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NDA Govt always prioritised Women Empowerment in every form: PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that his government has always prioritised women's empowerment in every form, and said that with the Women's Reservation Act, India is moving towards greater women-led governance.

He was commenting on a newspaper article written by Union Minister Annpurna Devi on "Enhancing women's leg-



islative leadership", which highlighted "how greater representation of

women is key to stronger, more inclusive governance and a developed

India".

In an X post, Modi said, "Representation must translate into real influence. The government has always prioritised Nari Shakti in every form. Hence, with the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam laying the foundation, India is moving towards greater women-led governance. This is also a key pillar of Viksit Bharat!" The Nari

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Rajnath hits out at Mamata over 'appeasement', says TMC means 'Total Misrule and Corruption'

BARRACKPORE (WB): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday launched a blistering attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, accusing her government of pursuing "politics of appeasement", encouraging infiltration for vote-bank reasons and pushing the state into an era of "misrule and corruption".

Addressing a public meeting in Barrackpore

in North 24 Parganas district, Singh alleged that the Trinamool Congress government had divided society on the basis of caste, religion and sect and said politics should instead be based on "justice, humanity and equality".

"Mamata ji, I want to give you a suggestion. Do politics, but not the politics of appeasement. Politics should be of satisfaction, not

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J&K Cops bust interstate LeT Racket, Pak Terrorist on Run for 16 years among 5 arrested

Srinagar, : Police in Srinagar has busted a major interstate Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) module and arrested five people, including Pakistani terrorist Abdullah alias Abu Hureira who was the run for 16 years and was able to set up bases outside the union territory, officials said on Tuesday.

A second Pakistani terrorist, Usman alias Khubaib, was also arrested on Monday in the operation that comes six months after Jammu and

Kashmir police dismantled a "white-collar" terror module with its centre in Faridabad's Al Falah University and with links across Kashmir, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Geographic Reference

Over the last few days, investigators searched 19 locations, including in Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan and Haryana, and recovered large quantity of weapons including four AK

>P2

Modern Courts Key to Justice delivery, says J&K CM, reviews new HC projects

Jammu: J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said modern court infrastructure is key to ensuring efficient justice delivery and strengthening public trust in the legal system.

Chairing a high-level meeting to review the progress of construction of High Court complexes in the twin capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar, he reiterated his government's commitment to augmenting judicial infrastructure and institutional capacity in both



divisions.

The meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo and representatives of

National Buildings Construction Corporation Ltd (NBCC), among others, an official spokesperson said.

Emphasising time-bound completion and

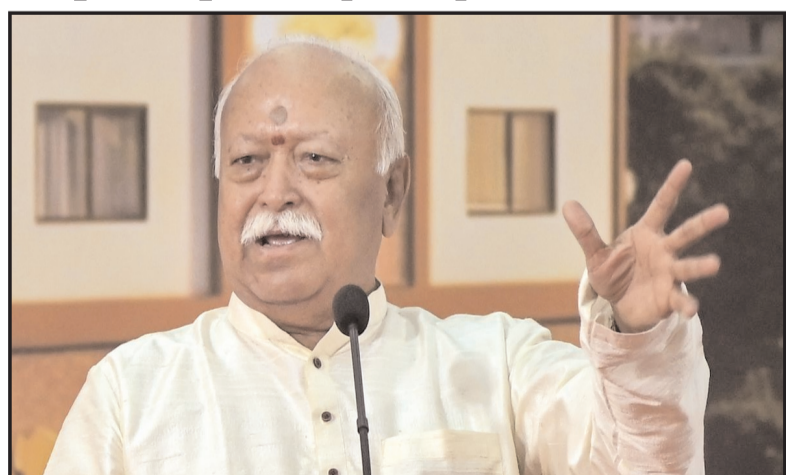
inter-departmental coordination, Abdullah called for early grant of administrative approval for the Jammu wing at Raika.

"The modern court infrastructure is essential for efficient justice delivery and public trust in the legal system," the chief minister said and directed officials to ensure adherence to timelines, quality benchmarks and transparency in execution.

The project, being executed by NBCC, involves

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RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat says nation's prosperity key to individual progress



Kerala: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Monday (April 6, 2026) said individual prosperity can be achieved only when the country is prosperous

and secure.

He was addressing a gathering after inaugurating a two-day convention of Balagokulam, a cultural organisation for students

affiliated with the RSS, in Kochi, Kerala.

Ego of some people led to war, says Mohan Bhagwat

Mr. Bhagwat said prosperity and security cannot be achieved in isolation. "When the country is prosperous and safe, families too attain prosperity and security. When individuals work for the prosperity and safety of the nation, they too become prosperous," he said.

He added that people are often encouraged to con

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Jammu-Srinagar NH closed again due to landslides in Ramban, 200 vehicles stranded

JAMMU: The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was closed for traffic on Tuesday due to multiple landslides in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir, a few hours after its restoration.

Over 200 vehicles are stranded at different points on the 270-km highway, the only all-weather road in the region, officials said.

The highway was reopened for vehicular traffic early Tuesday morning after a day-long



closure due to landslides on Monday.

"Traffic movement has been stopped in both directions — from Jammu towards Srinagar

and vice versa — on the highway due to a heavy landslide between Digdol and Khooni Nallah. The road is completely

>P2

NDA Govt always...

Shakti Vandan Adhinyam, more popularly known as the Women's Reservation Act, was passed by Parliament in 2023. Under the law, 33 per cent reservation will be given to women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The law, brought by amending the Constitution, will come into effect after completion of the delimitation exercise.

The prime minister on Saturday announced an extension of the budget session of Parliament by three days — from April 16 to 18 — so that the Women's Reservation Act can be amended for its implementation from 2029.

Officials said that if the proposal to implement the law even before the delimitation exercise actually materialises, another amendment to the Constitution will be required. The government is expected to amend the law in this effect in the three-day sitting of Parliament.

Modi had also urged all political parties to fully support it with an open mind and without political calculations, since "this is an issue related to women's empowerment".

He had asked them to "become partners in winning the trust of the country's mothers and sisters". (Agencies)

Rajnath hits out at Mamata...

appeasement," he said.

"You have divided society on the basis of caste, religion and sect. Politics should not be done on the basis of caste or religion. Politics should be based on justice and humanity, on justice and equality," the senior BJP leader said.

Stepping up the BJP's attack over the issue of illegal immigration, Singh claimed Banerjee was unwilling to stop infiltration because she viewed infiltrators as a political constituency.

"As far as infiltrators are concerned, I can say with confidence that Mamata ji does not want to stop them because she sees them as her vote bank," he said.

The Defence minister said that during his tenure as Union Home minister, the Centre had sought land from the state government for border fencing by the BSF, but the request had not been acted upon.

"When I was home minister, we had asked for land so that fencing could be done by the BSF on the border. But the land was not given. Only now has some land perhaps been given," he said.

In one of his sharpest attacks on the ruling party, Singh said if anyone asked him what TMC stood for, he would say it meant "Total Misrule and Corruption".

Claiming that Bengal had slipped behind other states, Singh alleged that incidents of loot, kidnapping and murder had become routine under the present dispensation.

"Loot and murder are taking place continuously in West Bengal. Mamata ji, where do you want to take this state? Compared with other states of India, you have pushed Bengal backward," he said.

Referring to the gherao of judicial officers in Malda and the subsequent observations of courts, Singh claimed even judicial officers had not been spared.

"Even judicial magistrates were held hostage here. You will not find such a government anywhere in the history of India or the world. The Supreme Court itself said that this was a planned and deliberate action," he said.

Singh also sought to revive the controversy over remarks over TMC government not following protocol during President Droupadi Murmu's visit to the state last month, alleging that the ruling party's mindset "insults tribals while glorifying infiltrators".

"Even the President of India, the highest constitutional authority, was not spared. She was not treated with the dignity she deserved. A TMC minister had once made an extremely derogatory and shameful remark about the President. I cannot even repeat those words," he said.

The BJP leader also took aim at Banerjee over her defeat in the Nandigram assembly seat in the 2021 polls, saying it had been a warning from the people of the state.

"In the last election, Mamata ji lost from her own (Nandigram) seat. The people of Bengal had given her a warning. Last time you lost your own seat. This time, TMC is going to be wiped out from all of Bengal," he said.

Contrasting the Centre's vision for the state with

what he called the TMC government's failures, Singh said the Narendra Modi government wanted to bring industries, jobs and investment to West Bengal.

"We want to bring industry to Bengal, increase people's incomes and bring more investment. Not only should people from Bengal invest here, not only should people from India invest here, but people from all over the world should come and invest in West Bengal, so that our youth can get employment opportunities," he said. (PTI)

J&K Cops bust interstate...

assault rifles and incriminating material. The probe, also involving central agencies, unearthed a massive network that provided logistics and financial support to the LeT terrorists.

Giving details, officials said three Srinagar residents were among the five caught. Mohammad Naqeeb Bhat, Adil Rashid Bhat and Ghulam Mohammad Mir alias Mama were arrested for allegedly providing logistical support, including shelter and food to the terrorists, they said.

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat has been personally overseeing the operations.

The two Pakistani terrorists in custody are categorized 'A+' and involved in creating the LeT network in Jammu and Kashmir as well as in other states on the basis of forged documents and identity, officials said.

The terrorists, they said, infiltrated into India about 16 years ago during which they remained active in various districts of the Kashmir Valley. Over the years, they handled and commanded about 40 foreign terrorists. Most of these have been killed by security forces.

Describing the network as "deep-rooted", officials said it also involved providing hideouts and financial support to LeT terrorists. The investigation has also unveiled the funding and financial pattern of LeT, officials said.

More arrests could be in the offing with investigation in progress to identify additional associates, financiers, facilitators, safe houses and inter-state linkages, they said.

Incriminating material has been seized from several hideouts in various parts of Srinagar and other cities. These include three AK-47 rifles, one AK-Krinkov rifle, pistols, hand grenades, electronic equipment and gadgets, the officials said.

Besides, forged documents with addresses located in other states have also been recovered from Abdullah and Usman, indicating the use of false identities and possible facilitation channels outside Jammu and Kashmir.

The elaborate network began to unravel on March 31 when the first of the three Srinagar residents were caught. Naqeeb Bhat from Pandach area was arrested along with a pistol and other incriminating material.

He said during his questioning that he was part of the LeT and procured the arms and ammunition from another associate, Adil Rashid of Zakoora. He also provided support to foreign terrorists, the officials said.

From Bhat, police were led to Mir and Rashid Bhat, both active associates in Srinagar. The officials said the probe indicates that a foreign terrorist managed to travel outside the country on the basis of forged documents and identity with the help of the Lashkar-e-Taiba network in other states.

During investigation, at the instance of apprehended foreign terrorists, various hideouts were also busted in forested areas in and around Srinagar.

In the earlier 'Al Falah operation' in November 2025, Srinagar police unraveled a network comprising highly educated professionals, mostly doctors, who had been radicalised to carry out terrorist activities.

One of the accused was the Al Falah university's Dr Umer-un Nabi, who was driving the explosives-laden car that detonated outside the Red Fort on November 10 killing more than a dozen people. He had earlier made unsuccessful attempts to join terror groups in 2016 and 2018, officials said. (Agencies)

Modern Courts Key to Justice...

the relocation of the existing High Court from Janipur to a purpose-built campus at Raika in Jammu, envisioned as a modern, integrated judicial complex.

A detailed presentation outlining the key aspects of the project was delivered in the meeting, where NBCC officials informed that the project is being executed in multiple phases to ensure structured development and optimal resource utilisation.

The chief minister also reviewed proposals for the redevelopment of the Lower Court Complex in

Srinagar, the spokesperson added. (Agencies)

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat...

tribute towards nation-building.

RSS chief stresses need to unite Hindu society, pitches for 3 children in Hindu families

Referring to the youth, Mr. Bhagwat said there is often "confusion" over whether to focus on personal career growth or work for the country's development. "There should be no confusion as career-building and working for the nation are not contradictory. The key lies in choosing the right path," he said.

He also interacted with children participating in the Balagokulam event.

Jammu-Srinagar NH closed...

blocked," a traffic police spokesperson said.

She said that people are advised not to travel on the highway until the road is fully restored. "Please don't pay heed to rumours and check the status of roads on the traffic police Twitter handle, Facebook page and traffic control units."

Officials said that work is on to reopen the highway but incessant rains in the Ramban-Banihal sector are making the task difficult.

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Dr Jitendra announces Seismological Earthquake Observatory for Kishtwar, Proposes Land Acquisition for Airport

KISHTWAR: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh today reviewed key developmental proposals concerning District Kishtwar during the DISHA meeting here, with focus on strengthening disaster preparedness, infrastructure, and local economic initiatives.

The Minister announced that a new permanent seismological observatory is proposed to be set up in Kishtwar to augment the national seismological network, enhance earthquake monitoring and increase disaster preparedness in the region.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also announced that site selection for installation of Automated Weather Stations at Paddar and Machail has been completed to improve weather forecasting and support disaster management efforts. He said the installation process would be undertaken soon.

During the meeting, the issue of development of an airstrip in Kishtwar under the UDAN scheme was also discussed, particularly with regard to acquisition of additional land. The Minister directed Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Sharma, to take up land extra acquisition proposal with concerned authorities for early progress.

The Union Minister also reviewed the proposal for development of a Saffron Park in Kishtwar, which has been pending for the past 12 years. He directed the concerned authorities to arrive at a consensus regarding the suitability of the identified land parcel so that the project can be expedited. Highlighting the importance of promoting local produce, the Minister emphasized the promotion of cumin seeds (kala zeera) under the One District One Product initiative. He suggested that cumin from the district could be developed as a signature product and presented as a souvenir to visiting dignitaries.

The Minister further reviewed issues related to the construction of cremation sheds, and directed the concerned department to accelerate the pace of work to ensure early completion. Addressing rehabilitation concerns of Kandani inhabitants affected by ongoing power projects, he instructed the authorities to take immediate steps for fair compensation, proper resettlement and addressing grievances in a time-bound manner.

During the DISHA meeting, which was also attended by Member of Parliament, Sajjad Ahmed Kitchloo, MLA, Kishtwar, Shagun Parihar and officers of various line departments, Dr Jitendra Singh emphasized the need for better inter-departmental coordination for timely execution of projects.

Javed Ahmed Rana Visits Dr. Javaid Rahi's Residence, Offers Condolences on Father's Demise



POONCH: Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, on Monday visited the residence of noted tribal activist and Secretary, Kala Kendra, Dr. Javaid Rahi to offer condolences on the demise of his father Babu Noor Muhammad Noor.

The Minister expressed

profound grief over the passing of the revered elder, describing him as a beacon of wisdom, humility and a symbol of the rich cultural heritage of the Gujjar-Bakerwal tribe.

He conveyed his heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

During his interaction

with family members, Rana acknowledged the significant contributions of the deceased towards the promotion of Gojri and Pahari languages and literature, stating that his legacy will continue to inspire future generations.

The Minister also prayed for strength and patience for the family to bear the irreparable loss.

Indian Army launches Digital Learning Hub at Kaman Post



URI: The Indian Army, in collaboration with the Gajanan Foundation, inaugurated the Kaman Learning Center, a computer lab established at Kaman Post to enhance digital education for local school children. The initiative reflects a commitment to improving access to technology and learning resources in border areas.

The center was inaugurated by General Officer Commanding Dagger Division, Major General Manoj Joshi, VSM in presence of esteemed guests L S Chandrashekhar, Malhar Patekar and Ganesh Thorat.

The event highlighted a shared vision of strengthening educational infrastructure and community development.

The Gajanan Foundation has been widely recognized for its consistent efforts in supporting communities across Jammu and Kashmir, contributing to education, welfare, and social upliftment initiatives. Their continued dedication to empowering underserved populations has made a meaningful impact in improving lives across the region.

Designed to benefit around 600 students, the

Kaman Learning Center provides access to essential computer education and digital tools. It aims to bridge the digital divide and equip students with skills vital for academic growth and future opportunities.

This initiative underscores the Indian Army's ongoing efforts to contribute to nation-building through community outreach. In partnership with the Gajanan Foundation, the project reflects a collaborative approach to empowering youth and fostering long-term development in the Uri region.

Mega Plantation Drive Launched Across Jammu & Kashmir from SRML Jammu



JAMMU: Government Sri Ranbir Model Higher Secondary School (SRML), Jammu, today emerged as the epicentre of a landmark environmental initiative with the grand launch of a *Mega Plantation Drive across the entire Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory (J&K UT)*. The initiative witnessed enthusiastic participation from multiple departments including School Education, Higher Education, Health & Medical Education, and Social Welfare.

The flagship event, held at the *SRML HSS campus, Parade Jammu, commenced at **12:00 noon* and brought together nearly *600 participants, including students, educators, officers, and community members. The drive aims to promote environmental sustainability, strengthen community participation, and instill ecological responsibility among youth in alignment with the vision of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020*.

The programme was graced by *Chief Guest Sakina Itoo, Hon'ble Cabinet Minister for Education, Health & Medical Education, and Social Welfare, J&K. Among the distinguished dignitaries present were senior officers including **MD ICDS, Director Social Welfare Jammu, Director Health Services Jammu, Director School Education Jammu, Chief Education Officer Jammu, along with MLAs and Chief Education Officers

from Rajouri and Doda.

Dr. Naseem Javid Choudhary, in her presence, reinforced the department's strong commitment towards integrating environmental consciousness within the school education system and appreciated the initiative as a progressive step towards nurturing environmentally responsible citizens.

Chief Education Officer Jammu, Ajeet Sharma, played a pivotal role in organizing the event and, in his welcome address, emphasized the importance of collective participation in environmental conservation. He lauded the efforts of students and institutions in making the plantation drive a meaningful success and highlighted the need for sustained green initiatives at the grassroots level.

The event began with the ceremonial launch of the plantation drive, marking the start of a *Union Territory-wide green initiative*. Thousands of saplings were planted simultaneously across various districts, symbolizing a collective commitment to a greener and healthier J&K.

A meticulously planned programme added vibrancy and inclusivity to the event. Students showcased their talent through *cultural performances, followed by engaging activities such as a **spoon race for children and a spirited tug of war*, creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm and community bonding. The event also emphasized *social welfare and inclusivity* through the distribution of *bicycles

to orphaned and single-parent girl students* by the Hon'ble Minister. *ECCE kits ("Jadu Ka Pitara"), sports kits for PM Shri Schools, and audio systems/desktops sponsored by the Bharti Airtel Foundation* were distributed to promote educational empowerment and digital learning.

Informative stalls by the *Social Welfare Department* created awareness about *afforestation, environmental protection, and biodiversity conservation*, reinforcing the core message of the drive.

In her inspiring address, *Sakina Itoo* applauded the youth-led initiative and highlighted the importance of collective responsibility in combating climate change. She described the plantation drive as a *"model movement" for environmental action and community participation across the Union Territory.*

The programme concluded with the *felicitation of dignitaries, followed by a **formal vote of thanks by Principal Dr. Kishor Sharma, who also presented a **token of gratitude to the Hon'ble Education Minister Sakina Itoo*. He reiterated the institution's unwavering commitment to eco-friendly practices and sustainable development.

The *Mega Plantation Drive* stands as a significant step towards building a greener future for *Jammu & Kashmir*, inspiring institutions and communities to actively contribute towards environmental conservation.

Plantation Drive Conducted at Govt. SPMR College of Commerce by NSS Units

JAMMU: The NSS Units of Government SPMR College of Commerce successfully organized a Plantation Drive within the college campus, reaffirming their commitment to environmental sustainability and ecological responsibility.

The programme was held under the patronage of the Principal, Dr. (Prof.) Sunil Gupta, who appreciated the efforts of the NSS Units and emphasized the need for such initiatives to be conducted regularly. He encouraged students to

become ambassadors of environmental protection in their communities.

The event was conducted under the guidance of NSS Programme Officers, Dr. Deepshikha Sharma and Dr. Deepak Pathania, who highlighted the importance of tree plantation in combating climate change, reducing pollution, and maintaining ecological balance.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from NSS volunteers, faculty members, and college staff, who collec-

tively planted a variety of saplings across the campus. The initiative aimed at promoting environmental awareness, enhancing green cover, and instilling a sense of responsibility among students towards nature conservation.

NSS volunteers played a pivotal role in the success of the drive. They not only carried out the plantation activity with dedication but also took responsibility for preparing the ground, arranging saplings, ensuring proper spacing, and watering the plants.

FADA releases FY'26 and March'26 vehicle retail data

JAMMU: The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) today released Vehicle Retail Data for March'26 and FY 2025-26.

Reflecting on FY 2025-26 Auto Retail performance, FADA President C S Vigneshwar said: "FY 2025-26 has been a landmark year for Indian auto retail - delivering an all-time high of 2,96,71,064 units with a broad-based 13.30% YoY growth that saw five of six vehicle categories set new annual records. This is not just a number - it represents the industry approaching the 3-crore mark, a milestone that would have seemed distant just two years ago. What makes this year particularly significant is that the growth was structurally

sound, underpinned by improving affordability, widening mobility demand across urban and rural India, and a diversifying powertrain mix.

The year, however, was not linear. The first five months - April through August - were a period of measured momentum, with monthly growth ranging between 2% and 5% as the market navigated residual caution from the previous year's sluggish inventory cycle, selective financing constraints, and consumer wait-and-watch behaviour in anticipation of policy clarity. During this phase, enquiries remained tentative, conversions stayed uneven, and the dealer community exercised understandable restraint.

The turning point arrived

in September with the implementation of GST 2.0. The rate rationalisation - which meaningfully reduced the effective tax burden on mass-segment two-wheelers, small cars, three-wheelers, and select commercial categories - improved real affordability at a time when the consumer was already positioned to respond. From September onwards, we witnessed a clear inflection: the festive convergence of Navratri and Diwali in October delivered an all-time record monthly retail of over 40 lakh units, and the momentum carried through the remainder of the year. January, February, and March 2026 each registered strong double-digit YoY growth, validating that the upshift was not merely

festive but structural.

Category-wise, Two-Wheelers reclaimed their pre-COVID peak, retailing over 2.14 crore units and growing 13.40% - a recovery that had been long awaited and was finally unlocked by the combination of GST-led affordability, improved rural cash flows, and a broadening product portfolio that catered to both entry-level and aspirational segments. Passenger Vehicles crossed the 47-lakh mark for the first time, growing 13.00%, supported by a rich new-model pipeline, steady urbanisation, and the sustained shift towards SUVs and alternative powertrains.

Tractors were the year's standout performer, crossing 10 lakh retail units for the first time in history at

18.95% growth - a direct reflection of an excellent monsoon, strong rabi sowing, and improving farm economics.

Commercial Vehicles recorded best ever figures and above the 10-lakh mark for the first time at 11.74% growth, led by infrastructure-driven freight demand and a particularly strong MCV sub-segment. Three-Wheelers set their third consecutive annual record at 11.68% growth, with the EV transition now accounting for over 60% of the segment's retail. Construction Equipment was the sole exception, declining 11.70% as project-level delays and a high base weighed on volumes.

The powertrain transition deepened through the year. EV share improved in every major category - 2W EV rose

to 6.54%, PV EV rose to 4.25%, and CV EV nearly doubled to 1.83%. CNG strengthened its foothold in PVs at 21.98% and in CVs at 11.79%. The total EV retail for the year stood at 24.52 lakh units, a 24.63% expansion, signalling that the transition is no longer directional but substantive.

On the demand-side, rural India continued to narrow the gap with urban markets. For FY'26, total rural retail grew 13.05% against 13.62% in urban - a near-parity that reflects the expanding aspirational footprint of auto retail in the hinterland, aided by better rural incomes, improving road connectivity, and increasing last-mile mobility needs. Within PVs, rural demand outpaced urban meaningfully at 17.12% versus 10.43%.

PhD graduate from NIT Srinagar joins University of Edinburgh as Postdoctoral researcher

Director lauds achievement, calls it a pride for

SRINAGAR: In a proud moment for the research community, Dr. Zarak Bhat, a PhD graduate from the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, has joined the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom, as a Postdoctoral Researcher.

Dr. Zarak is the first PhD scholar from the Nanoelectronics Research and Development Group at NIT Srinagar, completed her doctoral studies under the supervision of Dr. Sheikh Aamir Ahsan in the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering.

She has been inducted into the APRIL AI Hub at the University of Edinburgh, where her

research focuses on integrating artificial intelligence-driven methodologies into electron device design workflows.

Her work aims to accelerate optimisation processes, enhance performance prediction, and improve productivity in semiconductor innovation.

During her doctoral research, Dr. Zarak worked extensively on power Gallium Nitride (GaN) models. Her contributions, published in leading journals including IEEE Transactions on Electron Devices, played a key role in developing the NITSRI-GaN modeling framework.

The research has drawn attention for bridging device-level physics with

circuit-level simulations, particularly for next-generation power electronic systems.

Her appointment marks a major milestone for both the researcher and the institute, reflecting the growing global recognition of advanced semiconductor research being conducted at NIT Srinagar.

Dr. Ahsan, who leads the research group, expressed pride in this achievement, noting that such milestones highlight the group's commitment to high-quality industry-relevant research.

"It is always a rewarding experience to see students grow and take on new challenges at leading global institutions," he said.

Director NIT Srinagar,

Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, congratulated Dr. Ahsan and Dr. Zarak. He termed it as a proud moment for the institute and the Kashmir valley.

"This achievement is a matter of immense pride for our institute and the entire Kashmir valley. Dr. Zarak's selection at a prestigious global institution reflects the high academic standards and research excellence nurtured at NIT Srinagar," he said.

Prof. Kanaujia added that NIT Srinagar is committed to fostering innovation and producing researchers who can contribute meaningfully to cutting-edge fields like semiconductor technology on the global stage.

Kulgam Police cracks down on Narcotics Drug Smugglers under NDPS act: 10 FIRs registered

KULGAM: In a sustained and intensified drive against drug trafficking, Kulgam Police has registered 10 NDPS FIRs during the last 3 weeks

According to the statement, 9 FIRs of PS Qazigund and 01 FIR of PS Devsar), leading to the arrest of 14 drug peddlers. During these operations, cumulative recoveries of 415.61 grams of Heroin, 1348 grams of Charas

(including powder and charas-like substance), 1.5 kilograms of Bhang Patri and cash amounting to Rs.1,37,990 have been effected.

Investigations have further led to the establishment of multiple backward and forward linkages and subsequent arrests, indicating the presence of a wider and organised narcotics network, it reads.

Tourist woman from Maharashtra dies after falling unconscious in Srinagar hotel

SRINAGAR: A 52-year-old tourist woman from Maharashtra died after falling unconscious at a

hotel in Barbershah area of Srinagar, and was declared brought dead at a nearby hospital, police said.

The death occurred while the woman, identified as Kanta, wife of Moreshwar Barbal and a resident of Parwanchwati Wanshari Kalyani in Maharashtra, was staying at a hotel along with a group since April 3. The incident involves a visiting tourist and has led to standard medico-legal procedures being initiated by police.

According to information received by police, the woman suddenly fell unconscious inside the hotel, following which hotel staff and her companions shifted her to Khayber Hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead.

Police said the apparent cause of death is suspected to be a sudden heart attack, though confirmation will follow completion of medico-legal formalities.

The body has been taken into police custody, and proceedings as per procedure have been initiated.

Javid Dar reviews progress on irrigation Khuls, micro irrigation works under MGNREGA

JAMMU: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress on desilting works of Irrigation Khuls and the execution of Micro Irrigation projects undertaken under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act for the 2025-26 fiscal.

The meeting also reviewed the proposed action plan for the Financial Year 2026-27 aimed at strengthening the irrigation infrastructure and improving water availability for agriculture.



The meeting was attended by Commissioner Rural Development Department Sheetal Nanda, Director RDD Jammu, Shehnaz Akhtar, Director RDD Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat, Member Secretary MGNREGA, Waseem Raja, Chief Engineer of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department,

Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs) of both divisions and other senior officers of the concerned departments while the outstation officers participated online.

During the meeting, the Member Secretary, MGNREGA, delivered a detailed PowerPoint Presentation highlighting the district-wise performance of Micro

Irrigation works being implemented under the MGNREGA. The presentation informed that a total of 26,198 works were taken up across the Union Territory, of which, around 12,000 have been physically completed while 13,493 works are currently under execution. It was further apprised that the ongoing works are progressing at a steady pace and are expected to be completed by 10 April 2026, thereby strengthening the irrigation infrastructure and enhancing water availability for the farming community.

The meeting was further apprised that a total of ₹267.90 crore have been utilized for execution of

these works. Large-scale desilting of irrigation khuls, nallahs and canals is being carried out to improve the water flow and enhance irrigation potential. These interventions are expected to significantly support the water harvesting and irrigation requirements for the upcoming cropping season, thereby benefiting the farming community across rural areas.

The officers also informed the Minister that the e-KYC verification of active and eligible job card holders under MGNREGA is presently underway. The process is being carried out on priority to ensure transparency and inclusion of genuine beneficiaries.



Rashtriye Swayam-Sewak Sangh - Why RSS should be RS-SS

BY VIVEK KUMAR SINGH

With necessity comes the changes, the changes which marks a paradigm shift towards perfection be it life, a project, an ambition or an organization. The author might sound little incoherent here, incoherent to the current ways of transformative waves being generated and felt by the ever-judging society along with its societal reforms.

An idea was conceived on 27 September 1925 by few like-minded Rashtra-Bhakt souls. This year the world's largest organization based on that single idea, a philosophy of 'Nation First' by societal reforms is celebrating its evolution to be a centurion organization by surviving the ups and downs thrown towards its magnanimousness by the ever-changing socio-political dynamics of the nation from time to time. It works on the mantra that the true strength of the nation lies in the daily disciplined gatherings of like-minded Rashtra-bhakts (volunteers) known as 'Shakhas' and also through some other kind of meetings known as charcha, milan, ghoshti. The author might have not been groomed through the lanes of Prathmik, Pratham, Dwitya or Trithya dimensions of the necessary ordeal to qualify as the guardian of the 'idea' but have witnessed and felt the very core of its existence while serving as an associate with few matrusangathans for over a decade dealing with few noble souls who still walk the paths designated by our founding guardians a century ago.

The true essence of the organisation shall always be the commitment of its Swayamsevak towards the 'Dwajh' considered as revered 'Guru' notably celebrated as an occasion every Vijayadashmi. A Swayam-Sewak is a mutual friend by default, always a dedicated karyakarta till the last breadth of their life and continue for the organisation's ideal through body, mind and soul and the organisation's work has to be the sole priority in the life of a S w a y a m - S e w a k . Commitment makes a dedicated Karyakarta and devotion sets the tempo in the directions needed for fulfilling those commitments. Commitment in the wrap of

utmost devotion is what defines a Swayam-sewak. If we dive deep and see the word Swayam-sewak as Swayam plus Sewak it appears to denote a Karyakarta who has committed to an idea or a cause without any external influences and is independent in thriving under all hostile ambience. He or she is more concerned for the cause or idea rather than his or her own projections in any strata of society. They form the very basis of the idea, a kind of primary unit in itself. They are groomed in such a way that each one is like an institute in itself or is capable of raising one by connecting to the community, motivating various stakeholders to generate all kinds of resources human or materialistic, and giving it back to the same community. Our strength lies in our unity and collective character, not in individual achievements and by including constructive community participation for different projects in order to serves and fulfil the purpose of Nation First.

A nation can be transformed by nurturing a sense of duty in individuals. The nation is not a piece of land, but its people and its culture. We must be prepared to sacrifice our all for its honour. The Organization is stratified in such a hierarchy that it leaves no space for personal and becomes selfless by default. That's the beauty of it. You are driven towards it by self-consciousness, eager to do something for the nation and society in particular. The seeds of such an idea were sown long back some 100 years ago when few noble souls thought of an idea, channelized it, nurtured it and propagated it towards becoming a force to reckon with, which is very much evident today. This is truly reflected in the words of the founding father Param Pujniye Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar ji that it may take 100 years for the changes we want to see in the society but these changes shall definitely happen by keeping Nation above self and carrying out the continuous long-term efforts and commitments rebuilding society, transforming character rather than occasional, impulsive seasonal patriotism. He stressed on the continuous vigilance and function as an organized unit to prevent future shackles of slavery.

The world today is in the



process of reordering with dozens of military conflicts going on almost in every corner of the world. For a soldier thrust into combat, it is more like sending the unwilling, led by the unqualified to kill the unfortunate, and die for the ungrateful. But the new generation of youth is recalibrating their ways to fit into the modern societies brought closer to each other through ever evolving social media interactions and freely available information and misinformation as well on internet. This becomes important for the Parivar think tank to ponder on the issues of carrying on the legacy for the future generation. Our founding fathers had envisioned a road map to achieve a societal reform for 100 years since its inception and 'Yes' it has been achieved to a larger extent visible within the society and the administration. But the author feel that they had left it to the current think tank on how to maintain these reforms achieved during past 100 years.

Contemporary times, Contemporary ways. The first visible change in the outlook was pertaining to the changes in the dress-code known as 'Ganvesh' when shorts were replaced by Trousers. The author still remembers getting one such set of 'Ganvesh' during a shakha at his institute hostel while pursuing medical graduation some 25 years back. Its Ok to change if it clicks with the newer generation but the author feels with deviation from the traditional comes the dilution of the principles.

Learned minds need to ponder over it. There were times when karyakartas who rose to the ranks as high as hon'ble prime minister of the country once spent rupee 10 on food which was given to him for buying slippers as he had not eaten for the past 2 days, have heard many stories of varishth Pracharakas quenching their hunger at free langars or asking for alms and by staying at free dharmshalas for logistics. Today we see large bhawans being erected in almost all the major cities and towns having all the luxurious amenities including SUVs to ferry, dining tables with latest modern crockery, cushioned beds with conditioned rooms and halls and many more things to take notice of. The idea for highlighting all this is to strike upon the fact that 'How to maintain the idea' post 100 years when changes become visible as prophesied by our founding fathers. That makes it more important to stress upon the extra 'S' required in RSS making it RS-S'S cause the word 'Sewak' is more important than the 'Swayam'. This is a dedication with no reference to power, politics or personal legacy. These traits must be replaced by organisation, character, continuity and an unbroken commitment to national life.

Lately during many matru-sangathan meetings the author often heard about the slogan 'Panch Parivartan' involving in order of priority Samajik samrasta (social equality), Kutumbh Prabhodan (strengthening family val-

ues), Swa-jagaran (self-awakening for indigenous), Paryavaran (harmony with environment), and Nagrik kartavya (Dutiful responsible citizen). These are nothing new, had been in the process of social reforms already in the country but what is required is to speed up the process on a mass scale level. The projects or missions involving all these vital 5 changes should not be limited to target achievements on paper but results should be visible on grounds especially when large section of society include a young population belonging to so called Gen Zee & Gen Alpha. To make these 'Panch Parivartan' possible on ground shall require more than simple gathering & baudhik. Whole education system shall require revamping and this cannot be possible without taking the administration into loop. In addition to administration, the 'Parishad' of all registered revered sects (only registered sects) needed to be resurrected to channelize the youth on a prescribed marg, a marg shown by our revered scriptures. Without the margdarshan of our revered sects the idea of 'Panch Parivartan' in the near future shall always be a distant dream.

Today the work of our revered organisation has reached every corner of the nation, to the last man standing but is the job completely done yet especially when we think of

'Akhand Bharat'. The past 100 years were just a stepping stone in the direction for achieving it. Given the current reordering of the world order and the administrative coherence within the country generated by the efforts of the organisation and having an organizational structure of Sangh acceptable to the majority of the countrymen the author see a silver lining for not only Bharat but 'Akhand Bharat' as Vishwaguru.

Jai Hind!

Bharat Mata Ki Jai!

Namaste Sada Vatsale Matrubhoomi!

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Kashmir Concern NGO Organizes Plantation Drive; Sewa Bharti Kashmir Unit Participates Srinagar: In a significant step towards promoting environmental awareness and encouraging community participation in ecological conservation, Kashmir Concern NGO organized a plantation drive at Amar Singh College, Srinagar. The initiative aimed to contribute towards building a greener, cleaner, and more sustainable Kashmir. Members of Sewa Bharti Kashmir Unit actively participated in the drive, reaffirming their commitment to social responsibility and environmental protection. Among those present from Sewa Bharti were Vice President Dr. Farooq Ahmad Dar, Manzoor Ahmad Dar, and Javid Ahmad Wani. Speaking on the occasion, the Sewa Bharti representatives appreciated the efforts of Kashmir Concern NGO for organizing such a meaningful initiative. They highlighted the crucial role of tree plantation in combating climate change, improving air quality.

2-day Faculty Orientation Workshop on Project-Based Learning, DYD Pedagogy begins at GCW Parade

JAMMU: Government College for Women (GCW) Parade Ground on Monday inaugurated a two-day Faculty Orientation Workshop focused on strengthening Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Design Your Degree (DYD) pedagogy.

The workshop aims to equip faculty members with innovative, student-centric teaching approaches that encourage interdisciplinary learning, critical thinking and experiential engagement in higher education. Approximately 100 faculties from Degree Colleges of the Jammu Division are attend-

ing the programme.

Principal Dr. Ravender K. Tickoo formally welcomed the dignitaries and participants. In his address, the Principal highlighted the successful implementation of the DYD programme at GCW Parade Ground and its transformative impact on students. He noted that the initiative has significantly enhanced creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills among learners, while fostering greater ownership of their academic journey. He emphasized that such initiatives are aligned with the broader vision of reforming higher education through innovation

and flexibility.

Dean, DYD Programme Dr. Alpana Vohra introduced the workshop schedule and provided an overview of its objectives and structure. Initiating her address with a reflective question on the student-centric nature of higher education, she elaborated on the philosophy of the DYD framework, which enables students to design their own academic pathways based on their interests and aspirations. She underscored the role of the programme in promoting holistic development through the integration of disciplinary knowledge with real-world applications.

JMC Strengthens Drainage Infrastructure with Wire Mesh Installations & imposed Rs 14.39 Lakh Fines on Violators



JAMMU: The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) is undertaking proactive measures to strengthen urban drainage systems and enhance aviation safety by installing wire mesh over major drains across the city. Acting under the directives of Dr. Devansh Yadav, Commissioner, JMC. The Health and Sanitation Wing is intensifying efforts to address persistent sanitation challenges.

It has been observed that in several areas, residents indiscriminately dispose of garbage and other waste materials into open drains, leading to severe accumulation of filth and obstruction of water flow. To curb this practice, JMC has initiated the installation of wire mesh over drains, which acts as a preventive barrier against the dumping of solid waste.

The installation of wire mesh over open drains and channels is a critical structural intervention designed to improve urban waste management and enhance hydraulic efficiency. This step will help ensure the smooth flow of wastewater, reduce the risk of waterlogging, and contribute to a cleaner urban environment.

JMC also conducts regular awareness campaigns to sensitize citizens about responsible waste disposal practices. These initiatives emphasize the importance of avoiding littering in public places, preventing open defecation, ensuring proper disposal of Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste, discouraging the use of polythene, and refraining from dumping waste into water bodies such as rivers, ponds, and drains.

Fine / penalties have been levied upon the defaulters. Between April 2025 and March 2026, the Health and Sanitation Wing of JMC imposed fines amounting to approximately ₹14,39,200 on violators. This includes ₹3,58,800 for the use of polythene, ₹8,57,100 for improper disposal of C&D waste, and ₹2,23,300 for general littering in public spaces. Additionally, over 3,000 challans have been issued and referred to the courts for further legal proceedings.

The Jammu Municipal Corporation urges all residents to share their responsibilities and avoid littering / throwing garbage in Nallahs. Active public participation is essential to achieving the vision of a cleaner and more sustainable Jammu city.

Preparations for Baisakhi Festival reviewed at Bharderwah

BHADERWAH: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sunil Kumar Bhutyal on Monday chaired a meeting here at Dak Bungalow to review arrangements for the Baisakhi festival in the region.

The meeting held detailed discussions regarding the smooth conduct of Baisakhi Melas scheduled at different religious and tourist spots. On April 13, melas shall be organised at Subar Naag (Chinta), Sibbi Naag (Neota), Hirna Naag (Taisana) and Chatur Bhuj Naag. On April 14, festivities will take place at Nagni Mata, Vasuki Naag (Vasak Dehra) and Boung Naag (Guttasa). Similarly, on April 15, celebrations are scheduled at Dhairo Naag (Bhalara Kapra) and Mel Naag, among other locations.

The ADC emphasized ensuring adequate arrangements for essential services including uninterrupted power supply, safe drink-



ing water, proper road connectivity, sanitation and availability of essential commodities for the convenience of devotees and visitors. He directed all concerned departments to work in coordination to ensure smooth conduct of the festival.

The meeting was attended by officers including DFO, SDPO, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B), Tehsildars, AO BDA, BDOs, BMO, AE JPDCL,

AEE Jal Shakti, AEE PMGSY, EO Municipal Committee Bharderwah, Fire and Emergency Services and President of Sanatan Dharam Sabha along with prominent citizens.

The administration reaffirmed its commitment to ensure that all arrangements are put in place well in advance for the successful and peaceful celebration of the Baisakhi festival in the region.

Amid 'One Student-One Tree' call, Sakeena Itoo launches mega plantation drive from Jammu

*Calls students Ambassadors of Environmental protection
Also distributes Sports Kits, Technical equipment to various schools*

JAMMU: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting environmental sustainability, Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today launched a mega plantation drive across Jammu and Kashmir from SRML Higher Secondary School (HSS) here to instil the spirit of environmental protection and green development among students.

MLAs Qaysar Jamshaid Lone; Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi and Showkat Hussain Ganie; MD ICDS, Sajad Hussain Ganai; Director School Education Jammu; Naseem Javid Choudhary; Director Social Welfare Jammu, Ranjeet Singh; Director Health Jammu, Principal SRML HSS Jammu, CEO Jammu, Principals and Headmasters of other HSSs and HSs of Jammu district, large number of teachers and students were also present on the occasion.

Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Director Colleges, J&K, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Health Kashmir, Chief Education Officers of all districts other than Jammu, Principals and Headmasters of various HSSs and HSs along with students and faculty also participated in the plantation drive virtually.

The drive has been organised collectively by School Education, Higher Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical



Education departments.

Addressing a large gathering after planting a sapling, the Minister highlighted that that environmental protection must begin at the grassroots level and schools play a pivotal role in shaping responsible future generations. "This day is not just the launch of a programme, today we started a movement, a movement to clean our land, protect our future and nurture life", she stated.

She added that around 2.50 lakh tree saplings are being planted across Jammu and Kashmir in Schools, Higher Secondary Schools, Colleges, Hospitals, Anganwadi centres, Healthcare facilities and other places.

The Education Minister underlined that Jammu and Kashmir has always been known for its natural beauty, valleys, forests, rivers and green pastures but that beauty is under silent threat. "Climate change,

rising temperatures, harmed nature are realities, we can no longer ignore. Truth is simple, if we do not act now, we risk compromising the future of our children", she lamented.

The Minister said that in order to secure our future and future of coming generations, this Green Jammu and Kashmir initiative has been launched. "Green Jammu and Kashmir initiative is a clear vision to transform every school, every health institution, into a green, vibrant and life-supporting space. A tree is not just a tree, it is clean air for the patient, shade for a student and hope for the future", she stated.

Calling students the ambassadors of environmental protection, Sakeena Itoo said that students are not just participants in this mission, they are its ambassadors.

Giving slogan of one student -one tree, the

Minister said, "Let every student make a promise and pledge one student-one tree. Let every tree you plant grow with you, as a symbol of your responsibility and your love for this land".

The Minister also called upon the teachers that the schools should be examples of protecting nature.

Highlighting that health is deeply connected to the nature, the Minister also spoke about the role of doctors and healthcare professionals to environmental sustainability. "Greener air, greener surroundings, peaceful space contribute directly to healing. Let our hospitals not only treat illness, but also promote wellness through nature", she said.

The Minister also underlined the role of Social Welfare department, adding that their reach at the grassroots is unmatched and they are the backbone of this move-

ment.

"It is not about how many young trees we plant in a day. It is about how many trees survive, grow and become a part of our lives", Sakeena Itoo said.

The Minister highlighted that we need to move from plantation to preservation, from campaign to commitment, from effort to ownership. "Every tree grown will have a protector. Every institution will have a responsibility and every district will have a mission to complete", she said.

The Minister on the occasion, asked all participants, to promise with themselves and pledge to make every school greener, every hospital healthier, every season a protector of nature. "Together let us not just plant trees, let us plant hope", she said.

On the sidelines of the programme, Sakeena Itoo also distributed sports kits among various government schools to encourage phys-

ical fitness and promote sporting culture among youth. The kits included equipment for multiple disciplines aimed at strengthening extracurricular engagement and identifying sporting talent at an early stage.

In another major boost to educational infrastructure, the Minister also handed over technical equipment like desktops and other stuff to several schools to enhance digital learning and skill-based education. The initiative is expected to improve classroom experiences and enable students to adapt to modern technological advancements.

Highlighting the government's commitment to girl child education and empowerment, Sakeena Itoo also distributed bicycles among girl students from different schools.

The Minister reiterated that empowering girls through education remains a top priority of the government. She noted that providing mobility support directly contributes to reducing dropout rates and fostering confidence among young learners.

Pertinently, the plantation drive, organised by the School Education Department in collaboration with allied departments, witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, education officials, and local stakeholders across Jammu and Kashmir.

ADC Poonch reviews arrangements for Baisakhi Festival at Dera Nangali Sahib

POONCH: To ensure smooth and successful conduct of the upcoming Baisakhi festival, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Poonch Tahir Mustaf Malik, along with concerned officers, conducted an on-site visit to Shriromani Dera Santpura Nangali Sahib on Monday.

During the visit, the ADC held a detailed meeting with the management committee of Dera Santpura Nangali Sahib to review the preparedness and discuss necessary arrangements for the annual celebrations.

The members of the management committee highlighted several key demands, seeking adequate drinking water, proper lighting, sanitation, security arrangements, parking facility and maintenance of roads. They also

emphasized the urgent requirement for repair of potholes on the main road leading to Nangali Sahib.

Responding to the demands, the ADC assured that all necessary arrangements would be put in place well in time. He directed for adequate security deployment and systematic vehicle parking during the festival. Instructions were also issued for deployment of water tankers and ensuring uninterrupted supply of potable water and power through JPDCL and Jal Shakti Department.

The Executive Engineer of JPDCL and Tourism Department were directed to repair all non-functional street lights and install additional lighting wherever required. The Municipal authorities were instructed to maintain cleanliness in and

around the shrine and other congregation areas.

To ensure a safe and smooth travelling for devotees, the ADC directed GREF authorities to repair potholes and maintain the road stretch from Poonch Eid Gah to Nangali Sahib. The Health Department was instructed to deploy ambulance services during the event.

It was informed that the departments of Agriculture, Horticulture and AYUSH shall set up awareness and service camps during the main Baisakhi event.

The ADC also reviewed arrangements for the three-day religious Samagam scheduled from April 9 to April 11, 2026, at Gurudwara Baithak Mahant Mohar Singh, emphasizing uninterrupted water and power supply, sanitation and robust security measures.

JKLA Speaker sets historic record; presides over 102.35 hrs in 22 sittings of Budget Session 2026

JAMMU: Speaker Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather, has created a remarkable milestone in the history of legislative proceedings by presiding over all 22 sittings of the recently concluded Budget Session.

Demonstrating exceptional dedication and commitment towards parliamentary responsibilities, the Speaker personally chaired proceedings for an impressive 102.35 hours out of the total 110.36 hours of the session, while three members on the panel of Chairmen collectively chaired 8 hours.

In the absence of Deputy Speaker, this achievement stands as a record and marks a first-of-its-kind instance in



the legislative history.

Notably, despite challenges, the Speaker's unwavering presence of mind and active leadership throughout the session have been widely admired.

His steadfast approach ensured the smooth and efficient conduct of the Assembly's business which

is unprecedented and unparalleled in the Legislative history.

The Members from across party lines expressed their deep appreciation for the Speaker's exemplary efforts, acknowledging his dedication serving as an inspiration and a testament to his sense of duty.

DC Samba reviews implementation of Vibrant Village Prog.2.0 Emphasizes strengthening of Urban Local Bodies

SAMBA: District Development Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting to review the progress of Vibrant Village Programme-II in the District.

The DC took a detailed review and directed the designated village Nodal Officers to conduct regular visits to their allotted village to oversee implementation of initiatives taken to bridge developmental gaps.

The programme, she said, envisages 100% saturation of social security schemes, assured safe drinking water supply to all households, screening of Non-communicable Diseases, women and child related diseases including concrete TB Mukh Bharat Programme to improve quality of life of rural population.



Stress was also laid on creation of additional infrastructure and support services such as setting up of Model Anganwadis and new Panchayat Bhawans where ever required, in the selected vibrant villages.

To enhance livelihood, she stressed on effective implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme with special focus on high density plantation, dragon fruit/strawberry and Mission Yuva initiatives.

The chair emphasized upon the convergence of the government schemes to meet out the demands identified in the selected villages during VVP. Meanwhile, the DDC also took a comprehensive review of the functioning of Urban Local Bodies of the district. Directions were issued to the heads of ULBs to complete all PMAY-U Phase-I houses in one month. The DDC directed the Civic Bodies to organise mass aware-

ness camps to benefit the maximum number of eligible households under PMAYU 2.0 and PM-Savanidhi Scheme. Status of building permissions and outsourcing of manpower for cleanliness of urban areas was also reviewed by the chair.

The meeting was attended by CPO, ACR, SDMs of Ghagwal and Vijaypur, Nodal Officers of Vibrant Villages, concerned stakeholders and Heads of Urban Local Bodies.

Inspection drive of Chemist Shops conducted in Akhnoor 1 shop closed, Notices issued to defaulters

JAMMU: To ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act and adherence to the prescribed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) by the chemist shops, an inspection drive was conducted today across Sub Division Akhnoor.

The inspection team was led by Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Mukhter Ahmed and consisted of Sub Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Virender Gupta and the Drug Inspector.

The team inspected multiple medical establishments to verify the maintenance of proper records, functioning of CCTV cameras and the implementation of mandatory computerized billing systems. The inspection team found several establishments strictly adhering to the laid-down norms and SOPs. Proper documentation, functional CCTV networks and satisfactory computerized billing systems were observed.

Taking a tough stance against non-compliance, the authorities initiated strict disciplinary action against erring establishments. M/s Vikram

Medicos was closed on the spot under Section 22(d) of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act for failing to maintain a computerized billing system. The authorities have also recommended the suspension of its license. A Show Cause Notice was issued to M/s S.S. Medicos for failing to produce sales invoices during the inspection.

Furthermore, departmental action has been initiated as per norms against M/s Sodhi Medicate, for its failure to maintain a computerized billing system.

Emphasizing the zero-tolerance policy towards medical negligence, the SDM directed all chemists to ensure the availability of qualified personnel, proper record-keeping and functional billing systems. He reiterated that such surprise drives shall continue in the future. "Stringent action will be taken against violators to ensure public safety and transparency in the sale of medicines," he stressed.

Meanwhile, the local administration has issued an advisory urging the general public to purchase medicines only from licensed chemist shops and to mandate proper computerized bills for every purchase.

Rattan Lal Gupta Reaffirms Commitment to Empowerment of STs, Weaker Sections

Felicitates ST Wing Office Bearers at SK Bhawan*



JAMMU: Party Provincial President Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta, today reiterated that the socio-political and economic emancipation of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community, along with other weaker sections of society, remains at the core of the party's vision and mission.

He made these remarks while felicitating the newly

constituted office bearers of the Party's ST Wing of District Jammu Rural "A", Gupta expressed confidence that the new office bearers will work with dedication and commitment to strengthen the party at the grassroots level and effectively represent the aspirations of marginalized communities.

Highlighting the party's

inclusive approach, he emphasized the need to ensure equal opportunities, social justice, and economic upliftment for all sections, particularly the underprivileged. He urged the newly appointed members to actively engage with people, address their concerns, and contribute towards building a more equitable society.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from party workers and local leaders, who reaffirmed their commitment to the party's ideals and developmental agenda.

Among others who were present in the programme included: Sheikh Bashir Ahmad Provincial Secretary Jammu, Pardeep Bali Provincial Secretary Jammu, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Mehmood Ahmad Rizvi Adv District President Jammu Rural "A" ST Cell, Bashit Ali District Secretary Jammu Rural "A" ST Cell, Ch. Jamat Ali Block President Nagrota ST Cell, Ch. Mohd Sajjad Block President Mathwar ST Cell, Ch. Abdul Rashid Block President Bhalwal ST Cell, Ch. Mohd Hanief Joint Secretary ST cell, Ch. Abdul Gafoor and Ch. Shameen.

DLSA Reasi educates citizens about legal rights, significance of Lok Adalat

REASI: Under the visionary leadership of Chairman District Legal Services Authority, Reasi (also Pr. District and Sessions Judge) Khalil Choudhary and the guidance of Secretary Pooja Gupta, a series of legal awareness events were held across the District Today.

Essay Writing Competition on the theme "Rights of Senior Citizens" was organized by the Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) of TLSC Katra at Government High School Dhanori, Katra, in collaboration with the Department of Education. The objective was to generate awareness among students regarding the rights, dignity and welfare of senior citizens and to sensitize the younger generation towards their responsibilities.

Vivek Bali demands 20,000 Jobs for Kashmiri Pandits to facilitate their return to the valley

SRINAGAR: Vivek Bali, State President, Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP), has strongly supported the long-pending demand of Kashmiri Pandits for dignified rehabilitation and has called upon the Government to create 20,000 (jobs) to ensure their safe and sustainable return to the Kashmir Valley.

Addressing the media, Vivek Bali stated that the return of Kashmiri Pandits is not just a political issue but a matter of justice, identity, and restoration of the Valley's rich cultural heritage. He emphasized that



without proper employment opportunities, housing, and security, any rehabilitation plan would remain incomplete.

"Providing jobs to Kashmiri Pandits is essential for rebuilding their con-

fidence and ensuring their permanent settlement in the Valley. The Government must take immediate steps to create at least 20,000 jobs as part of a comprehensive rehabilitation package," he said.

Vivek Bali further urged the administration to engage with community representatives and formulate a time-bound roadmap for the return and resettlement of displaced families. He also stressed the need for special economic packages, educational support, and infrastructure development to make the return process viable.

DHSJ organises plantation drive

JAMMU: The Directorate of Health Services Jammu (DHSJ) on Monday organized a plantation drive at its office premises with the objective of promoting environmental sustainability and enhancing green cover.

The programme was attended by Director Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar; Deputy Director Dentistry Dr. Sanjay Sharma; Financial Advisor / Chief Account Officer Rajni Gupta; Deputy Director Planning Raman Sharma; State Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Jyoti Jolly and Assistant Director Schemes Dr. Ila Gupta along with other officers and officials of the Directorate.



The Director highlighted the importance of environmental conservation and emphasized the need for sustained and collective efforts to maintain ecologi-

cal balance. He stated that such initiatives are essential for fostering environmental awareness and ensuring a healthier and cleaner environment.

Sat Sharma asks BJP's ULB & Panchayati Raj Cells to stay poll-ready

J&K BJP reviews preparedness of ULB & Panchayati Raj Cells



JAMMU: J&K BJP President and MP (Rajya Sabha), Sat Sharma, along with General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, General Secretary Sanjita Dogra, and BJP All Cells Incharge Ved Sharma, addressed a review meeting of Urban Local Bodies (ULB) and Panchayati Raj Cells at the party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

The meeting was attended by Convenor, Urban Local Body Pawan Singh, Convenor, Panchayati Raj Advocate Jitender Kumar, Co-Convenors Ajay Gupta, Dinesh Gupta, Daljeet Kumar, and Aman Sharma. Manish Khajuria, Co-Incharge All Cells, conducted the proceedings.

Sat Sharma, while addressing the meeting, emphasized the importance of organizational preparedness at the grassroots level. He asked all members of Urban Local Body and Panchayati Raj Cells to remain fully prepared for

the upcoming elections, which is proposed in near future. He stressed that the cadre must remain active, organized, and closely connected with the public.

Sat Sharma stated that the BJP's strength lies in our booth-level structure and grassroots outreach. He said that every activist of party must ensure that the benefits of the Modi government's welfare schemes reach the last person in rural and urban areas alike. This is not just our responsibility but also our commitment to inclusive development and good governance, he added.

Ashok Koul conducted a detailed review of the functioning of Panchayati Raj Cells at the block level and ULB Cells at the committee level. He stressed on the organizational effectiveness and sought feedback from ground-level workers to further strengthen party outreach. Ashok Koul said that the effectiveness of our organization is reflected in

its activity at the grassroots. He stressed on the regular engagement, proper coordination, and efficient execution of programs at every level to maintain BJP's strong connect with the public.

Sanjita Dogra said that the party cadre has consistently worked to expand the outreach through various programmes. She stressed on further resolve to increase the party's grassroots presence through these programmes.

Ved Sharma presented a detailed report on the programs conducted by both the Panchayati Raj and Urban Local Body Cells. He also shared a structured roadmap for upcoming initiatives aimed at enhancing public participation and organizational expansion. He said that the Cell activists should intensify their efforts with well-planned activities to strengthen both cells and deepen public engagement.

BJP celebrates 47th Foundation Day across J&K with enthusiasm

JAMMU: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, celebrated its 47th Foundation Day on April 6, with great enthusiasm and organizational fervor across the Union Territory.

The celebrations were led by J&K BJP President and Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Sat Sharma CA, along with General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul and other senior leaders. The party flag was hoisted at the party headquarters, District and Mandal offices, booth levels, and even at the residences of party activists, followed by the distribution of sweets.

At the party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, Sat Sharma and Ashok Koul were joined by former MLC Ashok Khajuria, former MLC Ashwani Sharma, former MLC S. Charanjit Singh Khalsa, Vice-Presidents Bharat Bhushan, and Rakesh Mahajan, General Secretaries Sanjita Dogra and Gopal Mahajan, District President Naresh Singh Jasrotia, MLAs Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Prof. Gharu Ram Bhagat, Devyani Rana, and several other senior leaders. Hundreds of enthusiastic party activists participated in the celebrations.

Sat Sharma, along with General Secretary Sanjita Dogra, District Prabhari Brajeshwar Singh Rana, District President Rajesh Gupta hoisted the party flag at the Kachi Chawni District Office. Sat Sharma, along with MLA Gharu Ram Bhagat, Former Minister



Sham Chaudhary, District President Rinku Chaudhary senior leaders and district teams, also hoisted the party flag at Jammu Border District Office.

Ashok Koul, along with District Prabhari Chandji Bhat, senior leader Hira Lal Bhat, District President Rajeev Pandita and other leaders hoisted flag at Kashmir Displaced District at Durga Nagar.

Sat Sharma, while addressing the jubilant activists, said that the BJP was founded on April 6 1980, with the sole aim of serving the nation with a strong nationalist voice and uplifting even the last person in every section of society. He emphasized that the party's journey from its ideological roots to becoming the world's largest political organization reflects the dedication

and sacrifice of its cadre. He called upon party work-

ers to further strengthen the organization at the booth level and work tirelessly to realize the vision of a "Viksit Bharat," aligning with the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He stressed that every BJP worker must act as an institution, committed to nationalism, service, and good governance.

Ashok Koul prompted the party activists to take the Foundation Day as a renewed pledge to serve society with greater dedication.

He emphasized the importance of reaching every household with the party's message and asked workers to hoist the party flag at their residences as a symbol of pride and commitment. He highlighted that the strength of BJP lies in its disciplined and ideologically driven cadre at the grassroots level.

Day 3 of MSCBMC Trust National Art Workshop: Artists Inspire Young Minds at School Interaction in Srinagar



SRINAGAR: On the third day of the ongoing National Art Workshop under Jashan-e-Bahar, the Master Sansar Chand Baru Memorial Charitable Trust (MSCBMC Trust), in collaboration with Petronet LNG Limited, organised a special demonstration and interactive session at Kashmir Harvard Educational Institute.

The session featured participation from renowned artists including Suraj Kumar, Sachin Naik Jha, Javid Iqbal, Zargar Zahoor, Sharmila Sharma, Syed Murtaza, Vijaylaxmi Deepak Mer, Sandeep Aher, and Sahil Ahmad Maken, among others.

Students actively and enthusiastically participated in the session, creating

their own paintings under the guidance of the visiting artists. The school premises turned into a vibrant creative space as students expressed their imagination on canvas, experimenting with colours, themes, and techniques.

The artists not only demonstrated various painting styles but also interacted closely with the students, offering hands-on guidance, constructive feedback, and encouragement. The young participants showcased remarkable creativity and eagerness to learn, making the session highly engaging and inspiring.

The interaction evolved into a lively exchange of ideas, where students gained practical exposure to artistic techniques while building confidence in their creative abilities.

AJKRS holds advisory meet, condemns unauthorized activities of ousted President

JAMMU: A meeting of the General Advisory Committee of the All Jammu and Kashmir Ravidass Sabha (AJKRS) was held today at the headquarters of the Sabha in Krishna Nagar, Jammu. The meeting was chaired by Er. R.C. Bhasin and attended by several senior members and representatives.

The special meeting was convened to deliberate on important issues concerning the organization, particularly the alleged unauthorized activities of former president Piran Ditta and his associates. Members expressed concern over the reported misuse of the Sabha's letterhead and the continued projection of himself as president despite being removed from the position on December 29, 2024. The current executive body, it was noted, was elected unanimously in the general house meeting held on February 1, 2026.



Participants strongly criticized these actions, stating that such activities are unethical and detrimental to the dignity and reputation of the Sabha. Prominent members including M.R. Bangotra, Tulsi Dass Langeh, Dr. Chander Prakash, Dr. Rajinder Samyal, Mohan Lal Hans, and Bihari Lal Digra voiced their support for the current executive committee. They emphasized that the current leadership represents more than 4.5 lakh members of the Ravidassia community in the Union Territory and is working effectively for their welfare.

The members collectively resolved that all neces-

sary steps should be taken to put an end to any actions that undermine the organization's integrity.

They also stressed the importance of holding regular meetings to review progress and strengthen organizational functioning.

Among others present in the meeting were Tarsem Loach, Prof. C.L. Shivgotra, Prof. G.L. Thapa, Tara Chand, Surjeet Singh Heer, Bodh Raj Kalsi, Mahesh Shivgotra, Sewa Dass Digra, Charan Dass Shivgotra, Jagat Ram, Kaka Ram, Suresh Shivgotra, Puran Chand Amarnath, Pyare Lal Angral, Darshan Lal Gorka, and other members.

Cong alliance to form Govt in Assam with majority: Kharge

GUWAHATI, Apr 7: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday asserted that the opposition alliance will form a government in Assam by winning around 73 seats of 126 assembly constituencies in the upcoming elections.

Addressing a press meet here, he described Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma as the "most corrupt" in India and sought comments from RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on this.

"The Congress-led alliance is going to form the next government in Assam. We will win 72-73 seats," Kharge claimed.

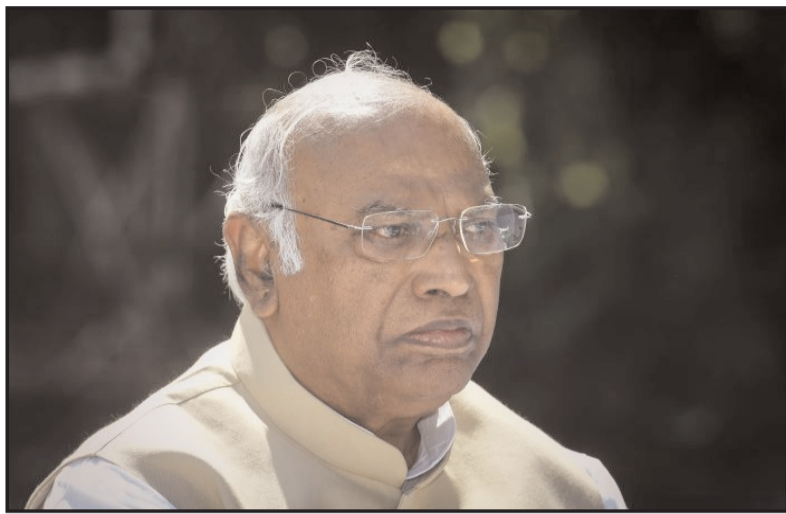
The Congress survey team has given feedback from the ground that the opposition alliance will surely form the government, he claimed.

The Congress chief also hit out at the CM over corruption charges.

"No CM in India is so egoistic and arrogant, like him. Himanta Biswa Sarma is working only for his family's development. He is running syndicates in everything — tea, school, coal, egg, land and areca nut," Kharge alleged.

He claimed that Sarma's every cabinet colleague is "corrupt" and "all of them own thousands of crores of properties".

"I seek comments from



Mohan Bhagwat on the corruption charges against the Assam CM. I requested the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to give their reactions to their adopted son Himanta. Why is there no enquiry, whereas you had said 'Na khaunga na khane doonga'," Kharge said.

The opposition has often referred to PM Modi's pledge to wipe out corruption — "Na khaunga na khane doonga" — and attacked him, alleging that it was mere rhetoric.

Kharge drew attention to Assam Congress president Gaurav Gogoi's assets and sought to compare them with those of Sarma.

Asked about Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera's allegations of Sarma's wife possessing three foreign passports and owning assets abroad, Kharge said all agencies are under the central government, which should probe the charges.

"They have already

filed an FIR against Khera. Let them probe the matter. We will face the case as it progresses. We have sought probes by ED or CBI into the allegations," he added.

Kharge also claimed Prime Minister Narendra Modi "has no right" to talk about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi or the Gandhi family, whose members have sacrificed their lives to unite the country.

"Those who are less intelligent call Congress pro-Muslim and pro-Pakistan," he said, when asked to comment on the charge that the opposition party indulges in appeasement of minorities.

Kharge also criticised the Assam government over the alleged delay in setting up the fast-track court in the Zubeen Garg death case.

"For six months, the BJP government did not set up the fast-track court... Once our govern-

ment is formed, we will give justice to Zubeen Garg and punish the culprits within 100 days of forming the government," he added.

The Congress chief also said that as the "opposition alliance is forming the next government, women in Assam don't need to fear".

"All the existing schemes will continue, with an enhancement in the cash amount," he said.

"The country is more important. A good government is important. If the CM is corrupt, the entire governance and administration will be affected. It (the election) is not our fight. It's Himanta Biswa Sarma versus the people, who are coming out now. We are just standing with the people," he added.

AICC general secretary and in charge of Assam, Jitendra Singh, said the party has filed a complaint with the Election Commission regarding Sarma's wife allegedly possessing assets abroad and not declaring the same in the poll affidavit.

"There are a lot of discrepancies in the affidavit. We don't have much hope from the EC, which works like the BJP's arm. If needed, we will approach the Supreme Court. Himanta Biswa Sarma will be disqualified even if he becomes the CM," he claimed. (PTI)

EC May Roll Out SIR in remaining 22 states, Union Territories post this month's Assembly Polls



New Delhi, Apr 7: The Election Commission may roll out the third and final phase of special intensive revision of voters' list in the remaining 22 states and Union territories, including Delhi, after the polls to five assemblies this month, officials said.

Assembly elections are taking place in Kerala, Assam, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal this month and counting will take place on May 4.

The officials said special intensive revision (SIR) could be rolled out after the polls conclude on April 29. Another possibility is to begin the massive exercise after the declaration of results.

So far, SIR has been carried out in 10 states and three Union territories. A 'special revision' of electoral rolls was carried out in Assam.

Except for Uttar Pradesh, final voters' lists have been published where SIR was carried out.

As many as 60 crore of the nearly 99 crore voters have been covered in these voters' list clean up exercises.

The remaining nearly 39 crore electors will be covered in the proposed exercise in 17 states and five Union territories.

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

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

In a letter to the chief electoral officers of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Ladakh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Delhi, Odisha, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura, Telangana and Uttarakhand, the poll authority said pan-India SIR of voters' list was ordered in June last year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Modi Govt perpetuating system of exclusion: Rahul seeks answers on contracts for 'Bahujan' entrepreneurs

NEW DELHI, Apr 7: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday accused the Modi government of perpetuating a system of exclusion through its policies and asked why 'Bahujan' entrepreneurs are being excluded from the country's largest public contracts.

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said he asked the government in Parliament that out of the Rs 16,500 crore worth of public works contracts awarded last year, how many were secured by businesses owned by Dalits, Adivasis, and Backward Classes.

"Their response was deeply concerning — the government does not maintain any data regarding this matter," he said



in a post in Hindi on Facebook.

"The policy mandates that, under the public procurement process, 25% of purchases must be made from MSMEs, of which 4% is earmarked for Dalit and Adivasi entrepreneurs. However, when it comes to the largest and most lucrative contracts — public works — the government claims that this is

not 'mandatory'," Gandhi said.

"This is not merely an administrative oversight. It is a deliberately engineered system of exclusion perpetuated through the Modi government's policies that undermines social and economic justice," Gandhi said.

He asserted that the question is straightforward — why are Bahujan entrepreneurs being

excluded from the country's largest public contracts.

In his questions to the government in Lok Sabha on April 2, Gandhi had asked the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs about the total number and value of public works and infrastructure contracts awarded by the Central Public Works Department and under urban infrastructure schemes of the Ministry during the last five years, year-wise.

He sought to know about the total number and value of such contracts awarded to enterprises owned by persons belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) during the last five years, year-wise.



FACT CHECK: Do Kegel exercises help men achieve better erections and control ejaculation?

CLAIM:

Consuming beetroot juice, improving lifestyle, performing Kegel exercises, and following regular weight training with adequate protein intake (around 1.5 g per kg of body weight) can improve sexual stamina, help men achieve stronger erections, and provide better control over ejaculation.

FACT:

Research suggests that pelvic floor (Kegel) exercises can help improve erectile function and ejaculation control in some men by strengthening the muscles involved in erections and ejaculation. Clinical studies have shown that a significant proportion of men with erectile dysfunction experienced improved or restored erectile function after regular pelvic floor training. However, men with persistent symptoms should consult a doctor, as erectile dysfunction can also be linked to underlying health conditions.

In a viral Instagram reel posted by doctor and influencer Yokesh Arul, who has over 1 million followers on the platform, Kegel exercises are promoted as a solution for improving sexual stamina and erections. In the reel, Arul presents the advice through a humorous skit that revolves around a conversation between a couple experiencing intimacy issues.

The reel begins with a woman complaining to her partner while getting close to him. "Dude, every time your stomach comes in the middle," she says, expressing frustration. The man replies, "I am trying." The woman responds bluntly, "I don't want to do it."

At this point, Arul enters the scene and addresses the man, saying, "Come on, son. I will increase your stamina." The man immediately asks, "First, tell me about stamina." Arul then hands him a glass and says, "Hold this." Confused, the man asks, "What is this?" Arul replies, "This is beetroot juice. Now you have to do Kegel's exercises." He goes on to claim that these exercises can help with "stronger erection, better control over ejaculation and even support better erectile dysfunction."

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Later in the reel, the man says, "Now I am going on a date." Arul stops him and advises, "Bro, wait. Go, at least

els. Your urethra (where pee leaves your body) and rectum (where poop leaves your body) pass through the muscles and tissues of your pelvic floor." In men,

cles and should continue breathing normally during the exercise.

For consistent results, the exercises need to be done regularly. "Aim for at least three sets a day," the

is pelvic floor muscle training, commonly known as Kegel exercises. A clinical study involving 55 men with erectile dysfunction examined whether strengthening the

IIEF." Improvements were also observed in pelvic muscle strength. After six months, the results showed that 22 participants (40%) regained normal erectile function, while 19 participants (34.5%) experienced noticeable improvement. However, 14 participants (25.5%) did not show improvement.

The researchers concluded that "pelvic floor muscle exercises and biofeedback are an effective treatment for men with erectile dysfunction."

Similar results have been reported in other research. A study conducted at the University of the West of England found that pelvic floor exercises helped 40 per cent of men with erectile dysfunction regain normal erectile function, while an additional 33.5 per cent experienced significant improvement.

Kegel exercises work by strengthening the pelvic floor muscles, particularly the bulbocavernosus muscle, which plays an important role in male sexual function. This muscle performs several key functions: it allows the penis to fill with blood during an erection, helps pump semen during ejaculation, and assists in emptying the urethra after urination.

Because of these functions, strengthening pelvic floor muscles may provide additional benefits beyond erectile function. Pelvic floor training has been associated with improvements such as reduced urinary or bowel incontinence, decreased dribbling after urination, and, in some cases, enhanced sexual satisfaction.

Although Kegel exercises are often associated with women, especially during pregnancy and postpartum recovery, these exercises can benefit men as well. Like any other muscle group in the body, pelvic floor muscles can weaken over time and may benefit from regular strengthening exercises.

However, healthcare professionals advise that people experiencing persistent erectile dysfunction should consult a doctor, as ED may sometimes be an early sign of underlying health conditions such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes.

This story is done in collaboration with First Check, which is the health journalism vertical of DataLEADS



reduce your stomach. Or else it will come in the middle." When the man asks what he should do, Arul recommends "regular weight training and protein intake, at least 1.5 gm per kg body weight."

The reel has amassed around 6.88 lakh views, along with 6,555 likes and 4,034 shares, drawing significant attention to the claims about Kegel exercises and sexual health.

What are Kegel exercises?

According to the Cleveland Clinic, "Kegel exercises (often shortened to Kegels) are exercises that strengthen your pelvic floor muscles." These muscles help control urinary and bowel functions and are also involved in sexual function.

The organisation explains that these muscles support organs in the lower abdomen. "Your pelvic floor muscles, along with other tissues, stretch from your tailbone in the back to your pubic bone in the front. They support your bladder and bow-

strengthening these muscles may help improve control over urination and ejaculation and support erectile function in certain cases.

The first step is identifying the correct muscles. According to the Mayo Clinic, "To find your pelvic floor muscles, tighten the muscles that you use to keep from passing gas or to stop urinating midstream." These actions engage the pelvic floor muscles. Once these muscles are identified, the exercises can be performed in almost any position.

The clinic recommends starting slowly and focusing on proper technique. "Tighten your pelvic floor muscles. Squeeze them for three seconds, and then relax for three seconds." Beginners may find it easiest to practise while lying down before progressing to sitting or standing positions.

It is also important to isolate the correct muscles. The Mayo Clinic advises that people should avoid tightening their stomach, thigh, or buttock mus-

clinic recommends. Each set can gradually be increased to 10 to 15 repetitions, and they can be performed in different positions - lying down, sitting, or standing. Health professionals may also provide personalised exercise plans depending on individual needs.

Do Kegel exercises help men achieve better erections and control ejaculation?

Erectile dysfunction (ED), the inability to achieve or maintain an erection sufficient for sexual activity, is a common condition affecting many men. It can occur for a variety of reasons, including physical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and low testosterone levels. Psychological factors, nerve damage, hormonal fluctuations, and problems related to blood flow can also contribute to the condition.

While some medications are widely used to treat ED, experts note that lifestyle changes and certain exercises may also help in some cases.

One approach that has received attention

pelvic floor muscles could improve erectile function.

According to the study, "Fifty-five men with erectile dysfunction (median age 59.2 years; range 22-78 years) were enrolled from a local urology clinic." Participants were divided into two groups. Twenty-eight men were assigned to an intervention group that performed pelvic floor exercises, received biofeedback training, and were advised on lifestyle changes. The remaining 27 participants formed the control group and were given lifestyle advice alone.

Researchers assessed erectile function at the start of the study and again after three and six months using several measures, including the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF). The findings showed notable improvements among those performing the exercises.

The study reported that "men in the intervention group showed significant mean increases in the erectile function domain of the

Iran calls for human chains to protect power plants as Trump's deadline nears

DUBAI, Apr 7: Airstrikes pounded Tehran on Tuesday, and Iranian officials urged young people to form human chains to protect power plants, hours before the expiration of US President Donald Trump's latest deadline for the Islamic Republic to reopen the crucial Strait of Hormuz or face punishing strikes on its infrastructure.

Trump has extended previous deadlines but suggested the one set for 8 p.m. in Washington was final, and the rhetoric on both sides reached a fever pitch, leaving Iranians on edge. Trump threatened to destroy all of Iran's power plants and bridges if Tehran does not allow traffic to fully resume in the strait, through which a fifth of the world's oil transits in peacetime. Iran's president said 14 million people, including himself, have volunteered to fight.

While Iran cannot match the sophistication of US and Israeli weaponry or their dominance in the air, its chokehold on the strait is causing major damage to the world economy and raising the pressure on Trump both at home and abroad to find a way out of the standoff.

Officials involved in diplomatic efforts said talks were ongoing – but Iran has rejected the latest American proposal, and it was unclear if a deal would come in time to head off Trump's threatened attacks. World leaders and experts warned that strikes as destructive as those Trump threatened could constitute a war crime.



Meanwhile, a wave of strikes hit Iran, including in residential areas of Tehran, killing nearly three dozen people. Iran fired on Israel and Saudi Arabia, prompting the temporary closure of a major bridge.

As the deadline approaches, rhetoric ramps up

In emphasising his Tuesday deadline, Trump warned that "the entire country can be taken out in one night."

"Every bridge in Iran will be decimated by 12 o'clock tomorrow night," he said Monday, and all power plants will be "burning, exploding and never to be used again."

In response, Iran called on "all young people, athletes, artists, students, university students and their professors" to form human chains around power plants.

"Power plants that are our national assets and capital," Alireza Rahimi, identified by Iranian state television as the secretary of the Supreme Council of Youth and Adolescents, said in a video statement.

Iranians have formed human chains in the past

around nuclear sites at times of heightened tensions with the West.

President Masoud Pezeshkian posted on X that 14 million Iranians had answered state media and text message campaigns urging people to volunteer to fight.

"I, too, have been, am, and will remain ready to give my life for Iran," Pezeshkian wrote.

A Revolutionary Guard general also urged parents to send their children to man checkpoints, which have been repeatedly targeted in airstrikes.

Trump's threat prompts warnings of war crimes

France joined a growing chorus of international voices calling for restraint.

Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said attacks targeting civilian and energy infrastructure "are barred by the rules of war, international law."

"They would without doubt trigger a new phase of escalation, of reprisals, that would drag the region and the world economy into a vicious circle that would be very worrying and, most of all, very damaging to our own interests," the minister said

on France Info television.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also warned the US that attacks on civilian infrastructure are banned under international law, according to his spokesperson. Such cases are notoriously difficult to prosecute, and Trump told reporters he's "not at all" concerned about committing war crimes.

A wave of airstrikes hits Iran, which fires on Saudi Arabia and Israel

A series of intense airstrikes pounded Tehran, including at a possible weapons depot in the mountains and in residential neighbourhoods. Residential strikes in the past have targeted Iranian government and security officials.

Israel's military said it attacked an Iranian petrochemical site in Shiraz, the second day in a row it hit such a facility after striking a plant at the South Pars natural gas field. Israel also issued a Farsi-language warning telling Iranians to avoid trains throughout the day, likely telegraphing intended strikes on the rail network.

Another strike hit the Khorramabad International Airport in western Iran, and an attack on an unidentified target in Alborz province, northwest of Tehran, killed 18 people, according to state media.

Nine people were killed in the city of Pardis in other airstrikes, Iranian media reported.

Early Tuesday, Tehran launched seven ballistic missiles at Saudi Arabia, which authorities said rained debris on the ground near energy facilities as they were intercepted. Defence Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki said the damage was being assessed.

The attacks prompted Saudi Arabia to temporarily close the King Fahd Causeway, a bridge that links Saudi Arabia to the island kingdom of Bahrain. The 25-kilometre (15.5-mile) bridge is the only connection by road for Bahrain, home to the US Navy's 5th Fleet, to the Arabian Peninsula.

Iran also fired on Israel, with reports of incoming missiles in Tel Aviv and Eilat.

More than 1,900 people have been killed in Iran since the war began, but the government has not updated the toll for days.

In Lebanon, where Israel is fighting Iran-backed Hezbollah militants, more than 1,400 people have been killed. And more than 1 million people have been displaced. Eleven Israeli soldiers have died there.

In Gulf Arab states and the occupied West Bank, more than two

dozen people have died, while 23 have been reported dead in Israel, and 13 US service members have been killed.

Chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz

Iran choked off shipping through the strait after Israel and the US attacked on Feb. 28, starting the war. Iran's attacks on the energy infrastructure of its Gulf Arab neighbours, coupled with its stranglehold on the strait, have sent oil prices skyrocketing, raising the price of gasoline, food and other basics far beyond the Middle East.

In spot trading on Tuesday, Brent crude, the international standard, was above USD 108 per barrel, up around 50 per cent since the start of the war.

Even though Iran has rejected the latest proposal from the US, officials involved in the diplomacy say that talks are still ongoing.

On Monday, Tehran rejected a 45-day ceasefire proposal and said it wants a permanent end to the war. But as the deadline neared Tuesday, an official said indirect communications between the United States and Iran remained underway. The official said mediators from Pakistan, Egypt and Türkiye "are racing against time" to reach a compromise before the deadline.

He said Iran has linked the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz to sanctions relief, and the US was open to easing some sanctions, especially on Iran's oil sector, in part to stabilise the global oil market.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss ongoing diplomacy. (AP)

ASI, 4 others injured in explosion in NW Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Apr 7: At least five policemen, including an officer, were injured in an improvised explosive device blast in northwest Pakistan on Tuesday, police said.

The incident occurred on a police patrol vehicle in the Lakki Marwat district in restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The police officials were on the Bannu-Dera Ismail Khan section of the Peshawar-Karachi Indus Highway when the blast occurred.

A spokesperson for the district's police, Qudratullah, said that the attack was carried out by Fitna-al-Khawarij.



Fitna al-Khawarij is a term the state uses for terrorists belonging to the banned TehA-reek-e-

Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

The attackers had planted an improvised explosive device (IED) on

a motorcycle parked along the roadside, which detonated with a loud blast as the police vehicle passed

by, he added.

Assistant sub-inspector (ASI) and four constables sustained injuries, while the police van was also damaged, the spokesperson said.

The injured personnel were shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital for medical treatment.

A heavy police contingent cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to nab those responsible.

District Police Officer (DPO) Nazir Khan, accompanied by officials of the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and Bomb Disposal Squad,

visited the site and reviewed the situation.

He also directed officers to enhance security measures and ensure the early arrest of the perpetrators.

Lakki Marwat and other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Bannu, Peshawar, Karak and Bajaur, have witnessed a spate of attacks targeting security forces in recent months.

According to the Centre for Research and Security Studies, violence in the province surged significantly, with fatalities increasing from 1,620 in 2024 to 2,331 last year. (PTI)

India's FY27 GDP growth forecast downgraded to 6.8-6.9% amid energy supply disruptions: Report

UPI payments surge 33% to 228.5 billion transactions in 2025, Bharat BillPay up 40%

NEW DELHI:

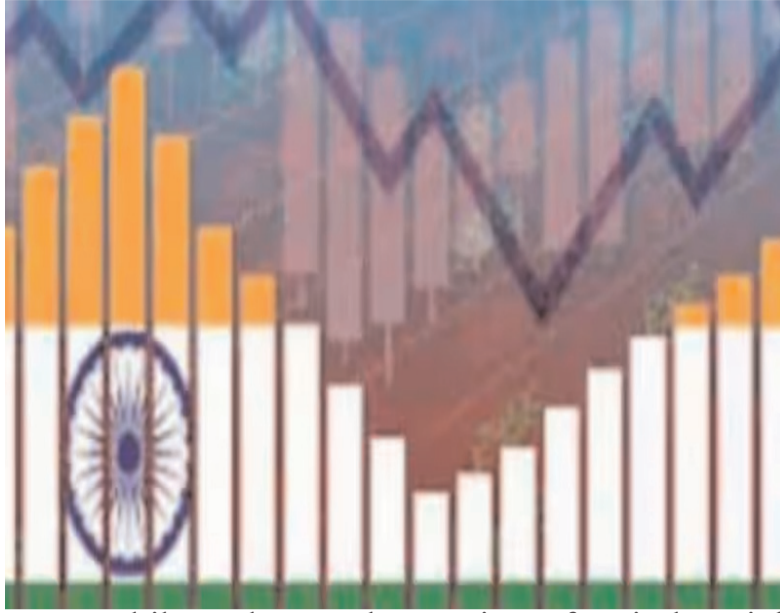
ICICI Bank has revised India's projected GDP growth for the 2027 fiscal year to a range of 6.8-6.9 per cent from a previous estimate of 7.2 per cent. This adjustment follows significant disruptions in energy supply and manufacturing momentum triggered by the ongoing conflict.

According to a report by the bank, the economic outlook has shifted as global oil prices and supply chain blockades begin to weigh on domestic production.

The revised forecast of 6.8-6.9 per cent relies on the assumption that oil prices eventually settle around USD 85 per barrel as supply lines improve.

The report highlighted that before the start of this conflict, the domestic growth outlook looked far more optimistic. Data from the new GDP series indicated that the economy grew by 7.8 per cent year-on-year in the third quarter of the 2026 fiscal year, with the financial year-to-date growth revised to 7.6 per cent.

High-frequency indicators through February, including



automobile sales and bank credit, suggested that growth momentum remained robust before geopolitical tensions intervened.

However, the advent of war has severely impacted the supply of energy products, particularly liquefied natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas. This strain is already visible in industrial data.

The Manufacturing PMI for March showed an immediate impact, with the index decelerating to 53.9 from 56.9 in the previous month. "Even during 2022 when energy and gas prices rose, India's manufacturing sector activity did slow down to -1.7 percent in FY23 from 10 percent in FY22," the report said.

"Given supply con-

straints for industrial energy, household demand is being prioritized but there is cut-back in supply of industrial use which is likely to impact production in sectors such as fertilizer, ceramics, restaurants, metals and glass among others," the ICICI Bank report noted.

The report further stated that apart from lower output, margins for the corporate sector will be impacted, as was seen in FY23 due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, thereby impacting Gross Value Added growth.

"Historical data of oil prices and GDP show that only periods of exceedingly higher oil prices have a material impact on real GDP. When oil prices

increased from ~USD 63/bbl. between 2015-19 to USD 85/bbl. in 2023-25, real GDP growth was largely unchanged (7.4-7.2 percent). However, when oil prices averaged USD 111/bbl. during 2012-14, real GDP was considerably lower at 5.7 percent," the report added. "Most of the impact is likely to be felt in Q4FY26 and Q1FY27 when supply constraint is likely to impact production."

External trade faces additional hurdles as the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz impacted exports to the GCC nations, which constitute 15 per cent of overall exports. This comes after the export sector briefly found relief following a trade deal with the US and a US Supreme Court ruling declaring "certain tariffs illegal."

While supply lines are expected to inch toward normalcy in the coming weeks, near-term growth remains under pressure.

"Near-term growth will surely be impacted as global oil price has averaged around USD 100/bbl. since the start of this conflict, and these levels are detrimental to growth," the report stated.

Techie laid off from Oracle moves back to Odisha with Rs 43,000 passive income, becomes Uber driver -- Post viral on his exigency planning

NEW DELHI:

On one hand while there is a mayhem in job market after massive layoff at Oracle, a techie who was fired from the company is making huge buzz in the social media --but not for the obvious reason!

Several employees have taken social media to share their experiences. Some posts have reflected the emotional and financial turmoil caused by the sudden layoffs. Some have quickly made up their mind for the next switch, seeking references and new job opportunities.

Meanwhile, there is a post by an X user by the name of Nayak Satya. The X user has claimed that his friend was fired from Oracle in the recent layoff spree. However the techie did not show any signs of panic and rather chose to go back to his home town in Bhubaneswar.

"One of my close friends was fired from Oracle Bangalore. No panic, no stress, and no crying on social media. He straight away came back to his hometown Bhubaneswar".

But the reason why the X post is making buzz in the social media is due to the financial planning that the Oracle techie had made.

Nayak mentioned how his

friend had made sure that he had a steady passive income of around Rs 43,000 per month.

"He had postal fixed deposits in two joint accounts Rs 15 lakh each. One with his parents, and the other in his and his wife's name. He also had one in his kids' account. Together, these give him almost Rs 28,000 in interest every month. He also had fixed deposits in some Indian banks worth around Rs 30 lakh, which give him another Rs 15,000 per month," Nayak wrote.

Nayak said that the Oracle techie is now living at own home with his parents and has taken to driving Uber. The techie also plans to start a small business of his own.

"He knows how to drive, so he immediately started working as an Uber driver at his own convenience earning good. He has no EMIs and no loans for any metro city flat. At the same time, he is calmly planning to start a small business with the help of his parents," said Nayak.

He never followed influencers, never did SIPs, and avoided all the modern financial hype. Pure old school vibes, steady process and discipline. He happily called me

today to meet up after our conversation to cross check potential of Bhubaneswar to start something fresh.

Nayak asked people to plan in advance so that when required one will never fumble.

It was a moment of shock for thousands of employees at Oracle Corporation last week, as reports of large-scale layoffs surfaced. Employees received termination emails as early as 6 AM and what started as a normal workday quickly turned into confusion and uncertainty. "He knows how to drive, so he immediately started working as an Uber driver at his own convenience earning good. He has no EMIs and no loans for any metro city flat. At the same time, he is calmly planning to start a small business with the help of his parents," said Nayak.

Although Oracle has not officially confirmed the exact number of layoffs, reports have said that the tech company may have laid off between 20,000 and 30,000 employees globally. This is nearly 18 percent of Oracle's total workforce of around 162,000 people. In India alone, as many as 12,000 employees are believed to have lost their jobs.

NEW DELHI:

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed 228.5 billion transactions in 2025, marking a 33 per cent year-on-year increase, while total transaction value touched Rs. 299.74 trillion, a report said on Monday.

The report from Worldline said that UPI's growth was broad-based, with both person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions rising, with the latter recording a 34 per cent growth to 143.82 billion transactions.

The overall average ticket size for UPI fell 9 per cent to Rs. 1,314, while merchant payments' average ticket size dropped to Rs. 592, reflecting the digitisation of small-ticket purchases.

"Reduction in ticket size signals the migration of previously cash-driven transactions — from street vendors to local services — into the digital economy," the report said.

Merchant acceptance infrastructure expanded in 2025, with UPI QR codes increasing 15 per cent YoY to 731.38 million.

Point-of-sale terminals grew 15 per cent to 11.48 million. Bharat QR deployments eased slightly as the ecosystem consolidated around UPI-led acceptance models, the report said.

"India's digital payments ecosystem is entering a new phase of maturity, where scale is being complemented by structure," Worldline India Chief Executive Officer Ramesh Narasimhan said.

The report revealed a maturing payments landscape where multiple payment rails — UPI, cards, and recurring payment platforms such as Bharat BillPay — are increasingly working in complementary roles to power a fully digital economy.

India's merchant ecosystem is increasingly becoming "QR-first, PoS-as-needed," enabling even the smallest merchants to accept digital payments with minimal infrastructure.

Credit card transactions increased 27 per cent to 5.69 billion, and debit card volumes eased 23 per cent, reflecting the migration of small-value transactions to UPI. Online credit card payments reached Rs. 14.53 trillion.

Recurring digital payments are growing rapidly as households move towards automated bill management with payments on Bharat BillPay touching 3.05 billion and value at Rs. 14.84 trillion, up 40 per cent and 93 per cent respectively.

The platform is seeing strong adoption across categories such as education fees, insurance payments, EMI repayments, and subscription services, signalling the rise of a "set-and-forget" digital payments model, the report said.

One barrel of oil does way more than just filling your tank

New Delhi: Somewhere right now, a barrel of crude oil is being cracked open — not literally, but chemically. Inside a refinery tower, heat drives its molecules apart by boiling point. The lightest fractions rise; the heaviest settle. What emerges is not one thing but eight: a precise, predictable suite of products that underpins nearly every major industry on earth. One barrel. One hundred and fifty-nine litres. Eight entirely different destinies.

According to data published by National Geographic and Bloomberg, the breakdown of a standard crude oil barrel has remained remarkably stable over decades of industrial refining. Petrol claims the largest share at 42 percent. Diesel takes 27 percent. Jet fuel accounts for 10 percent. The remaining 21 percent is divided among LPG, petrochemical feedstocks, marine fuel, lubricants, and asphalt. Together, these eight products form the material foundation of the modern economy.

The two largest slices of the barrel have one thing in common: they power vehicles. Petrol, at 42 percent, is the world's dominant passenger fuel — the product that built the car industry, shaped suburban development, and established the geopolitics of the 20th century. Diesel, at 27 percent, is the workhorse: it powers the trucks that stock supermarkets, the trains that carry freight, the construction machines that build cities, and the generators that keep hospitals running when the grid fails.

Together they consume roughly 110 litres out of every 159-litre barrel. That concentration is both oil's greatest economic strength and its greatest vulnerability. Electric vehicles directly threaten petrol demand. Electric trucks are beginning to dent diesel. The energy transition, at its core, is a bet against these two columns of the barrel — and as of 2024, global petrol demand has begun to plateau in many developed markets for the first time in history.

Papa don't Worry: Prince Yadav's IPL story

A few years back, Najafgarh-based Railway Protection Force's ASI Ram Niwas Yadav was extremely worried about the future of his youngest son Prince, who was only interested in bowling yorkers at tennis ball tournaments.

However, the youngster was unruffled and told his father straight up, "Papa aap mera chinta karna chhod dijiye. Main apne se kuch kar loonga (Dad stop worrying about me. I would manage something on my own)."

Cut to 2026 and the seemingly nonchalant boy has managed to come good on the promise. The Lucknow Super Giants swing sensation has already breached the defences of experienced India internationals such as Axar Patel and Ishan Kishan in successive IPL games.

"Any father would be worried about the future of his kids and so was I. Till the age of 18, he had not even bowled once with the leather ball. I literally forced him to appear for the Delhi Police's Constables' Exam and he was fit enough to clear the physical round.

"But he wasn't well prepared for written test because his mind was elsewhere," recalled Ram Niwas.

Prince Yadav

But like most doting fathers, he too had no other option but to back his audacious boy.

"Bete ki zid hai aur humein pura karna tha. Ek ASI ke salary mein aur kitna hi ho pata hai (It was his passion so I had to believe in him. (But) how much can you manage with an ASI's salary?). But I am happy that I allowed him to fly on his own," said Ram Niwas, who now has people from nearby Kheda



Dabar village in Najafgarh's Dariyapur thronging his house thanks to Prince's IPL exploits.

"After Ishan Kishan's dismissal (LSG vs SRH game), a lot of our neighbours came and told me that 'Usne iss dehat (rural area) ka naam roushan kar diya' (People have come up to tell me that he has brought fame to this hamlet).

"Pahle humare is ilaake ko log isliye jaante the kyonki poorv president sahibaa (Pratibha Patil) aaye the Chaudhary Bramprakash Ayurvedic Sansthan ke udgathan pe (2012). Ab cricket ke liye famous ho gaya (earlier people knew us because of a visit by former President Pratibha Patil. Now it is famous for cricket)," the pride in Ram Niwas' voice was unmissable.

The Role of Coaching and Mentorship

According to Ram Niwas, Prince's first and only coach till date, Amit Vashistha and former India U-19 World Cup winning pacer Pradeep Sangwan, played the biggest role in shaping Prince.

"I can't thank Amit sir enough. He saw him playing a tennis ball tournament and asked Prince to join his academy in Najafgarh. Pradeep ji (Sangwan) was also Amit sir's student and he helped him with fitness," he said.

There was a time when Prince would tie a sand

bag on his back and run through paddy fields to improve his upper body fitness.

"Pradeep guided him a lot and Amit sir taught him technique. And how can I forget DPL (Delhi Premier League) and New Delhi team. Had DPL not been there, I don't think my son's progress would have been this quick. So I am grateful to DDCA too and also Vijay Dahiya sir," said Ram Niwas.

When PTI contacted the reticent Vashistha, who has been running the Sporting Cricket Club of Najafgarh for years, he spoke about Prince's inherent skill and ability to work hard.

"He could bowl yorkers and even swing the tennis ball at a decent clip. When I saw him, I told his friends to tell him to contact me. He was already 18 back then and there was very little time to quickly make the grade unlike those who come to me at 13 or 14.

"One thing that helped was his basics were strong and also he could impart back-spin on the ball, he had good arm speed -- traits essential for swing bowling," said Vashistha, who has also coached the likes of Lalit Yadav (Delhi all-rounder), and Railways' Himanshu Sangwan (last man to dismiss Virat Kohli in First-Class cricket) to name a few.

Vashistha feels the Prince's ability to work hard helps him stand out.

"Aap Delhi ki garmi mein 2 ghanta bowling dalwalo usse. Thakega nahi and will always follow instructions. His fitness has improved after working with Pradeep and obviously now when you get modern amenities while playing Ranji Trophy or for LSG, you can only improve. He worked with Zaheer Khan sir and now with Bharat Arun sir. Sky is the limit," said the coach.

In fact, national selectors wanted Prince to play one T20 World Cup warm-up game for India A but a knee injury left him unavailable. This was after a brilliant Vijay Hazare Trophy for Delhi where he had 18 wickets in 8 games including three-wicket hauls in four of the games.

Overcoming Challenges: The Age Discrepancy Ban

Prince did have a difficult two years during the COVID-19 lockdown when he was among the multiple Delhi cricketers who were banned for two years due to age-related discrepancies.

Father Ram Niwas described it as the most difficult period.

"I was very nervous and didn't know how would he handle the two-year ban. Its a lengthy period. But he just told me to relax, got Gym equipments at home and would train everyday for those two years."

The coach looked at the episode a tad differently.

"I believe since better part of the ban overlapped with COVID-19 lockdown, he didn't miss much of competitive cricket. Yes, he did miss out on playing Delhi U-23. But then when DPL happened he was back on track."

But the coach's dream is to see Prince in 'India Whites' as swing is his main weapon.

IPL 2026: How does Shami keep coming back stronger?

When Mohammed Shami bowls, it's not just another show from a fast bowler. His deliveries carry whispers of struggle and echoes of resilience.

His spell of four overs, no maiden, just nine runs and two wickets shaped Lucknow Super Giants' five-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad on Sunday (April 5, 2026).

Shami's Intelligent Bowling Mohammed Shami celebrates Abhishek Sharma's wicket

He is not a tearaway pacer, but one who strikes using his intelligence. It looks like he stalks the weakness in every batter.

One wonders whether his seam position is a trap and whether the length he bowls is only to mislead a batter.

When he runs in to bowl with the seam upright, the movement he generates resembles that of a restless and venomous snake.

He knows fast bowling can be cruel, and injuries have often stopped his run-up to glory. Every time he has returned to the top of his run-up, he has looked sharper and hungrier.

Precision and Accuracy

What forced SRH to manage only nine runs from his four overs is his precision. His accuracy is suffocating for any batter.

When the ball seams away and straightens wickedly after pitching,

he turns into one of the most lethal bowlers.

His wrists are strong, but his mind is sharper. The manner in which the match bends to his rhythm is a treat to watch.

I have been fortunate to report many of his great spells, but have also wondered why he has not been considered for the next series. Behind every wicket is his story of persistence.

Dedication and Comebacks

Mohammed Shami practices hard to get his deliveries to skid and hurry the batter. His near-perfect action was also shaped through hard work.

This is why he is so flawless as a pacer. He once confessed that what he enjoys the most is the crack of the timber when he clean-bowls a batter.

Overcoming Injuries

It is remarkable that he remains a dangerous bowler even after a knee injury he incurred soon after the 2015 World Cup, which took 18 months to recover from.

After the 2020-2021 Australia tour, a serious ankle injury forced him to undergo surgery in March 2024, keeping him out of action for another 14 months.

Every comeback has been stronger and louder than the setback. It seems as if he marks his run-up right from the surgery table, and when he produces spells like 4-0-9-2, it reveals that he is a man who can never be stopped.

Klaasen reveals SRH's BIG problem after IPL 2026 losses

Dashing former Proteas batter Henrich Klaasen feels it is still early days in the tournament for the Sunrisers Hyderabad and is confident that the 2016 IPL champions will fire in all departments going forward after two defeats in their first three games.

SRH lost to Royal Challengers Bengaluru by 6 wickets in their opener and then were humbled by 5 wickets by Lucknow Super Giants in their last game. Their only win --

65-run victory -- came against Kolkata Knight Riders.

"Our batting has been good so far, but we missed out about 40 runs in 3 games. We need to bat better. The two games that we struggled, we didn't execute with the bat. The bowlers, especially the pacers have been fantastic. We need to get to 220-230 mark to give our bowlers chance of defending," Klaasen told JioStar Press Room.

"Our fielding has been poor and that's what is affecting us. I will give us 6 out of 10 so far, we played some brilliant cricket in phases but lost out in the crucial phases of the game.

"Bowlers are hanging on as per plan, rest of the batting is doing well. I will give 80 per cent but our fielding needs to improve, we need to hold onto our catches. If you need to go 8-9 in rating, you need to build some momentum,

you need to put all three compartments together," he added.

Klaasen, who has retired from all forms of international cricket last year and is now only plying his trade in franchise, struck consecutive fifties for SRH in their last two games, and is happy with his form.

"Unfortunately we lost two games but on a personal note, it was a good start for me especially since I am not playing too

much cricket these days. I would like to continue the form," he said.

He is also enjoying his role and responsibilities at the No.4 position.

"It's a role (No.4) that I had played throughout my whole career. In this role, you need to adapt to the situation, my role in the team is to keep going even if (Ishan) Kishan, Abhishek (Sharma) and Travis Head are going. My role is in phases, every game is going to produce a

different situation and I just need to adapt to that," he said.

SRH will next play Punjab Kings in New Chandigarh on Saturday.

Klaasen acknowledged that SRH are missing Pat Cummins, whom he has left the camp to return home for a scheduled scan on his injured back. He is expected to rejoin around April 17 if cleared by Cricket Australia. In Cummins absence Ishan Kishan is leading the side.

Rana inaugurates, lays foundation for multiple development projects in Mendhar

MENDHAR: In a significant push to strengthen the public infrastructure in border areas, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for multiple development projects in the Mendhar constituency.

These initiatives aim to enhance the essential services, improve connectivity and promote socio-economic development in the area.

The Minister inaugurated a newly constructed Food Store Building at Mendhar, developed under the FCS and CA sector. Built with an expenditure of Rs. 151.80 lakh, the facility is expected to significantly strengthen the public distribution system by improving the storage capacity and ensuring better availability of essential commodities for the local population.

In a significant move to promote education and empowerment among young women, the Minister inaugurated a 100-bedded Girls Hostel



(G+1) at Mendhar. Constructed under the SAMAGRA (PAB) 2022-23 programme at a cost of Rs. 259 lakh, the hostel aims to provide safe and improved residential facilities for girl students.

Furthering infrastructure development, the Minister laid foundation stone for a 300-metre RCC motorable bridge and culvert on the Jugal-Salwah road, constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 120 lakh. This project is poised to enhance the accessibility, facilitate smoother transportation and stimulate economic growth in the surrounding areas.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that these projects reflect the

government's commitment towards improving the essential infrastructure and ensuring better facilities for the people, particularly in far-flung and border areas. "Our government is committed to bridge the divide between rural and urban areas so as to achieve balanced and equitable development across the region," he said.

The Minister said that sustained efforts are being made to bridge the developmental gaps and improve infrastructure across all sectors in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in far found and underserved areas. He highlighted that investments in infrastructure, education and connectivity are cru-

cial for accelerating growth and improving the overall quality of life.

During the visit, the Minister also inspected and reviewed the progress of several ongoing projects, including Synthetic Athletic Track at Bhatidhar, 50 MVA, 132/33 KV Grid Station at Kottan, Mendhar and Polyhouses with High-Density Plantation under HADP. He emphasized the importance of timely completion of these projects to ensure that their benefits reach the people without delay.

Among others the event was attended by Ashok Kumar Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Poonch; Manoj Gupta, Chief Engineer I&FC Jammu; Hanief Choudhary, Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Jammu; Gul Sayed, Director Horticulture Jammu; Arshad Hussain Reshi, Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL and Ravi Kant, Chief Engineer (Projects) JPDCL besides other district and departmental officials.

Health & Education paralysed in Jammu, courtesy Sakina Itoo": Bali Bhagat slams Omar Govt

Jammu: Senior BJP leader and former Health Minister Bali Bhagat on Tuesday launched a blistering attack on the Omar Abdullah-led government, alleging that both the health and education sectors in Jammu & Kashmir have been pushed into "complete paralysis" under the leadership of Education and Health Minister Sakina Itoo.

Bhagat said the situation has worsened with recent strikes by health employees crippling hospital services, while at the same time, parents across Jammu are protesting against what he termed as "unchecked loot by private schools."

"On one hand, hospitals are paralysed due to repeated strikes by health employees, and on the other, parents are on the streets against exorbitant school fees. This is complete administrative failure," he said.

Referring to the recent agitation by health employees, Bhagat said essential services in several government hospitals were affected, causing immense hardship to patients.

"When doctors and paramedical staff are protesting on roads, who is taking responsibility? The Health Minister has completely failed to handle her own department," he remarked.

Focusing sharply on the education crisis, Bhagat said Jammu is witnessing unprecedented anger among parents over rising costs imposed by private schools.

"Parents are being forced to pay hefty admission fees, annual charges, and purchase expensive books and uniforms from selected vendors. This is nothing but organised exploitation," he said.

He added that many parents have staged

protests in recent days, accusing schools of turning education into a commercial enterprise.

In a serious allegation, Bhagat questioned the silence of the government, hinting at a possible nexus.

"Why is the government silent? Why is Sakina Itoo not acting? People are openly questioning whether there is a nexus between private schools and those in power," he said.

Bhagat termed the Fee Regulation Committee as "completely ineffective," saying it has failed to regulate arbitrary fee hikes or provide any relief.

"If a regulatory body exists, why are parents still protesting? Clearly, it is just an eyewash," he added.

The BJP leader warned that the situation in Jammu is turning tense, with both patients and parents suffering due to what he called governance collapse.

"Jammu is under tension. Patients are suffering due to health strikes, and parents are protesting against school exploitation. Both critical sectors—health and education—stand paralysed," he said.

Taking a direct swipe at the Omar government, Bhagat said, "This is the reality of governance today—total failure in essential sectors. The future of our children is at stake, and the government is missing in action."

He demanded immediate intervention to resolve the health employees' issues and strict regulation of private schools.

"If the government cannot control schools or ensure functioning hospitals, it has no moral right to govern. Health and education both stand paralysed in Jammu—courtesy Sakina Itoo," Bhagat asserted.

"End Institutional Monopoly" RTI activist Balvinder Singh demands Doctor Rotation Policy in J&K Medical Colleges

Jammu: Renowned RTI activist Balvinder Singh has urged the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, the Health Minister Sakina Itoo, and the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to introduce a structured policy for inter-medical college transfers of doctors and allied healthcare personnel across Jammu province.

Mr. Singh stated that earlier, Government Medical College Jammu was the only tertiary care institution in the region, and therefore, the absence of a transfer mechanism was understandable. However, with the establishment of multiple government medical colleges



in Jammu province, the continued lack of rotational postings has led to administrative imbalance and limited institutional dynamism.

Highlighting key concerns, he pointed out that prolonged tenure of medical professionals in a single institution may, in certain cases, give rise to conflicts of interest and inefficiencies in healthcare delivery. He noted that patients often face delays

in elective surgical procedures, diagnostic investigations, and specialist consultations, which can result in increased waiting periods and inconvenience, particularly for economically weaker sections.

However, Mr. Singh categorically clarified that these observations should not be construed as a generalisation against the entire medical fraternity. He emphasised that a large number of doctors continue to serve with utmost dedication, professionalism, and ethical commitment, and that exceptions always exist in every system.

He further stated that the objective of his appeal is to strengthen

institutional accountability and improve patient-centric healthcare delivery. In this regard, he advocated for a transparent and regulated inter-college transfer policy to ensure optimal utilisation of human resources, prevent any possibility of monopolistic practices, and enhance overall efficiency in public healthcare institutions.

Mr. Singh urged the administration to take timely action in the larger public interest, stating that such reforms would go a long way in improving service delivery, reducing patient burden, and reinforcing public trust in the government healthcare system.

J&K Govt holds Steering Committee meet; explores AI adoption in governance

JAMMU: The government of Jammu and Kashmir convened a high level Steering Committee meeting, chaired by Additional Chief Secretary (PwD) Anil Kumar Singh, to deliberate on adopting and mainstreaming Artificial Intelligence (AI) across key governance sec-

tors in the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by the senior officials including Secretary, Information Technology, Dr. Piyush Singla, CEO JaKeGA Mahima Madan, technical experts and representatives from leading institutions like IIT, NHSRC and BISAG-N.

The objective of the meeting was to explore the potential of AI-driven solutions in enhancing the public service delivery, improving operational efficiency and enabling data-driven decision-making.

The meeting emphasised on identifying and adapting successful AI use

cases being implemented in other States and Union Territories to suit the specific requirements of Jammu and Kashmir.

It was informed that the priority sectors identified for AI integration included public works, disaster management, healthcare, agriculture, education, trans-

port, finance and road safety.

Key application areas discussed included predictive analytics for disaster forecasting, satellite-based monitoring, AI-enabled diagnostics in healthcare, intelligent traffic and crime analysis systems besides smart learning and assessment tools in education.

The need for immediate identification of select high-impact and scalable use cases, particularly in agriculture and healthcare, was also highlighted.

It was decided that all the Administrative Departments will prepare comprehensive, sector-specific AI roadmaps with clearly defined implementation timelines.

Dr Jitendra announces Doppler Weather Radar for Doda, fresh work tender for Sudhmahadev Tunnel



DODA: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh today announced the establishment of a Doppler Weather Radar for Doda to strengthen weather forecasting capabilities and enhance disaster preparedness in the region.

The Minister stated that the Doppler Weather Radar will enable accurate and real-time monitoring of weather conditions. This will improve early warning systems and support disaster management efforts in the district, he added.

Dr Jitendra Singh was chairing the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meeting alongside Member of Parliament Sajjad Ahmed Kitchloo and MLA Doda West, Shakti Raj Parihar and the entire district administration at the DC Office Complex here to review the implementation and progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and key infrastructure projects in the district.

Dr. Jitendra Singh informed that the construction of the link road from Kalota and Humbal to National Highway-44 is to be taken up on priority being to improve connectivity and ease of transportation for the local population. He further stated that the road to the Mata Dedani Shrine is also being expedited, with directions issued to accel-

erate the pace of work to facilitate better access for devotees and promote religious tourism in the area. The Minister directed the authorities to repair the roads ridden with potholes at the earliest.

Dr Jitendra Singh also reviewed the status of infrastructure related to the medicinal and aromatic plants sector. During the meeting, Dr. Wahid, Technical Officer, J&K, Medicinal Plants Board, apprised that the Post Harvest Management Unit for Medicinal Plants at Kotli, comprising a marketing mandi, storage godowns, and drying sheds for medicinal and aromatic plants, is yet to be fully operational due to shortage of manpower. Taking note of the issue, the Union Minister directed that office space may be provided to local entrepreneurs engaged in the medicinal and aromatic plants sector under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model at High Altitude Medicine Centre Baderwah with necessary approvals from the Ministry of AYUSH in consultation with the District Administration.

The Union Minister called for efficient utilization of resources and removal of bottlenecks. He stressed the importance of effective inter-departmental coordination with local public representatives to ensure last-mile delivery of services. The Minister also reviewed the status of key road projects, including the Thathri-Doda road and Paryote road under National Highways, and directed authorities to ensure timely maintenance. Directions were

issued to expedite restoration works on the Assar-Baggar road and maintenance of the Khellani-Marmat stretch.

Progress of the Chattergal Tunnel project was also assessed, with instructions to expedite work and submit the Detailed Project Report at the earliest. Addressing concerns regarding the Sudhmahadev Tunnel, Dr Jitendra Singh clarified that reports about stoppage of work were incorrect, and said the earlier tender was cancelled because of the security issue related to the allottee and said, a new tender will be floated soon.

Reviewing educational infrastructure, the Minister directed that vacant faculty positions, including that of Principal at KV School Jodhpur, be filled within a stipulated time frame. On healthcare, he emphasized the need to address staff shortages through a robust policy framework.

On the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh also inaugurated three PMGSY roads, namely Thathri to Chira road, with a total length of 19 kilometres, costing 928.40 lakh rupees, Goila Morh to Trankal (5 km) and Puneja to Bhalara (9 km). Altogether, these roads will benefit 7,151 souls.

The meeting reviewed the progress of ongoing developmental works and implementation of various flagship schemes across District Doda. Sector-wise assessments were undertaken for key departments including health, education, roads and infrastructure, power, rural development, forest, agriculture, Jal Shakti, and employment generation. District Development Commissioner Doda, Krishan Lal, made a presentation on the status of developmental works and achievements across departments.

CS assesses flagship urban schemes for sanitation, housing & livelihood generation across J&K

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, held a meeting of the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) to assess the progress of major schemes aimed at transforming urban infrastructure, generating livelihoods, ensuring cleanliness and improving quality of life across the urban areas in J&K.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD; Commissioner, Jammu and Srinagar Municipal Corporations (JMC/SMC); Managing Director, J&K Housing Board; Managing Director, AMRUT; Chairperson, Jammu and Srinagar Development Authorities (JDA/SDA); Directors of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) for Kashmir and Jammu divisions; Managing Director, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY-NULM/Shehri); and other senior officers.

During the comprehensive review, the Chief Secretary took a detailed appraisal of the implementation of key Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), AMRUT 2.0, and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY-NULM) Shehri.

Emphasizing the critical role of these initiatives in strengthening urban infrastructure and municipal services, the Chief Secretary directed the department to significantly accelerate the pace of implementation. He underscored the need for expeditious completion of projects, particularly those related to used water management, sanitation, waste disposal, and treatment.

With regard to PMAY (Urban), he stressed the importance of removing bottlenecks and ensuring timely completion of housing units. He called for proactive sensitization of beneficiaries to commence and complete construction promptly, alongside timely release of financial assistance. He further directed



the department to sponsor all eligible beneficiaries under the Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS) component and ensure rigorous monitoring for early completion of housing projects.

Reviewing the progress under AMRUT 2.0, the Chief Secretary instructed the concerned authorities to fix clear timelines for each project and ensure strict adherence to completion schedules through continuous monitoring.

Earlier, Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur, presented a detailed overview of the progress achieved under various schemes. She highlighted key bottlenecks, measures taken for their resolution, and outlined the implementation strategy and future roadmap to achieve the intended objectives.

Commissioner, JMC and MD, SBM (U), Devansh Yadav, made a detailed presentation on preparations for Swachhta Survekshan 2026. He elaborated on improvements in door-to-door waste collection, segregation practices, and future plans for source segregation.

He also highlighted the development of sanitation infrastructure, including community and public toilets, Individual Household Latrines (IHHLs), Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs), Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), Construction & Demolition (C&D) waste processing plants in Srinagar and Jammu, Compressed Biogas (CBG) plants in these cities, and bio-remediation of legacy waste across urban areas.

Commissioner, SMC, Peer Fazlul Haseeb, presented an overview of the existing and upcoming waste management infrastructure in Srinagar,

focusing on scientific waste collection and disposal systems.

Managing Director, J&K Housing Board, Shahbaz Mirza, apprised the meeting of the progress under various verticals of PMAY (Urban), including Beneficiary-Led Construction (BLC), Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP), and Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS). He informed that out of 39,153 houses sanctioned under Phase-I of BLC, 31,173 have been completed, while 1,791 have not yet been started, with the remaining nearing completion.

He further informed that under Phase-II of PMAY (Urban), around 27,700 applications were received across districts, of which 23,203 have been verified on the ground in coordination with Deputy Commissioners, resulting in identification of 3,011 eligible beneficiaries too.

Reviewing the progress under the newly launched D-JAY (Shehri) scheme, the meeting was informed that the scheme is currently being implemented on a pilot basis in Jammu and Srinagar cities. The initiative aims to address occupational, social, and residential vulnerabilities of the urban poor through strengthening grassroots institutions, enhancing livelihood opportunities, creating social infrastructure, and extending social security benefits over the next five years.

It was reported that 2,56,659 individuals have been enumerated under the scheme so far, including workers from vulnerable occupational groups such as construction workers, gig workers, waste workers, domestic workers, transport workers, caregivers, and others in the unorganized sector.