions such as Nalanda and the great schools of thought that emerged from Kashmir," he said.

The DG Tourism said India's rich civilisational legacy provides a strong foundation for future leadership and stressed the need to connect the country's diverse intellectual traditions into a coherent knowledge framework.

Expressing confidence in India's rise on the global stage, Billa said the coming decades would belong to nations capable of harnessing the power of ideas, culture and knowledge, adding that India was uniquely positioned to lead that transformation—(KNO)

'SMC rolls out 40,000-litre water backup plan for Muharram, Amarnath Yatra'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 20: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Commissioner Fazlul Haseeb on Saturday said the civic body has rolled out a 40,000-litre water backup plan to ensure uninterrupted water supply during Muharram-ul-Haram and the annual Amarnath Yatra.

After flagging off four high-capacity water tankers, the Commissioner said SMC has prepared an advance strategy in coordination with the Water

Works Division, taking into account lessons learnt from shortcomings witnessed in previous years.

"Important events including Muharram and the Amarnath Yatra are approaching. Keeping these requirements in mind, we have augmented our capacity. These tankers, with a combined capacity of 40,000 litres, will be utilised wherever there is a crisis or gap in water supply," Haseeb told reporters.

He said after identifying gaps in previous years, the civic body strengthened

its preparedness through an Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC), improved planning under capital expenditure allocations and better coordination with concerned departments.

The Commissioner said efforts are also underway to further augment the tanker fleet in coordination with the Water Works Division to improve emergency response capabilities.

He said the administration's focus remains on ensuring a robust, reliable and efficient water

supply system for residents while continuously addressing infrastructural deficiencies.

Explaining the reasons behind recurring water shortages in some localities, he said the city's growing population, rapid expansion of residential colonies and leakages in the distribution network remain key challenges.

"Earlier, a particular source catered to a limited population. Over time, the number of households and

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

EOW files chargesheet in telecom project fraud case

KNO

Srinagar, Jun 20: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Kashmir on Saturday said it has filed a chargesheet against a Kanpur-based man in a telecom project fraud case.

Officials said the investigation found that the accused allegedly duped a complainant by promising a US-based telecom call project and fraudulently obtained money through false assurances.

In a statement, a spokesperson said the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Kashmir, of Crime Branch J&K has produced a chargesheet in FIR No. 44/2023 under Section 420 IPC before the Hon'ble Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Sopore, against Harkheet Singh S/o Guru Mohan Singh R/o Kali Mata Mandir, Lal Bangla, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

He said the case pertains to a written complaint alleging that the accused

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

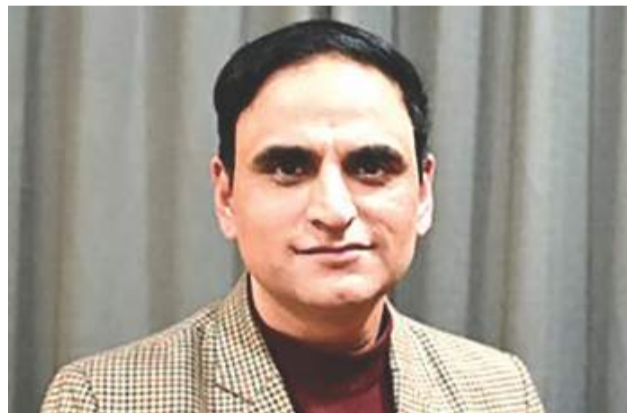
Outside-state vehicles must follow permit rules: RTO Kashmir

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 20: Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir, Qazi Irfan Rasool, on Saturday said that vehicles brought from outside Jammu and Kashmir are required to comply with mandatory registration and permit norms, asserting that transport authorities are enforcing the rules uniformly across the sector.

His remarks came after a group of All India Permit tourist vehicle operators alleged on Friday that, despite possessing valid permits, they were not being allowed to operate in Kashmir and had been denied an audience with transport authorities.

Rejecting the allegation, RTO Kashmir Qazi Irfan Rasool, while speaking to reporters



during a function said that the operators were not refused a meeting.

"The claim that we did not meet them is incorrect. They might have approached the Transport Commissioner's office but did not meet him

there," he said.

The RTO said several vehicles bearing outside-state registration numbers, including those registered in Delhi, were found operating without completing

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Iran conflict, crop harvest failures fuel saffron prices

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jun 20: Kashmir's famed saffron, known globally for its superior quality, aroma, and colouring properties, has witnessed a significant rise in prices over the past year. Growers and traders attribute the surge to a combination of geopolitical tensions in West Asia, particularly involving Iran, and a steep decline in local saffron production caused by adverse weather conditions.

According to traders, premium GI-tagged Kashmiri saffron is currently fetching around Rs 350-400 per gram, compared to nearly Rs 200-250 per gram during the same period

last year. Non-GI saffron has also recorded a substantial increase, with prices rising from approximately Rs 200 per gram to around 300 per gram. The sharp increase has been driven by reduced availability in both domestic and international markets, coupled with sustained demand for high-quality saffron.


Industry experts said that the conflict and instability involving Iran have significantly affected the global saffron trade. Iran accounts for nearly 90 per cent of global saffron production, making it the world's largest producer and exporter of the spice. Any disruption in Iranian supplies has an immediate impact on international markets, pushing prices upward

across major saffron-producing and consuming regions, they said.

The situation has had a direct effect on Kashmir, where traders also rely on Iranian saffron to meet market demand. With supplies from Iran becoming uncertain and international supply chains facing disruptions, saffron prices have surged globally, benefiting markets where stocks remain available.

However, despite the rise in prices, many saffron growers in Kashmir have been unable to fully capitalise on the trend due to poor production during the previous harvesting season.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in



In Loving Memory of Ishfaq Bhat

3rd Death Anniversary

"Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return."

Three years have passed since you left us, yet your memory remains alive in our hearts. Ishfaq, the youngest and most beloved member of our family, was known for his kindness, humility, and gentle nature. His presence brought warmth and happiness to everyone around him.

Not a day goes by without a prayer for you. Though you are no longer with us, your memories continue to comfort and inspire us.

We find peace in knowing that your beautiful soul rests in the mercy of Allah and in the gardens of Jannah.

Forever loved, deeply missed, and always remembered in our prayers.

— Bhat Family

Beyond Crops: India's New Agricultural Journey Towards Farmers' Prosperity

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian agriculture has over the past 12 years entered a completely new era. Today, policy focus has shifted from simply asking 'how much production' to deeper questions such as 'what is the farmer's actual income, how sustainable is agriculture, and how strong is the rural economy'.



Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian agriculture has over the past 12 years entered a completely new era. Earlier, our biggest concern was ensuring that the country did not face a shortage of foodgrains and that hunger could somehow be prevented. Today, Prime Minister Modi's visionary leadership and farmer-centric policies have transformed agriculture from being merely a "sector of production" into an integrated foundation for farmers' prosperity, risk protection, nutritional security, green technology and rural development. For the first time since the Green Revolution, policy focus has shifted from simply asking "how much production" to deeper questions such as "what is the farmer's actual income, how sustainable is agriculture, and how strong is the rural economy." It is with this broader thinking that the Pulses and Oilseeds Mission, Cotton Mission, National Mission on Natural Farming, Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PM-DDKY), Khet Bachao Abhiyan, digital agriculture and research-led innovation are all being connected through one comprehensive vision for agricultural transformation and rural prosperity.

Beyond Production: Income, Security and the Rural Economy

Today, India has achieved a record foodgrain production of 376.563 million tonnes, the highest in the nation's history. Paddy, wheat, maize, pulses and oilseeds have all registered remarkable growth. This is not merely a story of increased production; it is evidence of the expansion and strengthening of the overall rural economy. Alongside this, the Modi government has placed equal emphasis on farmers' risk protection and income security. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN), more than Rs 4.27 lakh crore has so far been directly transferred into farmers' bank accounts through 22 installments, providing regular annual income support to over nine crore farmer families across the country. At the same time, the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has provided a strong insurance shield to crores of farmer applicants by protecting them against crop losses caused by natural disasters and other adverse conditions.

Investments in irrigation, rural roads, agricultural infrastructure, warehouses and cold-chain systems have strengthened all three critical pillars of agriculture — production, storage and market access. Agriculture today is no longer confined to the boundaries of farmland alone. Dairy, fisheries, poultry, horticulture, beekeeping, food processing, storage systems, rural industries, solar energy and the service sector are all combining to create a new and diversified rural economy. This transformation is generating employment opportunities, increasing rural incomes and

building resilience among farming communities. The government's vision is not merely to support farming activity, but to create an entire ecosystem where agriculture becomes the foundation of economic growth, entrepreneurship and rural development.

Pulses, Oilseeds and Cotton Missions: Self-Reliance and Price Security

For a long time, the sectors of pulses, edible oils and cotton remained below their full potential. India remained dependent on imports for pulses and edible oils, while cotton farmers frequently had to face volatility in global markets. Recognising the strategic importance of these sectors, the Modi government has accorded them special priority and launched separate missions to address their challenges in a comprehensive manner.

Through the National Pulses Mission, work is being carried out across the entire value chain — from seeds to markets — in order to increase both the cultivated area and productivity of tur, urad, masoor, gram and other pulses. This includes the promotion of high-yield varieties, cluster-based farming, processing units, a strengthened MSP (minimum support price) framework, government procurement systems, storage facilities and export support. The objective is clear: India should become fully self-reliant in pulses, reduce its import bill and ensure that farmers receive sustainable incomes from these high-value crops.

Similarly, under the Oilseeds Mission, special emphasis is being placed on crops such as mustard, soybean, sunflower, sesame and palm oil. This is not merely a programme aimed at increasing production. It is part of a larger national strategy to achieve self-reliance in edible oils, strengthen the country's oil security and provide better prices to farmers. The mission seeks to improve productivity through scientific interventions, modern agricultural practices and improved market linkages.

Alongside these efforts, the Cotton Mission is focusing on high-yield and pest-resistant cotton varieties, advanced farming systems, integrated pest management, crop diversification, better integration with the textile value chain and quality improvement measures. Cotton is a major cash crop for millions of Indian farmers, and the mission aims to ensure that farmers not only increase production but also receive stable incomes, better market value and globally competitive quality standards. Through these initiatives, the government seeks to reduce dependence on imports while simultaneously strengthening farmers' incomes and India's agricultural economy.

National Mission on Natural Farming: A New Path for One Crore Farmers Across 75 Lakh Hectares

Rapidly increasing dependence on chemicals, declining soil health and

growing pressure on groundwater resources are warning signs that farming methods must change. Recognising this challenge, natural farming is being advanced as a national mission under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Our commitment is to sensitise one crore farmers towards natural farming practices, actively prepare around 18 lakh farmers to adopt natural farming and gradually bring nearly 75 lakh hectares of land under natural cultivation practices in a phased manner.

This transformation is being carried out gradually, on the basis of scientific evidence and farmers' own experiences. Small farmers are being encouraged to experiment with natural farming models on a portion of their land. They are being provided training, locally sourced input packages, certification support, branding assistance and market connectivity. The broader objective is to improve soil fertility, reduce chemical input costs, make crops more resilient against climate-related shocks and provide consumers with healthier and more nutritious food.

Natural farming is also being viewed as a sustainable response to climate change. By reducing excessive chemical usage and promoting ecological balance, the mission seeks to preserve biodiversity, conserve water and restore long-term productivity of agricultural land. The government believes that the future of Indian agriculture lies not only in higher production but also in sustainability, environmental protection and improved health outcomes for both farmers and consumers.

Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana and Focus on 100 Low-Productivity Districts

In a vast country like India, some regions progress rapidly while others continue to lag behind for various reasons. To reduce this imbalance, the Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana has been conceptualised. Under this initiative, nearly 100 low-productivity districts have been identified where per-hectare yields remain significantly below the national average and farmers are unable to obtain expected returns from agriculture.

In these districts, convergence of 36 schemes from 11 departments is being implemented through an integrated development package. This includes irrigation, soil health management, seeds, fertilisers, crop diversification, animal husbandry, horticulture, agricultural equipment, skill development, infrastructure and market linkages — all being brought together under one coordinated framework. The central idea is that government schemes should not function in isolated 'silos'; instead, they should work collectively with the farmer and the village at the centre of planning and implementation.

This marks an important shift in policy thinking. The focus is no longer limited to 'how much production is taking place', but also on identifying areas where

productivity remains low and ensuring that targeted investments and interventions help increase yields and raise farmers' incomes. The scheme seeks to create balanced agricultural growth and reduce regional disparities in rural development.

'Khet Bachao Abhiyan': Balancing Soil, Water and Farmers' Interests

In the race to increase production, pressure on soil and water resources has intensified in many regions. Imbalanced fertiliser use, excessive extraction of groundwater and limited crop rotation have adversely affected the health of agricultural land. If corrective measures are not taken in time, future generations may inherit weakened soils and degraded farmlands.

Keeping this challenge in mind, the Khet Bachao Abhiyan has been launched. This campaign is not merely about protecting soil; it is about safeguarding farmers' incomes, ensuring food quality and securing the country's long-term food security. The campaign carries five key messages. Every farmer should use fertilisers based on soil testing; excessive dependence on DAP (diammonium phosphate) and urea should be reduced while balanced NPK (nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium) use, micronutrients, bio-fertilisers and nano-fertilisers should be promoted; green manure, organic manure and integrated nutrient management should be encouraged; farmers should remain vigilant against fake seeds, fertilisers and pesticides and immediately inform authorities about such cases; and organised movement towards natural farming and climate-resilient agricultural practices should be strengthened.

The objective is not to abruptly reduce fertiliser usage, but to ensure that every farmer uses the right quantity, at the right time and in the right combination. This will help maintain long-term soil health, reduce cultivation costs and protect productivity. The campaign also seeks to create awareness among farmers about sustainable farming methods that balance profitability with environmental conservation.

Science, Digital Agriculture and the Role of ICAR

Science, research and digital technology form the backbone of all these efforts. Between 2014 and 2025, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the National Agricultural Research System (NARS) developed nearly 3,000 climate-resilient crop varieties capable of withstanding drought, floods, heat waves, salinity and other environmental stresses. In total, more than 3,800 high-yield varieties and over 200 bio-fortified varieties have been released, strengthening not only productivity but also nutritional security.

Under the Digital Agriculture Mission and 'AgriStack', systems such as Farmer IDs, digitisation of crop plots, drone-based

services, pest and disease monitoring, weather-based advisories and location-specific recommendations are being developed. These initiatives are rapidly reducing the gap between laboratories and farms, and between data collection and decision-making.

Through platforms such as e-NAM, Kisan Saathi, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) networks, mobile messaging services, WhatsApp groups, community radio and social media, scientists, extension workers and farmer leaders are now able to communicate directly with farmers. Agriculture and rural development are increasingly being viewed together through a holistic lens. Roads, electricity, internet connectivity, Self-Help Groups, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), rural industries and skill-development programmes can accelerate employment generation, entrepreneurship and social transformation in villages only when they move in step with agricultural development.

Technology is also helping create transparency and efficiency in governance. Digital systems are making subsidies, insurance benefits and advisory services more accessible to farmers. The integration of modern research with grassroots implementation is enabling Indian agriculture to become more competitive, sustainable and resilient in the face of future challenges.

Beyond the Quantity of Crops: Concrete Steps Towards Farmers' Confidence

In the coming years, India will have to further strengthen its agricultural system amid global food, nutrition and climate challenges. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision is clear — farmers' incomes must rise, their hard work must receive proper value and respect, and self-reliance in pulses, oilseeds and cotton must strengthen nutritional, edible oil and textile security.

Through PM-KISAN, PMFBY, natural farming, the Khet Bachao Abhiyan and climate-resilient technologies, the government seeks to ensure the protection of soil, water and farmers themselves. Through the Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana, targeted investment in low-productivity districts will reduce regional disparities and help every farmer progress. Science, research and digital technology will make farming more efficient, resilient, sustainable and globally competitive. When the farm survives, the farmer survives. When the farmer survives, agriculture survives. And when agriculture survives, India's future will remain secure, prosperous and self-reliant. Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this is the essence of India's new agricultural journey — moving beyond crops towards the confidence of farmers and the prosperity of rural India.

The author is Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development

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

Regional Passport Office Srinagar bags best Passport Office award

External Affairs Minister confers prestigious 'Passport Seva Puraskar' to Regional Passport Officer at New Delhi Conference

KT News Desk

Srinagar, 20 June: The Regional Passport Office (RPO), Srinagar, has been adjudged as the Best Passport Office for the year 2025-26 under the Passport Seva Puraskar. The prestigious awards are instituted annually by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, to recognize outstanding efficiency, public service delivery, and operational excellence.

The award, as per PIB statement, was presented by the External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar, to B.S. Rawat, Regional Passport Officer, Srinagar, during the annual Passport Seva Divas celebrations and the Regional Passport Officers' Conference held in New Delhi on June 19.

RPO Srinagar secured the top position by excelling across almost all key performance parameters utilized by the Ministry to assess the operational efficiency, speed of verification, grievance redressal, and



citizen-centric service delivery of passport offices nationwide.

The high-level Regional Passport Officers' Conference saw participation from Passport

Officers representing 37 Passport Offices across India, alongside senior officials of the Central Passport Organisation. The national recognition

highlights RPO Srinagar's ongoing commitment to providing seamless, transparent, and highly efficient public services to the people of the region.

Sakeena Itoo lays foundation for flood protection projects at Guddar Laisoo

KT News Desk

KULGAM, JUNE 20: Minister for Education, Health and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo, on Saturday visited Guddar Laisoo area of Kulgam district and inaugurated and laid foundation stones for several important flood protection works aimed at safeguarding the local habitations and infrastructure.

During the visit, the Minister, as per an official statement, laid the foundation stone for permanent restoration bund at Laisoo to be constructed at an estimated cost of 2.50 crore. She also laid the foundation stone for a flood protection bund at Guddar Laisoo costing 2.46 crore.

On the occasion, the Minister also inaugurated a recently completed flood protection bund constructed at a cost of 22.55 lakh, which will help protect the area from erosion and flood-related damage.

She was accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, officers from R&B, Irrigation and



Flood Control and other district officers.

Later, the Minister chaired a public outreach programme at Guddar village, where she interacted with the local residents and listened to their grievances, issues and developmental demands. The people projected various concerns, particularly seeking repair and upgradation of roads in the area.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister assured the public that their genuine demands would be taken up with the concerned departments for timely redressal.

Sakeena Itoo informed the people that additional protection bunds have already been approved and work on these projects will commence shortly. She said that the Omar Abdullah-led government is taking all necessary measures to improve public infrastructure and ensure better living conditions across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister said that the government is working tirelessly for the welfare of the people and will continue to take all necessary measures to improve infrastructure and public services.

CSB-CSR&TI Pampore hosts key meet to boost Sericulture in J&K

KT News Desk

Srinagar, 20 June: A review and monitoring meeting on sericulture development in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir was held at CSB-CSR&TI, Pampore, under the chairmanship of Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, IAS, Director, Sericulture Development Department. The meeting was attended by Dr N Sakthivel, Director, CSB-CSR&TI, along with scientists and departmental officials.

Discussions, as per a PIB statement, focused on strategies to achieve the target of 225 metric tonnes of raw silk production by 2030-31. Key areas included preparedness for upcoming silkworm

rearing seasons, disease monitoring, crop surveillance, and strengthening training and extension programmes for 2026-27.

Emphasis was laid on synchronized brushing schedules, expansion into new sericulture areas, and adoption of region-specific scientific practices. The meeting highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts, modern technologies, and effective stakeholder collaboration to enhance bivoltine silk production and rural livelihoods.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to work jointly towards sustainable growth and long-term development of the sericulture sector in Jammu & Kashmir.

Secretary RDD reviews sanitation preparedness near Holy Cave for SANJY-2026

KT News Desk

BALTAL, JUNE 20: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, Saturday undertook an extensive review of sanitation arrangements and allied facilities from Baltal Base Camp to the Holy Cave Shrine and Panjtarni to assess preparedness for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026.

The Secretary, as per an official statement, conducted an extensive field visit along the Yatra route, covering key locations including Baltal, Domail, Rail Pathri, Brari Marg, Kali Mata Track, Sangam Top, Sangam Down, the Holy Cave Shrine and Panjtarni.

Commencing his tour from Baltal Base Camp, the Secretary reviewed the sanitation infrastructure and facilities established along the entire Baltal axis up to the Holy Cave. He was accompanied by Director General, Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra, sanitation officers (BDOs) deployed at various locations and other departmental officials.

At the Holy Cave Shrine area, the Secretary took a first-hand appraisal of the sanitation arrangements and later visited Panjtarni to assess the infrastructure and public amenities put in place for the annual pilgrimage.

During the visit, Aijaz Asad reviewed sanitation facilities, health camps, solid waste management systems and other essential amenities established for the convenience of pilgrims. He assessed the overall preparedness and stressed



the need to ensure that all facilities remain fully functional and operational well before the commencement of the Yatra.

The Secretary also visited health camps and reviewed the waste management mechanisms put in place across camps and designated locations. He was informed that a four-stream waste segregation system has been introduced for effective and scientific management of waste generated during the pilgrimage.

Emphasizing environmental sustainability, he directed officers to ensure strict adherence to waste segregation protocols and maintain cleanliness along the entire route. He reviewed the functioning of toilets, washrooms, dustbins, grey water drainage systems, wet waste segregation sites and plastic waste management units. He also examined the placement of dustbins at strategic locations to facilitate waste disposal at source and promote cleanliness among

pilgrims.

While reviewing arrangements at the Holy Cave Shrine area, the Secretary directed officials to ensure regular cleaning, proper maintenance and periodic upkeep of the installed toilets and bathing facilities so that hygienic and dignified amenities are available to pilgrims throughout the Yatra.

Taking stock of the sanitation workforce deployed along the Baltal axis, he instructed officers to ensure adequate manpower at all locations and maintain the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness throughout the Yatra period. He underscored that all tracks leading to the Holy Cave must remain clean, hygienic and pilgrim-friendly at all times.

The Secretary further directed that dedicated toilet facilities for women pilgrims be earmarked at all major locations with proper and clearly visible signage to ensure convenience, accessibility and dignity for female devotees.

DC Anantnag visits Nunwan Base Camp Assesses preparedness of various departments for SANJY-2026

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, JUNE 20: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag (Yatra Officer Pahalgam Axis), Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat Saturday visited Nunwan Base Camp Pahalgam, to assess the preparedness of various departments for the ensuing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026.

The DC, as per an official statement, was accompanied by CEO PDA, ADC, SEs R&B, Jal Shakti and KPDC, SDMs Bijbehara and Pahalgam, CMO, Tehsildar, Police Officers, Exens of various engineering wings, ULB and F&ES officials and other concerned officials.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner conducted an extensive inspection of facilities and logistical arrangements being established for the pilgrims. He reviewed accommodation, sanitation, drinking water supply, power availability, healthcare services, security arrangements, and other essential amenities at the base camp.

Emphasizing the significance of SANJY as one of the country's most important religious pilgrimages, Dr. Bilal directed all departments to work in close coordination and ensure that every facility is put in place well before the commencement of the Yatra. He stressed the need to maintain high standards of cleanliness, efficient service delivery, and robust emergency response mechanisms to facilitate a safe and comfortable pilgrimage experience.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the progress of ongoing infrastructure and developmental works at the base camp and instructed the executing agencies to expedite pending works and adhere strictly to prescribed timelines.

Subsequently, the DC chaired a comprehensive review meeting at Pahalgam Club, where department-wise preparedness and the progress of arrangements were discussed in detail. He directed the officers to ensure flawless coordination for a smooth and successful conduct of SANJY-2026.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with representatives of Tent Associations, Trade Associations, Pony Associations, and other stakeholders associated with the Yatra. He patiently heard their suggestions and assured them that all genuine issues would be addressed on priority adding that keeping with the tradition they have a huge role during the forthcoming Yatra.

Reiterating the administration's commitment to ensuring successful conduct of the pilgrimage, the DC stressed on maintaining high standards of readiness by all stakeholders so the best possible facilities are provided to the visiting devotees.

The district administration is undertaking extensive measures to ensure that SANJY-2026 is conducted in a safe, organized, and pilgrim-friendly manner.

DC Kulgam chairs IPPI review meeting

KT News Desk

KULGAM, JUNE 20: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Saturday chaired an IPPI (Intensified Pulse Polio Immunization) review meeting to finalize arrangements for the upcoming Pulse Polio campaign.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by officers from the Health Department and other concerned stakeholders. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the preparedness of the district and stressed the importance of ensuring that no eligible child is left out of the immunization drive. It was informed that a target of 87,770 children has been set for vaccination across the



district. For the successful implementation of the campaign, 519 vaccination booths and 13 transit camps have been established to cover children at fixed sites as well as those on the move.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure effective awareness, monitoring, and supervision to achieve 100 percent coverage of the target population.

IGNOU activates 19 Agriculture-Based Programmes at SKUAST-Kashmir from July 2026

KT News Desk

Srinagar, 20 June: In a significant step towards expanding access to quality agricultural education in Jammu & Kashmir, the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Regional Centre Srinagar, has established a new Study Centre at the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K). On the consecutive demand of stakeholders, 19 agriculture-based programmes have been activated at SKUAST-K following an MoU signed by Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad (SKUAST-K) and Regional Director IGNOU Dr. A. H. Rizvi, with approval accorded by Prof. Uma Kanjilal, Vice-Chancellor IGNOU.

The newly established Study Centre, as per a PIB statement, will offer a wide range of academic programmes from IGNOU's School of Agriculture

(SOA), New Delhi, enabling aspiring students, agricultural professionals, entrepreneurs, and rural youth to pursue higher education and skill development through the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode. The centre aims to strengthen agricultural education, promote sustainable farming practices, and enhance employability opportunities in agriculture and allied sectors. Enrolled students will have access to academic counselling, learner support services, practical training, and expert guidance from both institutions.

The admission process for the July 2026 Admission Cycle is currently underway. Interested candidates can apply for various certificate, diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate programmes offered by the SOA, IGNOU New Delhi. The activated programmes include Master of Science in Food Safety and Quality Management, MBA in Agribusiness Management,

Post Graduate Diplomas in Food Safety and Quality Management and Agribusiness, and a Post Graduate Certificate in Agriculture Policy. It also includes a Bachelor of Science (Food Safety and Quality Management), alongside specialized Diplomas in Value Added Products from Fruits & Vegetables, Meat Technology, Watershed Management, Horticulture, Agricultural Cost Management, and Dairy Technology. Certificate courses in Beekeeping, Organic Farming, Poultry Farming, Water Harvesting & Management, and Sericulture, along with an Awareness Programme on Dairy Farming, are also available.

Speaking on the occasion, Regional Director Dr. A.H. Rizvi expressed confidence that this collaboration will significantly contribute to capacity building and human resource development, benefiting both urban and rural

students through flexible and affordable education. Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad welcomed the initiative on the university premises, while Registrar Prof. Azmat Alam Khan committed to providing all necessary infrastructural facilities. Prof. (Dr.) Mohd. Altaf Bhat, Director Education SKUAST-K, convened the meeting for the centre's establishment, and Prof. Vijayakumar P, Director SOA, played a major role at IGNOU Headquarters. Dr. Rohitashw Kumar, Associate Dean and Professor, has been appointed as the first Coordinator of the Learner Support Centre-30041, expressing his commitment to promotional activities and quality education. Prospective learners are advised to visit the IGNOU Admission Portal or contact IGNOU Regional Centre Srinagar or the Coordinator at SKUAST-K, Shalimar Campus, for detailed information.

Nasha Mukh J&K Abhiyan DIPR's Cultural Unit organises awareness programme at HSS Palpora

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 20: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukh Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, the Cultural Unit of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Srinagar, organised an awareness programme at Higher Secondary School (HSS) Palpora, Srinagar, aimed at sensitising students about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

During the programme, students, as per an official statement, delivered thoughtful and informative speeches highlighting the dangers of substance abuse and the importance of adopting a healthy and responsible lifestyle.

Adding a creative dimension to the awareness campaign, artists of Kashmir Kala Manch presented a thematic short play depicting the adverse social and personal consequences of drug



addiction. The performance was widely appreciated by the audience for its powerful message and effective presentation.

Speaking on the occasion, the Cultural Officer Kashmir and AECO stressed the need for active youth participation in the fight against drug abuse. They urged students to become ambassadors of change and contribute towards making

Jammu and Kashmir a drug-free society.

The Principal of HSS Palpora expressed gratitude to the DIPR Cultural Unit for organising the programme and appreciated the department's efforts in spreading awareness among students. The Principal also highlighted the importance of collective action in addressing the menace of drug abuse.

PM-KISAN transforms rural economy, says Minister Javi Dar

Attends virtual release of 23rd installment at SKUAST-K

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 20: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar on Saturday attended the virtual event marking the release of the 23rd installment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K). The installment was released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who transferred the financial assistance directly into the bank accounts of the eligible farmers from across the country through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mechanism. In Jammu and Kashmir, an amount of approximately 4,209.82 crore has been successfully disbursed

among 9.17 lakh beneficiaries under the PM-KISAN scheme since its inception, providing vital financial assistance to the farming community. The Union Territory-level function organised at SKUAST-Kashmir witnessed the participation of Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Kashmir, Professor Nazir Ahmad Ganie, senior scientists, officers of the Agriculture Production Department, progressive farmers, scholars and other stakeholders. Speaking on the occasion, Javid Ahmad Dar said that PM-KISAN has emerged as a transformative initiative aimed at providing assured financial support to the farmers and strengthening the rural economy. He said that the timely release of installments enables farmers to meet agricultural input costs, adopt improved farming practices and undertake allied agricultural activities

more effectively. Highlighting the growing significance of agriculture in the face of climate change and emerging environmental challenges, the Minister emphasized that the sector remains the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's economy and a key source of livelihood for a large section of the population. He stressed the need to promote climate-resilient agriculture, efficient water management, crop diversification and the adoption of modern technologies to enhance productivity and sustainability. The Minister observed that agriculture today is not only a means of livelihood but also a promising avenue for innovation, entrepreneurship and employment generation. He expressed satisfaction that educated youth, including graduates, post-graduates and Ph.D. scholars in agricultural sciences, are increasingly

taking keen interest in agriculture and allied sectors and contributing through research, innovation and field-level interventions for the welfare of the farming community. He stated that the Jammu and Kashmir Government is undertaking several farmer-centric initiatives aimed at strengthening the extension services, improving access to scientific knowledge and ensuring that farmers are equipped with the latest information and technologies to address emerging challenges. The Minister reiterated that under the PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi Yojana, eligible farmers receive 6,000 annually in three equal installments of 2,000 each. The amount is being directly credited to their bank accounts through the DBT system, ensuring transparency, accountability and efficiency in service delivery.



Dr Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan on Saturday

Legal rights must translate into accessible support for women: SC judge

Justice Vikram Nath addresses JKLSA prog on 'Empowering Women and Strengthening Institutional Legal Support'

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 20: The Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority under the guidance of National Legal Services Authority on Saturday organised a mega awareness programme on "Empowering Women and Strengthening Institutional Legal Support" at SKICC, Srinagar.

Among others present on the occasion were Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority; Justice S. V. N. Bhatti, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Supervising Judge for J&K Legal Services Authority; Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Chief Justice (Acting), High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority; Justice Sanjay Dhar, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Chairperson, High Legal Services Committee besides other Judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

The programme was conceived as a common institutional platform to strengthen awareness of the legal rights of women and girl children and to improve coordination among the Legal Services Institutions, Police, Health, Education, Social Welfare, One Stop Centres, Child Welfare Committees and other authorities responsible for protection, legal assistance, compensation, rehabilitation and follow-up support.

In his presidential address, Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA, emphasized that the effectiveness of Legal Services Institutions must be judged by whether a person in distress is able to approach the system without fear, be heard with dignity and receive competent assistance without avoidable delay. He called upon all the stakeholders to strengthen the legal literacy, institutional coordination and grassroots outreach so that constitutional and statutory safeguards become a practical reality for women and girl children.

Justice Vikram Nath further stressed that the proceedings and key deliberations of this conference should be translated into vernacular languages and circulated among all concerned stakeholders, so that the knowledge and guidance emanating from the conference are easily understood and effectively acted upon at grassroots level.

Justice S. V. N. Bhatti, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Supervising Judge for the J&K Legal Services Authority, during his special address, highlighted the need for functional grievance mechanisms, trained stakeholders and victim-sensitive procedures. He observed that women and children should not be compelled to navigate a fragmented institutional system or repeatedly recount traumatic experiences before different authorities. Clear referral

pathways, confidentiality and accountability, he stated, are necessary for meaningful legal empowerment.

While delivering the inaugural address, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Chief Justice (Acting), High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority, underscored that access to justice cannot be measured merely by the availability of laws and institutions.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar called for stronger grassroots outreach and effective functioning of Front Offices, Legal Aid Clinics, Panel Lawyers and Para-Legal Volunteers so that persons in need are guided to appropriate remedies without procedural hardships. He also stressed the importance of convergence among all stakeholder institutions dealing with women in distress.

Recalling the distinguished tradition of humanitarian and justice-oriented intervention by the J&K Legal Services Authority, Justice Sanjeev Kumar highlighted its exemplary response in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake of 2005. The J&K Legal Services Authority undertook proactive measures to reach out to the affected population and facilitated timely settlement of their claims. In a significant departure from conventional court-based proceedings, Judicial Officers stepped beyond the confined traditional courtrooms and conducted Lok Adalats in the open, closer to the

affected communities, enabling victims to receive compensation and have their claims settled on the spot.

Senior functionaries, including the General Managers of the concerned insurance companies, were brought together on a common platform so that insurance claims could be examined and settled expeditiously, thereby demonstrating how responsive, innovative and compassionate justice-delivery mechanisms can provide meaningful relief during times of crisis.

Justice Sanjay Dhar, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Chairperson, High Court Legal Services Committee, in his address, observed that recognition of a right in law is only the beginning and that the real test of justice lies in whether the right can be understood, approached and effectively enforced.

Justice Sanjay Dhar emphasized that the constitutional character of the justice system is reflected in the manner in which a woman is received by the first institution she approaches. Prompt assistance, confidentiality, sensitivity and institutional follow-up, he said, are essential to prevent secondary victimisation and restore confidence in the justice system.

On the occasion, "ENDEAVOUR-2025", the Annual Newsletter-cum-Compendium reflecting the legal services activities and initiatives undertaken across the Union Territory

during the year 2025, was released by the dignitaries.

The awareness programme was also graced by the presence of Justice Sindhu Sharma, Justice Rajesh Oswal, Justice Mohd. Akram Chowdhary, Justice Rahul Bharti, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal, Justice Rajesh Sekhri, Justice Mohd. Yousuf Wani, Justice Sanjay Parihar and Justice Shahzad Azeem.

The programme was also attended by a Former Chief Justice and other former Judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh; officers of NALSA and the Registry of High Court of J&K and Ladakh; Judicial Officers; representatives of the Civil and Police Administration; academicians and representatives of various Government departments and institutions.

The dignitaries also flagged off Multi-Utility Vehicles for the District Legal Services Authorities of Kashmir Province. These vehicles will strengthen the mobile legal services and enable DLSAs to extend legal awareness and legal aid services to remote, far-flung and underserved areas.

The programme thereafter unfolded through two technical sessions. The first technical session, on the theme "Women's Rights, Legal Empowerment and Access to Justice: Role of Legal Services Institutions", was chaired by Justice Vikram Nath and co-chaired by Justice S. V. N. Bhatti. The session focused on the Sexual Harassment of Women

at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 and the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.

The deliberations in the first session covered safe and dignified workplaces, constitution and effective functioning of Internal and Local Committees, child-friendly procedures under the POCSO Act, protection of identity and privacy, reproductive rights, bodily autonomy, confidentiality and timely access to lawful medical care. The role of Legal Services Authorities in creating awareness, facilitating early legal intervention and coordinating with first-response institutions was also discussed. The session concluded with remarks by Justice S. V. N. Bhatti, who stressed that statutory compliance must be substantive and not merely formal or paper-based.

The second technical session, on the theme "Institutional Support, Victim Assistance and Convergence Mechanisms for Women in Distress", was chaired by Justice Sindhu Sharma, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Executive Chairman, Ladakh Legal Services Authority and co-chaired by Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

While chairing the session, Justice Sindhu Sharma emphasized the need for a coordinated and compassionate institutional response that places the dignity, safety and rehabilitation of the

survivor at the centre of every intervention.

Justice Sindhu Sharma stressed that effective convergence among Legal Services Institutions, police, medical authorities, welfare departments and other stakeholders is essential to ensure timely and comprehensive assistance to women in distress.

The technical resource persons emphasized that justice for a survivor cannot end with registration of a case or conclusion of trial and that medical care, counselling, legal representation, shelter, protection, compensation and rehabilitation may be required simultaneously.

The session also discussed cyberstalking, impersonation, misuse of images, online blackmail and technology-enabled abuse, with emphasis on prompt reporting, preservation of digital evidence, privacy and victim-sensitive handling of complaints.

In her concluding remarks, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi underlined that convergence becomes meaningful only when responsibilities are clearly assigned, timelines are known and the victim is supported through a continuum of assistance.

The welcome address was presented by Shazia Tabasum, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and the vote of thanks was delivered by Haq Nawaz Zargar, Principal District & Sessions Judge and Chairperson, District Legal Services Authority, Srinagar.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Our goal to revive

Kashmir, from the temples of Tamil Nadu to the monasteries of Ladakh, from the ghats of Kashi to the valleys of Kashmir, each region preserves its distinct cultural identity and rhythm of life. Our shared aim should be to weave these diversities into a harmonious unity that enriches the nation's collective consciousness," LG Sinha said.

He observed that Indian civilization has always been defined by its centers of knowledge. Nalanda, Takshashila, Vikramashila, and many others were hubs of global intellectual exchange, attracting travelers from China, Korea, Java, Persia, and West Asia.

"Nalanda is a living intellectual cosmos of its time. It is a seat of critical thinking and curiosity where thousands of scholars in the past engaged deeply with logic, grammar, medicine, mathematics, philosophy, religion, and the arts. Likewise, Jammu Kashmir was the unique Sharda Peeth of learning, drawing people from afar for instruction across disciplines from mathematics to music.

The young generation needs to understand India's knowledge traditions, whose roots strengthened in Bihar region during Emperor Ashoka's era around the third century BCE. European scholars once overlooked this legacy but I am happy to note that the host city of this event, Srinagar, was also established by Emperor Ashoka. The Srinagar-Nalanda Dialogue reminds us that the moment has come to renew this tradition as a modern, relevant intellectual project. Just as scholars in ancient times travelled from Nalanda to Jammu Kashmir carrying manuscripts, philosophies, and scientific ideas, we must revive open exchange and deep engagement of ideas," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said that our ancient towns are living learning centres and cities such as Nalanda, Srinagar, Jammu, Purmandal, Varanasi, Hampi, Sanchi, Madurai, Puri, and Thanjavur carry centuries of experience and knowledge.

"We must strengthen the role of these towns. That requires infrastructure development, heritage conservation, and platforms like the Srinagar-Nalanda Dialogue for cultural exchange. We should continuously promote festivals, exhibitions, and discussions that bring

together these towns and artists, scholars, and citizens from across the world," he said.

Padma Shri Prof Shafi Shaqu; Suman Billa, Director General Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; Prof. Siddharth Singh, Vice Chancellor Nava Nalanda Mahavihara University; Chittaranjan Tripathy, Director National School of Drama New Delhi; D Aaliya, Festival Chairperson, Nalanda Literature Festival; Shri Ganga Kumar, Festival Director Nalanda Literature Festival; Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir; Prof. Nilofer Khan Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Dr. GV Sundeep Chakravathy, SSP Srinagar; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; senior officials, literary personalities, prominent citizens and youth in large were present. (KNO)

Yoga invaluable

mind and body, bridges the bond between humanity and nature, and guides us toward a more holistic realm of health and happiness. With rising stress and modern health challenges, Yoga offers a powerful ray of hope. Let's take a step toward wellness today by participating and committing to a healthier lifestyle."

Under PM Modi,

Shah also highlighted the creation of dedicated institutional mechanisms for cooperatives and dairy development, saying these initiatives have contributed to strengthening rural economies.

Marking more than 12 years of the National Democratic Alliance government at the Centre, Shah said the BJP would continue working towards Prime Minister Modi's vision of making India a developed nation by 2047. He expressed confidence that the NDA would continue receiving public support in the years ahead. (KNO)

J&K records lowest

official figures reveal that school at upper primary level, Jammu and Kashmir was facing a dropout rate of 2.65 percent in the year 2022-2023 and 4.23 percent in the preceding academic year.

It reveals that in 2020-21, Jammu and Kashmir schools at secondary level were facing

a dropout rate of 3.68 percent followed by 5.96 percent in 2021-22 and 6.20 percent in the academic year 2022-23.

The report suggests that in the academic year 2023-24, schools in Jammu and Kashmir at secondary level were facing a dropout rate of 9.07 percent. (KNO)

J&K Lok Bhavan

It has been home to great luminaries and historic icons such as Maharshi Sri Aurobindo, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Chhatrapada, Khudiram Bose, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, and Mahasweta Devi, who gave a new direction to our spiritual and national consciousness. May the state continue to scale new heights of growth and development," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor recalled the pivotal role of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee in spearheading the movement for the complete integration of Jammu Kashmir.

"Building upon the foundation of national unity that Dr. Mookerjee strengthened through his historic struggle, Jammu Kashmir is today advancing on a new path of development and prosperity. I salute his indomitable courage, patriotism and dedication to the motherland," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the youth to draw inspiration from such monumental personalities and contribute toward building a strong, prosperous and Viksit Bharat.

Ensure foolproof

taken to secure the life and property of citizens in Jammu and Kashmir," he said, adding, "The Home Secretary was also briefed about the steps taken to maintain the prevailing peace and break the terror ecosystem in the Union Territory."

Pertinently, on June 12 Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a high-level meeting in New Delhi to review security preparedness for the Amarnath Yatra. He directed the top security brass to focus on ensuring a safe and smooth pilgrimage for devotees. "Safety of pilgrims

remains the top priority of the PM Modi-led government," Shah said.

The Union Home Minister directed officials to put in place a comprehensive, multi-layered security grid along the Yatra routes through close coordination between Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), the Jammu and Kashmir Police, and other security agencies.

Shah laid emphasis on integrating modern technology with traditional security mechanisms.

During the meeting officials were directed to ensure extensive deployment of drones, CCTV surveillance, and advanced monitoring systems to further strengthen situational awareness and threat response capabilities.

The Home Minister also instructed that senior officers from CAPFs and the Jammu and Kashmir Police be deployed at key camp locations to maintain continuous oversight of arrangements on the ground throughout the duration of the Yatra.

Apart from the Yatra routes, HM Shah asked officials to ensure enhanced security arrangements at other major tourist locations across Jammu and Kashmir so that visiting pilgrims can travel safely and without disruption.

The annual Amarnath Yatra, which draws thousands of devotees each year to the Himalayan shrine, is set to commence on July 3, with authorities working to ensure tight security and smooth management amid challenging terrain and weather conditions. (KNO)

Rain, hailstorm

16.2 mm, followed by Kukernag at 13.1 mm, Katra at 9.7 mm and Qazigund at 6.4 mm. Srinagar recorded 1 mm of rainfall.

The MeT department said generally cloudy weather with one or two spells of light rain, intense showers, thunderstorms, lightning, hailstorms and gusty winds is likely at many places till June 22. From June 23 to 26, the weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy with scattered rain and thunder activity at a few places.

The Department advised people to stay indoors during thunderstorms and lightning, avoid electric poles, wires, loose structures and old trees, and suspend boating and shikara operations during adverse weather conditions.

It also warned that isolated hailstorms are likely over parts of north and south Kashmir during the next few days, while brief intense showers may trigger flash floods and mudslides at vulnerable locations, particularly in parts of Kashmir, Banihal, Ramban and Kishtwar. (KNO)

'Nation first, always'

socio-economic empowerment of local communities, particularly women engaged in Pashmina production and allied activities. The Vice-President appreciated the dedication of scientists, staff and local stakeholders, whose collective efforts are helping strengthen rural livelihoods, enhance women's economic participation and preserve an invaluable national asset for future generations.

During his visit to Ushpi, the Vice-President also inspected the first rock check dam on the Sindhu River, constructed under the Sindhu Jal Samridhi Abhiyan. Appreciating the eco-friendly and cost-effective initiative, he described it as an innovative and locally adapted solution to Ladakh's recurring water challenges.

The Vice-President lauded the vision and leadership of the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, for conceptualising and spearheading the initiative. He noted that the pioneering project augments water levels in shallow stretches of the Sindhu River, enabling farmers to irrigate their fields during the critical sowing season. He observed that such sustainable interventions can significantly strengthen water security, support agricultural livelihoods and contribute to the long-term development of the region.

Later in the day, the Vice-President also met with the brave personnel of the 5th Battalion of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) in Ladakh. He lauded their unwavering dedication, professionalism, and steadfast commitment to safeguarding the nation's frontiers under some of the most challenging conditions.

The Vice-President is on a three-day official visit to Ladakh from June 19 to 21, 2026. During the visit, he will participate in the International Day of Yoga celebrations on June 21, 2026. (KNO)

'Paschimbanga Divas' reminder of struggle that kept Bengal in India: Modi

PTI

Tarakeswar, Jun 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday invoked Bengal's Partition-era history and the role of Syama Prasad Mookerjee to assert June 20 marked a defining moment that ensured West Bengal remained within India, while alleging that efforts were made to include the entire undivided province in Pakistan during Partition.

Launching a sharp attack on the Congress, Modi alleged that it had "bowed before conspiratorial forces" during Partition, and later sought to erase the history and significance of 'Paschimbanga Divas', claiming Bengal's past had been "whitewashed" for political reasons.

Addressing a programme to mark the 'Paschimbanga Divas' after inaugurating and laying the foundation stone for development projects at Tarakeswar in Hooghly district, the PM sought to blend history with contemporary politics, portraying the state's recent political change as a continuation of the aspirations that "shaped the creation of West Bengal" in 1947.

"We need to repeatedly highlight the importance of 'Paschimbanga Divas'. It is important for the younger generation to know what was happening during that period,"



he said.

Describing June 20 as a defining moment in Bengal's history, Modi said the observance was about recalling "an entire chapter of history" rather than merely marking a date on the calendar.

On June 20, 1947, legislators from the Hindu-majority districts of undivided Bengal voted in favour of Partition and for joining the Indian Union, a development that eventually paved the way for the creation of West Bengal.

Paying tributes to Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee, who was

with the Hindu Mahasabha during the Partition years, Modi credited him with spearheading the Bengali Hindu Homeland movement that opposed proposals for including the whole of Bengal in Pakistan during Partition.

"When efforts were being made to make the whole of Bengal a part of Pakistan, Congress had bowed before conspiratorial forces. It was then that Syama Prasad Mookerjee raised his voice against it. In April 1947, he got a historic resolution passed, and those who were anti-India got to know that the whole of Bengal

would not become a part of Pakistan," he said.

The Prime Minister said that Mookerjee, along with several eminent personalities, mobilised public opinion and led a movement that culminated in the creation of West Bengal.

"When there was a conspiracy to separate the whole of Bengal from India, a separate West Bengal was created to thwart those designs," he said. Modi said the state remaining within India was crucial for preserving Bengal's civilisation and cultural heritage.

"The civilisation and culture that are thousands of years old, along with the region's core faith and traditions, are preserved today in the form of West Bengal because those attempts were defeated," he said.

Recalling the trauma of Partition, Modi said Bengal had paid a heavy price with bloodshed and displacement, but succeeded in preserving its identity.

"The violence in Kolkata in 1946 and the Noakhali riots claimed the lives of many innocent people. Bengal witnessed bloodshed, lost its own people, and saw its motherland being partitioned. Yet, Bengal did not allow its cultural identity and heritage to be destroyed," the PM said.

The remarks came amid a renewed political focus

on June 20, a date that has increasingly become a point of argument in Bengal's political discourse, with the BJP projecting it as a landmark in the state's history and a tribute to Mookerjee's role in preserving Bengal's place within India.

Modi also alleged that the significance of the movement leading to the creation of West Bengal had been deliberately downplayed over the decades for political reasons.

"The same spirit with which West Bengal was saved should have been used to take it forward. But, the opposite happened. Attempts were made to erase the history and significance of 'Paschimbanga Divas' and the spirit behind it. Because of political agendas, history was whitewashed," he said.

Launching a broadside against the Congress, the Prime Minister asserted that the party abandoned Bengal during Partition and later pursued appeasement politics.

"The Congress, which was willing to abandon Bengal during Partition like an orphan, went on to play politics of appeasement in West Bengal after Partition. Bengal's history was suppressed," he said.

He also claimed that Mookerjee's contributions were ignored because of ideological considerations.

India always spread peace in world: President



PTI

Rairangpur (Odisha), Jun 20: President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday said India has always spread peace in the world because issues can only be resolved through mutual discussion, not war.

"Whenever the world reeled under war-like conflicts and uncertainties, India spread the message of peace... Issues can be resolved through mutual discussion, not through war," she said, while addressing a public gathering at Rairangpur in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, where she, along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attended the second anniversary

celebrations of the state's BJP government.

India's glory has enhanced at the international level due to PM Modi's "influential leadership", she said, while praising him for his dedication towards the country and its people.

The entire world witnessed India's management skills during the COVID-19 pandemic. During that period, India not only successfully vaccinated its people, but also provided vaccines to several foreign countries, she said.

India has always been the first to extend a helping hand to countries facing natural calamities, she added.

Nationwide mock drill held ahead of NEET-UG re-exam

NTA says 'comprehensive arrangements' in place

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 20: A nationwide mock drill was conducted across the country on Saturday on the eve of the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination as part of efforts to ensure smooth, secure and transparent conduct of the medical entrance test, officials said.

In a statement, the National Testing Agency (NTA) said it has put in place "comprehensive arrangements" to ensure a "fair, secure and candidate-friendly" conduct of re-examination.

More than 22.79 lakh medical aspirants will appear for the re-examination on Sunday, nearly seven weeks after

the original test was cancelled following allegations of a paper leak that triggered nationwide outrage, political sparring and legal challenges.

The re-examination will be held from 2 pm to 5.15 pm across 551 cities in India and 14 cities abroad. Candidates with disabilities (PwD/PwBD) eligible for compensatory time will be allowed to write the examination till 6.20 pm.

Candidates have been asked to report to their examination centres between 11 am and 1.30 pm.

"Entry gates will close sharp at 1.30 pm, and no candidate will be permitted entry thereafter under any circumstance," the agency said. The

examination is being conducted in English and 12 Indian languages. On exam day, candidates have been advised to carry their admit card, a valid photo identity proof and two passport-size photographs.

The NTA said security and surveillance arrangements for the re-examination include more than 95,000 examination rooms, each fitted with CCTV, and a total of 1,38,560 CCTV cameras being monitored live at the national, state and ministry levels. The CCTV feeds are also being analysed through AI-based tools to flag anomalies, while 51,311 jammers have been deployed to guard against electronic malpractice.

India becoming centre for solutions to humanity's future challenges: Om Birla

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 20: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday said India was emerging as a centre for solutions to "all the challenges of humanity - present and future", and asserted that the world was looking towards the country and its IITs for answers to future global challenges.

Addressing an event at IIT Delhi, Birla said the institutions had evolved from being engineering centres into key hubs of innovation, research and problem-solving across sectors ranging from agriculture and water to AI, robotics, clean energy and public welfare.

The event, held to celebrate 75 years of IIT excellence, also saw the launch of the PanIIT Book Club and inaugural book release - IIT: The Story of India's Most Prestigious Educational Ecosystem, authored by Prabhat Kumar, IRS,



Chairman, Pan IIT Alumni India, at the Lecture Hall Complex, IIT Delhi.

Pan IIT Alumni India, the apex body representing over 500,000 alumni from all 23 Indian Institutes of Technology across the globe.

"We are not working only for the country; India is becoming a centre for solutions to all the challenges of humanity - present and future. That is why the world is looking toward us, believing that the solutions to future global challenges will emerge from IIT institutions," he said.

HQ District Police, Kupwara, UT of J&K

No.-CRB/Lookout Email: dpokupwara@jkpolice.gov.in Dated: 15/06/2026
Notice/2026/32907-50

LOOKOUT NOTICE

As intimated by SHO P/S Trehgam vide letter No. 818/5-A/PST/2026 dated 13-06-2026, that accused MD Akhtar S/O MD Masrudin R/o Madhopur, District Supaul, State Bihar is involved in case FIR No. 25/2026 U/S 65 (1), 351(3) BNS, 5/6 PCSO Act P/S Trehgam and is absconding after commission of crime. Despite strenuous efforts, whereabouts of the said accused are not ascertained so far. The Photograph

Alongwith description roll of absconding accused person in as under:-

Description Roll	Photograph
Name:- MD Akhtar Parentage:- MD Masrudin Address:- Madhopur, District Supaul, State: Bihar Age:- 24 years Height:- 5 Feet 7 Inch Hair:- Black Complexion:- Brownish Build:- Normal	

It is therefore requested that a sharp lookout may please be maintained and if traced out or any clue leading to the whereabouts of said absconding accused, immediate information may kindly be shared on the below mentioned Email/phone No's.

Email: dpokupwara@jkpolice.gov.in

PCR Kupwara:- 7051404938
 SHO P/S Trehgam: 7051404916
 PS Trehgam:- 7051404917
DIPK-2307/26
 Dated: 19-06-2026
 Syed Al-Tahir Gilani-JKPS
 Sr. Superintendent of Police, Kupwara

3 Indian-flagged oil tankers transit through Strait of Hormuz



PTI

New Delhi, Jun 20: Three Indian-flagged crude oil tankers carrying over 8.6 lakh million tonnes of cargo with 94 crew members from the country transited through the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday and are en route to India, Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said.

The three crude oil tankers -- Desh Vaibhav, Desh Vibhor, and Sanmar Herald -- are expected to arrive in India between June 24 and July 1.

While Desh Vaibhav is expected to

reach Vadinar Port on June 24, Desh Vibhor is likely to arrive at Sikka Port the same day. Sanmar Herald, the third Indian-flagged oil tanker to cross the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday, is scheduled to reach Paradip on July 1.

"3 Indian-flagged crude oil tankers, Desh Vaibhav, Desh Vibhor and Sanmar Herald carrying over 8.6 Lakh MT of cargo with 94 Indian crew members have successfully transited the Strait of Hormuz today and are en route to India," Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways Sonowal said in a post on X.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AGRICULTURE OFFICER, DISTRICT BUDGAM (PUBLIC NOTICE)

Subject: Provisional Merit List of eligible applicants for engagement as Krishi Udyamis (KUs) at various KKG of phase-II in District Budgam.
 In response to advertisement Notice No. 02 of 2026 dated 13/05/2026 under No. CAOB/Plan/2026-27/1794-1800 Dated 13/05/2026 & advertisement Notice No. 03 of 2026 dated 13/05/2026 and in reference to Mission Director HADP J&K UT order No E-7358056/Plan-2/2/2023 dated 07.02.2024, and further directions by Worthy District Development Commissioner Budgam Vide No. DDCB/KKG/5881-82 dated 08-11-2024 regarding engagement of Krishi Udyamis (KUs) for establishment of 119 KKGs at various Vacant KKGs/ Ouster Panchayats of District Budgam approved in phase II under HADP, only 02 applications from desired applicants were received upto cut of date (26-05-2026) for 07 Panchayats/cluster only, whereas no application was received for 05 Panchayats. The 02 applications for these 02 Panchayat/Clusters, thus received, were scrutinized by the committee of District Agriculture officers of Budgam framed vide No. CAOB/Plan/2024.25/11209-14 dated 05.12.2024 and 02 no. of applications were found eligible. Whereas, the total of 05 vacant Panchayat/Clusters will be re-advertise due to no eligible applications received, the provisional Merit List of the 02 eligible applicants for 02 Panchayat/Clusters, thus emerged based on the points obtained by the applicants as per eligibility and qualification criteria as fixed in the advertisement notification, preferring elder over younger in case of tie-up within the same KKG Panchayat/cluster.

The Panchayat wise provisional merit list of the 02 eligible candidates for 02 Panchayat/Clusters are hereby published for information of general public and inviting of objections (if any) which shall be received in the Office of Chief Agriculture Officer Budgam within 07 (Seven) days from the date of Publication. No objections will be entertained afterwards.

No. CAOB/Plan/2026-27/3924-33 Dated: 20-06-2026 **DIPK-2418/26**
DATED: 20-06-2026

Chairman DLIC KKG
Chief Agriculture Officer Budgam

S. No.	Name of the Cluster Panchayat	Name	Parentage	Residence	Domicile Panchayat Falling in the Cluster (Max. Points 25)	Female Candida to (Max. Points 5)	Bsc (Max. Points 25)	Bsc Agri/ Allied (Max. Points 45)	Diploma in Agri./BAT/ BHT / etc (Max. Points 15)	Diploma/ Certificate in Computer Application (Max Marks 15)	PG Science /Agri/ Allied (Max Marks 10)	Total Points earned
1	Watkaloo	Sumeera Yousuf	Mohd Yousuf najar	Watkulu	25	5	25	0	0	15	10	80
2	Narbal	Nazima Bashir	Bashir Ahmad bhat	Narbal	25	5	25	0	0	15	10	80

District level Subject Matter Specialist Budgam (Member) Asst Soil Conservation Officer Budgam Member District Agri Officer Ext Budgam Chairman Chief Agriculture Officer District Budgam

Iran talks to begin today in Switzerland

Tehran says Hormuz closed over Lebanon fighting

AP

Tyre (Lebanon), Jun 20: Iran dealt two quick blows to the interim agreement with the United States on Saturday, angered by Israel's continued attacks in Lebanon, saying it had closed the Strait of Hormuz and also announcing that while its negotiators were going to Switzerland for talks, not much is likely to happen there.

Key mediator Pakistan, meanwhile, said the technical-level talks will begin on Sunday in Burgenstock, Switzerland, with Qatari mediators also participating.

In Tehran's first salvo, Iran's joint military command said the strait had been closed, citing the Israeli attacks and US "bad faith" and "clear breach of its commitments" by failing to end the war. Its statement on state television warned that "if the aggression continues, subsequent steps have been planned."

Shortly after that, the state broadcaster announced that Iran's negotiating team was heading to Switzerland "in the coming minutes," a trip that



had been originally planned for Friday.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei, however, signaled that little might happen until Iran feels the US is living up to the deal.

"This trip is therefore about demanding that the other side fulfill its obligations," he said, adding that negotiations toward a final agreement will begin only once key commitments are upheld. If they are not, he said, "then the memorandum of understanding as a whole will be jeopardized."

In Washington, Vice

President JD Vance confirmed on Saturday that the top US negotiators — Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff — were already in Switzerland and have been working through technical details of the anticipated negotiations on Iran's nuclear program.

Vance told Fox News that he expects to leave for Switzerland "sometime the next couple of days" but acknowledged that "it's always a delicate coordination dance."

Meanwhile, the global economy braced for more uncertainty. Ships had begun

transiting the strait after the interim US-Iran agreement was signed earlier in the week, a milestone that has left plenty of questions unanswered.

Israeli attacks in Lebanon kill at least 16

Earlier Saturday, Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon killed at least 16 people, including two children, hours after reports emerged of a ceasefire agreement there. Seven people remained trapped under the rubble after the strikes hit the southern city of Nabatiyah and nearby villages, Lebanon's National News Agency said.

The death toll in the latest war between Israel and Hezbollah has now surpassed 4,000, Lebanon's health ministry later announced. Mediators were scrambling to halt the fighting between Israel and the militant Hezbollah group after a heavy exchange on Friday killed at least 47 people in Lebanon and four Israeli soldiers.

An Israeli military official said Hezbollah had fired more than 50 projectiles at Israeli forces in southern Lebanon overnight. The official spoke anonymously in line with regulations. Israel's army said it

struck dozens of Hezbollah targets and militants in southern Lebanon, including Hezbollah command centers.

On Friday, the Israeli ambassador to Washington, Yechiel Leiter, said Israel "remains firmly committed to an immediate ceasefire" if Hezbollah honors the agreement and ceases hostilities.

On Saturday, Hezbollah said it had committed to the ceasefire but blamed Israel for violating it several times Friday night. A statement by the group's military wing said it would abide by the ceasefire but would also repel attacks by Israeli troops.

The conflict could sink the US-Iran deal

Hezbollah and Israel went to war two days after the US and Israel launched strikes on Iran on Feb. 28, with Hezbollah firing rockets and drones at northern Israel and Israel seizing large swaths of southern Lebanon. The interim US-Iran agreement reopened the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran had closed as the war unfolded — cutting off the global economy from significant supplies of oil and natural gas.

UN rights chief troubled by new EU migrant return rules



AFP

Geneva, Jun 20: The UN rights chief said on Saturday he deeply regretted the European Union's new migration rules, which allow much broader detention powers and the creation of deportation centers outside the bloc.

The rules, approved on Wednesday, enable the 27 EU nations to open "return hubs" outside the bloc's borders, where they can send asylum seekers and migrants to whom they do not grant the right to remain.

Volker Turk, the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights, said the EU and its member states must ensure the rules fully comply with international human rights and refugee law.

"EU states cannot simply outsource their human rights obligations to third states in this context," he said in a statement.

"Detention and return of vulnerable people, including children, to other countries is a particularly sensitive exercise of the state's power and carries a high risk of human rights violations."

"There must be front-and-center emphasis on human rights protection and dignity throughout — in fact and in law," Turk insisted.

European governments have sought a tougher stance on immigration, which has become a hot political topic used by far-right parties to make electoral gains across the continent.

With asylum seeker arrivals down in 2025, the focus in Brussels has turned to tightening up the repatriation system.

"Serious human rights violations" Currently, fewer than 30 percent of people who are ordered to leave are returned to their country of origin.

Usha, Anju among four honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 20: Legendary sprinter and Indian Olympic Association president P T Usha was on Saturday conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award at the inaugural Indian Athletics Awards ceremony here.

Former Asian Games gold-winning decathlete Gurbachan Singh Randhawa, former national team chief coach Bahadur Singh Chauhan and World Championships bronze medallist long jumper Anju Bobby George were the other recipients of the honour.

Speaking after receiving the award, Usha said she was pleasantly surprised by the recognition.

"I did not expect to win this award because I did not apply for this. Most of the time in India, you don't get awards if you have not applied for it. This is a very good initiative from my Federation, the AFI," she said.

The awards were presented during the first edition of the Indian Athletics Awards, launched by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) to recognise excellence and contributions to the sport. The

initiative seeks to honour athletes, coaches, technical officials, mentors, state associations and other stakeholders who have played a role in the growth of Indian athletics.

The inaugural awards feature 10 categories, including Best Athlete (Male and Female), Best Coach, Best Technical Official, Best State Association and Lifetime Achievement Awards.

Usha is regarded as one of India's great-



est athletes, having won multiple medals at the Asian Games and represented the country at three Olympic Games. She currently serves as the president of the Indian Olympic Association.

India beat Afghanistan by nine wickets, sweep ODI series 3-0



PTI

Chennai, Jun 20: India completed a clean sweep of the three-match ODI series with a comprehensive nine-wicket win over Afghanistan in the final match, as Yashasvi Jaiswal smashed an unbeaten century and combined with Rohit Shar-

ma for a 170-run opening stand to make the chase a mere formality here on Saturday.

Chasing a modest 219-run target, India raced to victory in just 28.4 overs, losing one wicket. Jaiswal slammed an unbeaten 110 off 86 balls (14 boundaries, 3 sixes), while Rohit scored 79 off 69 deliveries. Earlier, pacer

Prasidh Krishna ripped through Afghanistan's top order, claiming four early wickets to finish with outstanding figures of 5/23 as the visitors were bowled out for 218 in 44.2 overs.

However, despite Krishna's destructive spell, Afghanistan skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi stood firm with his maiden ODI century, leading a remarkable recovery after the visitors were reduced to 36 for 4 in the 10th over.

Shahidi, who had endured a quiet series until then, struck 13 boundaries and a six in his 131-ball 102, while Azmatullah Omarzai provided valuable support with a brisk 56-ball 50.

Brief scores: Afghanistan 218 in 44.2 overs (Hashmatullah Shahidi 102, Azmatullah Omarzai 50; Prasidh Krishna 5/23, Prince Yadav 1/38). India 224 for 1 in 28.4 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 110 not out, Rohit Sharma 79).

Gaza health officials say Israeli strikes kill five

AFP

Gaza City, Jun 20: Gaza health officials said Israeli strikes on Saturday killed five people, including four members of the same family, in the latest violence to rock the Palestinian territory despite a ceasefire.

Israel and Hamas trade near-daily accusations of truce violations and the Gaza Strip remains gripped by bloodshed as progress on permanently ending the war remains stalled.

An overnight Israeli airstrike on an apartment building in the Sabra neighborhood of Gaza City killed four members of the Al-Safadi family, including the husband, wife and their two daughters, according to the civil defense agency, a rescue service that operates under Hamas authority.

It said the strike also injured 12 others. Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital confirmed receiving the bodies of four members of the Al-Safadi family, including two children. "Around 2 o'clock, my cousins were asleep when a missile struck them. They have no connection to Hamas, nor are they involved in anything. They're just innocent children," said Nael Al-Safadi, a relative.

Neeraj Chopra honoured with 'Best Male Athlete' award by AFI

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 20: Ace Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was on Saturday honoured with the 'Best Male Athlete of the Year 2025' award at the inaugural Indian Athletics Awards ceremony here.

Chopra, who won gold at the Tokyo Games and followed it up with a silver medal in Paris, said the honour held a special place in his heart as it came in the presence of athletes from different generations.

"Yeh award dil ke nazdik hai (This award is very close to my heart). The old and new generation of athletes are here. I am very happy to have received the award in front of them," said Chopra, who flew in from Doha earlier in the day to attend the ceremony.

Chopra had competed at the Doha Diamond League on Friday night, where the 28-year-old registered a best throw of 85.69m in his third attempt to finish fourth in his season-opening event.

The star javelin thrower has been recovering from a back injury sustained before the World Championships in Tokyo in September 2025. The Doha event marked his return after an eighth-place finish at the World Championships. He has been training in Switzerland since May 25 following a rehabilitation stint in Turkey.

However, Chopra comfortably crossed the 82.61m qualification mark set by the



Athletics Federation of India (AFI) for the upcoming Commonwealth Games.

Chopra, who will be India's biggest medal hope at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in July-August and the Asian Games in Japan in September-October, provided he remains injury-free, had a stellar 2025 season.

He breached the coveted 90m mark for the first time with a throw of 90.23m at the Doha Diamond League to finish second, topped the Paris Diamond League standings and also won the NC Classic

in Bengaluru. The Best Female Athlete of the Year award went to Parul Chaudhary, the national record holder in the 3000m steeplechase.

Earlier, legendary sprinter and Indian Olympic Association president P T Usha was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award at the ceremony.

The Indian Athletics Awards, launched by the AFI, aim to recognise the contributions of athletes, coaches, technical officials, mentors, state associations and other stakeholders to the growth of the sport.

MOVIES Schedule

Sunday, 21st June

OBSESSION (A) ENGLISH - 05:20 PM	TOY STORY 5 (U) 3D ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES - 04:45 PM ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES - 10:00 AM
MAIN VAAPAS AAUNGA (HINDI) (U/A16+) 10:45 AM, 02:00 PM, 07:40 PM	COCKTAIL 2 (A) HINDI ATMOS - 10:30 AM, 01:30 PM, 07:30 PM HINDI - 12:15 PM, 03:15 PM, 06:15 PM

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