

Northin News

E-mail: ninnorthinnews@gmail.com

Postal Regd. No. JK/504/19-21

VOL. NO. 13 | ISSUE NO. 124

JAMMU, MONDAY, 19 MAY 2025

E-paper: https://northinnews.com/epaper/

PAGE 12

RS. 3.00

Centre has taken measures to ensure PACS don't become financially sick: Amit Shah

Ahmedabad, May 18: Union Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the Centre has taken measures to prevent registered PACS from becoming financially sick and will soon bring a policy for their quick settlement in case they have gone into liquidation and for registration of new PACS in their place. The Union Minister of Cooperation said the Narendra Modi government aims to set up two lakh new Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) by 2029, and they are being connected to 22 different types of businesses, with arrange-



ments being made to ensure registered PACS do not become financially sick. "The work of connecting 22 different types of businesses with PACS has been done

by the Union government, and I am sure arrangements have been made to ensure not a single registered PACS becomes financially sick in coming times," Shah said at

'Shakti Mahasammelan' organised here to mark the International Year of Cooperatives. In a short time, the Centre is going to bring a new policy for quick settlement of PACS that have gone into liquidation and for registration of new PACS in their place, he added. The Union Minister said initiative is also being taken to involve "a cooperative-owned company" for manufacturing equipment such as those for making ice cream, cheese, paneer, keeping milk chilled as well as measuring fat etc as part of promoting a circular economy

in the dairy sector. In a short time, the government also plans experimentation with a circular economy in the dairy sector by forming a cooperative society for the use of skin, bones, and horns of animals when they die, he said. "If the cooperative sector has to move forward, then we will have to make efforts to bring awareness, training and transparency in every group. The Cooperative Department of the Union government has set this as the goal of the Cooperative Year. Therefore, the Centre

(Contd on Pg 2)

LG Sinha pays obeisance to Maa Zeashta Devi

Prays for well-being of all and peace and prosperity of J&K UT

SRINAGAR, MAY 18: On the auspicious occasion of Zeashta Mata Jayanti, Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha paid his obeisance to Maa Zeashta Devi, at Zeashta Devi Temple, Zeathay, Srinagar. The Lieutenant Governor sought the blessings of Mata Zeashta and prayed for the well-being of all and peace and prosperity of J&K UT. The Lieutenant Governor also interacted with the devotees and conveyed his heartfelt greetings on the sacred occasion. Members of Zeashta Devi Prandhak Committee, prominent citi-



zens and people from all walks of life were present.

IMF imposes 11 new conditions on Pak, warns it against risks to bailout programme: Report

Islamabad: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has slapped 11 new conditions on Pakistan for the release of the next tranche of its bailout programme and warned that tensions with India could heighten risks to the scheme's fiscal, external, and reform goals, according to a media report on Sunday. The new conditions imposed on Pakistan include the parliamentary approval of a new Rs 17.6 trillion budget, an increase in the debt servicing surcharge on

electricity bills and lifting restrictions on import of more than three-year-old used cars. The Express Tribune newspaper said the Staff Level report, which the IMF released on Saturday, also said that "rising tensions between India and Pakistan, if sustained or deteriorate further, could heighten risks to the fiscal, external and reform goals of the programme." The report further stated that tensions between Pakistan and India

(Contd on Pg 2)

17 killed in fire at a building in Hyderabad; PM Modi condoles deaths

Hyderabad: A blaze triggered by a suspected short circuit in a building near the iconic Charminar here on Sunday left 17 people dead, with a majority of them being children. The fire broke out at a building in Gulzar House here, police said. "All 17 who were shifted to hospitals were brought dead," a senior police official told. A narrow staircase was the only escape route for the inmates of the building, but they could not rush out. The building housed jewellery shops on the ground floor



and people were residing in a flat above, police said adding smoke spread and people suffocated. Telangana State Disaster

Response and Fire Services Director General Y Nagi Reddy, who inspected the spot, told reporters that the fire accident was reported

between 6 am and 6.15 am. There was a call to the fire department at 6.16 am and the fire engine was turned out at 6.17 AM, he said. There were shops on the ground floor while the first and second floors were residential, he said. "Prima-facie cause of the fire is short circuit in the mains in the shopping area," Reddy said. A total of 21 people were in the building when the fire erupted, and of them 17 were shifted to hospitals by the fire department in an

(Contd on Pg 2)

Preparations underway for Kailash Mansarovar Yatra from Sikkim after 5 years

Gangtok: The Sikkim government has accelerated infrastructure development for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Nathu La, a mountain pass in the Himalayas that connects the state with China's Tibet Autonomous Region. The pilgrimage to Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake, set to resume after a gap of five years, holds religious significance to Hindus as well as Jains and Buddhists. Two acclimatisation centres are being established between state capital Gangtok and

Nathu La, while functional toilets and other travel-related infrastructure are also being developed for the pilgrims, said MLAs Thinlay Tshering Bhutia. The pass is located under Bhutia's Kabi-Lungchok constituency and the legislator told reporters that he was assessing the ground situation to further enhance facilities for the Mansarovar Yatra. The Ministry of External Affairs last month said the Yatra is set to take place from June to

(Contd on Pg 2)

India-Pakistan conflict deals blow to border tourism in Jammu, revival hinges on peace

Suchetgarh: Popular for its Wagah-Attari-style structured border along the International Border on the outskirts of Jammu wears a deserted look these days. The latest military conflict between India and Pakistan has dealt a body blow to the village, which opened for tourists for the first time in October 2021 as part of the government's border tourism promotion programme. Stakeholders such as hotel and restaurant owners, shopkeepers and horse

carriage operators are worried but also remain hopeful that the understanding between India and Pakistan to stop military actions would hold and play the role of a catalyst for the return of tourists and the accompanying hustle and bustle. Indian Armed Forces carried out missile strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on May 7 in retaliation against the Pahal-gam attack in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed. Pakistan responded to the strikes with intense

mortar and artillery shelling and drone attacks in Jammu and Kashmir and beyond before the two countries signed on May 10 to stop the military actions. "Tourist arrivals are at their lowest ebb in view of the recent border clashes. Hardly any tourist visited the zero line in the past week despite the ceasefire announcement," restaurant owner Sunil Kumar told. Suchetgarh's opened up as a tourist destination after India and Pakistan announced implementation of a

(Contd on Pg 2)

Unexploded mortar shells in border villages a 'death trap', say residents

Pargwal: People along the Line of Control and International Border in the Jammu region continue to live under the shadow of death, with unexploded mortar shells fired by Pakistani troops still embedded in farmlands and residential areas even though hostilities have stopped for nearly a week. Despite the May 10 understanding between India and Pakistan, locals describe the border areas as a "death trap". Sixty-two-year-old Balvinder Singh, who now resides in his home in Pargwal sector on May 14,

recounted a narrow escape. "Two shells exploded in our compound, damaging our house. Three more landed on our farmland. We were terrified and told our family to stay away from the fields until the Army could help," Singh told. Army engineers later came to the village and safely defused the unexploded shells, bringing a temporary sense of relief. "Fear is writ large on the faces of people to these death traps in border hamlets," he said. Scenes of destruction are evident.

(Contd on Pg 2)

Sports Minister announces introduction of multiple games under Khelo India scheme

New Delhi: Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Sunday announced the broadening of the scope of the Khelo India initiative with the introduction of multiple Games to cover school sports, martial arts, beach and water sports from this year onwards. While launching the Khelo India Annual Calendar, Mandaviya said that the government will soon introduce a series of Khelo India Games and other competitions, including Khelo India North-East Games, among others. He said the aim was to

strengthen India's sporting ecosystem, provide strategic year-round schedule to boost grassroots competitions and talent identification. "The Khelo India Annual Calendar is not just a schedule but it is a strategic blueprint strengthening India's domestic competition structure for transforming India into a global sporting powerhouse," Mandaviya said. "Over the past decade, Indian sports have undergone a remarkable transformation... We have created a dynamic and inclusive

sporting ecosystem with regular national-level competitions under the Khelo India initiative. "Taking this vision forward, we will soon introduce Khelo India Beach Games (KIBG), Khelo India School Games (KISG), Khelo India Water Sports and Khelo India North-East Games, among others. "Mandaviya said these events will be pivotal in identifying, nurturing, and preparing India's young talent." Through structured competitions, year-round

(Contd on Pg 2)

BJP keeps winning because opposition is a failure: Owaisi



Hyderabad: The BJP is winning elections consistently because the opposition is a failure (nakaam), BJP is winning because it has consolidated the Hindu votes, Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi said, rejecting suggestions that he cuts into anti-Modi votes. "How can you put the blame on me, tell me?" Owaisi said in an interview. "If I contest in Hyderabad, Aurangabad, Kishanganj and a few other seats in the 2024 Parliamentary elections and BJP gets 240 seats then am I responsible?" Owaisi said.

"BJP is coming to power because the opposition is a failure (nakaam). BJP is winning because it has consolidated almost 50 per cent of the Hindu vote," he said, adding that attempts to blame him, and call him BJP's B-Team are nothing but the opposition's "hatred" for his party because it largely represents Muslims. Opposition parties like the Congress have scoffed at Owaisi's attempts to grow his All India Majlis-e-Itehadul Muslimen party outside its stronghold of the Hyderabad region, saying

he ends up benefitting the BJP by taking away a chunk of votes, mostly Muslims. The fifth-term Lok Sabha MP has countered, accusing opposition parties of taking the Muslim votes for granted and paying little heed to their real concerns. He said, "When every segment of the society has a semblance of political leadership, and that's acceptable to you but you don't want that Muslims should have a semblance of political voice, political leadership," he said. Asked if he was referring to Congress, he said he is referring to all opposition parties, including BSP, SP and BJP. "Yadav will be a leader, Musalman will be a beggar. Upper caste will be a leader, Musalman will be a beggar. How is that fair tell me," Owaisi said. He lamented that the founding fathers of India had

(Contd on Pg 2)

Constitution of India supreme, all its pillars must work together: CJI

Mumbai: Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai on Sunday stressed that neither the judiciary nor the executive, but the country's Constitution was supreme and its pillars must work together. Even though Parliament has the power to amend the Constitution, it cannot touch the "basic doctrine" structure, he said, underscoring the supremacy of the Constitution. The right to shelter is also supreme, he said, referring to "bulldozer justice" Justice Gavai, who took oath as the 52nd CJI earlier this week, spoke at his felicitation ceremony and state lawyers' conference organised by the Bar Council Maharashtra and Goa here.



The CJI said he was glad that the country has not just strengthened but has also developed on the social and economic fronts and contin-

ues to do so. "Neither the judiciary, nor the executive, nor Parliament is supreme, but it is the Constitution of India which is supreme, and all the three wings have to work as per the Constitution," he said. The Parliament has the power to amend the Constitution, but it cannot touch the basic doctrine structure, CJI Gavai said. The basic structure doctrine holds that certain funda-

mental features of the Constitution, such as its supremacy, the rule of law, and the independence of the judiciary, cannot be amended or abrogated by Parliament through a constitutional amendment. The CJI said the country's basic framework was strong, and all three pillars of the Constitution - legislative, executive and judiciary - were equal. "And all the organs of the Constitution must recip-

rocate and give due respect to each other," he said. Gavai, who belongs to Maharashtra, said he was happy to become the CJI when the Constitution is completing 75 years and marching towards its centenary. "There is no question that our country is 'mazboot' due to the basic structure doctrine laid down in the Kesavananda Bharati case judgment, and all three pillars of the Constitution are trying to work within the spheres prescribed to them," he said. Judiciary and legislature came up with several laws due to which the concept of social and economic justice will be fulfilled, he added. A book chronicling 50 landmark judgments pronounced by Justice Gavai was also released at the event. In his speech, the CJI cited a few of his judgments. Referring to his judg-

(Contd on Pg 2)

FROM PAGE ONE

Centre...

has given importance to both Science of Cooperation and Science in Cooperation - reviving and modernising the science of cooperation and the use of technology in cooperatives," he added. He said the cooperative movement, which started during the Independence movement, had ended in many parts of the country, except for Gujarat.

But it is the responsibility of the cooperative leaders of Gujarat to make the movement symmetric, Shah added. In order to make the cooperative sector strong, changes that it has gone through in recent years should be taken to the bottom level to benefit PACS members and farmers, Shah said. "Every district, every state should be associated with the cooperative movement, the condition of primary mandali in every state should improve, strengthening district level institutions, which in turn should strengthen cooperative structure at the state and national level. To achieve this, the Union government has envisioned a fourth-tier cooperative structure in place of a three-tier structure," he said.

"We want to use the International Year of Cooperatives for this symmetric development. The entire campaign is based on three pillars - making cooperation a part of the mainstream of the society, bringing transparency and authenticity in the cooperative movement through technology, and accelerating the work of connecting more and more citizens to the cooperative movement," he said. For this, his ministry has taken about 57 initiatives, Shah said. There is need for co-operation among cooperatives, an idea which has been implemented in Gujarat leading to an increase of Rs 11,000 crore in the deposits of the cooperative sector, Shah asserted.

India...

renewed ceasefire agreement along the borders in Jammu and Kashmir in February 2021 that came as a major relief to people living along the International Border and the Line of Control (LoC). India shares a 3,323-kilometre-long border with Pakistan. Of this, 221 kilometres of the International Border and 744 kilometres of the LoC fall in Jammu and Kashmir. India and Pakistan had initially signed a ceasefire agreement in 2003 but the neighbouring country frequently violated it, with more than 5,000 violations reported in 2020 -- the highest in a single year.

The introduction of the Wagah-Attari-style ceremony, comprising a structured parade by Border Security Force (BSF) personnel on weekends, proved a major attraction for tourists from within and outside Jammu and Kashmir. The BSF suspended the parade last week following the clashes. "Earlier, our restaurant used to be packed... Especially on weekends, during the BSF's beating retreat ceremony, our sales touched Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000. Now, we are hardly earning Rs 2,000 to Rs 3,000 as people have stopped coming after the Pakistani shelling," Kumar said. He said they were expecting the revival of border tourism once the situation eased and normality returned.

Mahendra Lal, who runs a tea and sweets shop in the area, said the situation was equally grim for him. "Our work has come to a standstill and we have stopped manufacturing sweets, including the famous milk cake, owing to a lack of tourists... We used to sell sweets, unlike Pakistan, which is distributing powder," he said. "We only hope that Pakistan shows some wisdom and strengthens peace for better relations." Teja Singh, who offers horse carriage rides to tourists around the zero line, said his weekend business used to thrive before the recent military standoff.

"Now, the carriages stand idle. No one comes to see the zero line anymore. We are praying that tourists start returning so our livelihood can be restored," said Singh, a local. A tourism department official said they were monitoring the situation on the borders and expressed hope of a revival of border tourism in the coming weeks. "The situation along the borders has been peaceful over the past week owing to the ceasefire. We are taking necessary steps, including restarting the BSF parade, to attract tourists once there is permanent peace on the borders," he said.

Unexploded...

rooftops torn apart, broken houses, windows punctured by shrapnel, and carcasses of cattle lying in pools of blood. The acrid smell of gunpowder still lingers in the air.

Sardar Gurnmeet Singh faced a similar ordeal. His family could not re-enter their home as a live mortar shell had sunk into the compound in a village close to the International Border. "The army's bomb disposal squad removed it after four

days, allowing us to finally enter, back home" he said. Indian Army engineers have launched a sweeping clearance operation across border districts, defusing over 80 unexploded shells in the past five days - including 6 in Pargwal, 19 in Rajouri, 42 in Poonch, and 12 along the IB.

"These shells, mostly 120 mm calibre, have a range of 15 to 30 km and pose a serious threat to both civilian and military targets," an Army officer said. "Many of them were fired by Pakistan during recent hostilities." On May 7, the Indian Army launched Operation Sindoor, conducting precision strikes on nine terror hubs in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoK) in response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgal that killed 26 people, most of them tourists.

The subsequent retaliation by Pakistan pushed the region to the brink of war. From 7 to 10 of May, 27 civilians were killed and over 70 injured in Pakistani shelling in the Jammu region. Farid Din Gujjar, a resident near the border, expressed fear about returning to his fields. "Several shells created deep craters in our paddy land. We cannot resume work until all unexploded ordnance is cleared. It's a death trap," he said. Army units, in coordination with Jammu and Kashmir Police, have evacuated high-risk zones and issued stern warnings to residents not to touch any suspicious objects or unexploded shells.

In one major operation, 42 live shells were safely destroyed in the Poonch villages of Jhullas, Salotri, Dharti and Salani. "All safety protocols were followed. The shells posed a serious danger to local lives," an Army spokesperson said, calling the effort a "continued commitment to protect civilians and restore normalcy." Poonch saw the vast majority of deaths due to shelling. Security officials said that Pakistan used a mix of mortar shells, armed drones, and missiles during the shelling spree, specifically targeting civilian habitations and border towns in Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Rajouri, and Poonch. As clearance operations continue, the border residents are slowly returning to their homes, but with caution, fear, and lingering uncertainty about shelling that may yet happen in the future.

Sports...

engagement, and pan-India participation, we are building the foundation for sustained sporting excellence as we gear up for the Commonwealth Games 2030 and the Olympic Games 2036. India is on the move, and the youth are at the heart of this sporting revolution," the sports minister added. The Khelo India platform already includes four structured national-level Games, namely the Khelo India Youth Games, Khelo India University Games, Khelo India Para Games, and Khelo India Winter Games. A special focus is being given to the Khelo India School Games (KISG), which will follow a tiered structure, starting from the district level moving to the state level, and culminating in national-level competitions. Furthermore, the inclusion of events like the Khelo India Martial Art Games, Khelo India Tribal Games, and Khelo India Swadeshi Games will aim to bring indigenous and traditional martial arts into the mainstream, the sports ministry said. The first edition of the Khelo India Beach Games (KIBG) is set to take place in Diu from May 19-25, which will draw national attention to coastal and beach sports, while also highlighting the region's tourism potential. The calendar for the remainder of the year includes events such as the Khelo India School Games (August to December), Khelo India University Games (March-April), Water Sports and North-East Games (May-June), Tribal Games (September in Chhattisgarh), and the Indigenous and Martial Art Games (July-August in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh).

IMF...

have risen significantly over the past two weeks, but so far, the market reaction has been modest, with the stock market retaining most of its recent gains and spreads widening moderately.

The IMF report has shown the defence budget for the next fiscal year at Rs 2.44 trillion, which is higher by Rs 252 billion or 12%. Compared to the IMF's projection, the government has indicated allocating over Rs 2.5 trillion or an 18% higher budget, after confirmation with India early this month. India carried out precision strikes under 'Operation Sindoor' on terror infrastructure early on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgal terror attack that killed 26 people. Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10.

India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. The Express Tribune report said that the IMF slapped 11 more conditions on Pakistan, taking the total conditions to 50. It has imposed the new condition of securing "parliamentary approval of the fiscal year 2026 budget in line with the IMF staff agreement to meet programme targets by end-June 2025". The IMF report has shown the total size of the federal budget at Rs 17.6 trillion, including Rs 1.07 trillion for development spending.

A new condition has also been imposed on the provinces where the four federating units will implement the new Agriculture Income Tax laws through a comprehensive plan, including the establishment of an operational platform for processing returns, taxpayer identification and registration, a communication campaign, and a compliance improvement plan. The deadline for the provinces is June this year. According to the third new condition, the government will publish a governance action plan based on the recommendations of the Governance Diagnostic Assessment by the IMF.

The purpose of the report is to publicly identify reform measures to address critical governance vulnerabilities. Another new condition states that the government will prepare and publish a plan outlining the government's post-2027 financial strategy, outlining the institutional and regulatory environment from 2028 onwards. In the energy sector, four new conditions have been introduced. The government will issue notifications of the annual electricity tariff rebasing by July 1 of this year to maintain energy tariffs at cost recovery levels.

It will also issue a notification of the semi-annual gas tariff adjustment to maintain energy tariffs at cost recovery levels by February 15, 2026, according to the report. Parliament will also adopt legislation to make the captive power levy or ordinance permanent by the end of this month, according to the IMF. The government has increased the cost for the industries to force them to shift to the national electricity grid. Parliament will also adopt legislation to remove the maximum Rs 3.21 per unit cap on the debt service surcharge, which is tantamount to punishing honest electricity consumers to pay for the inefficiency of the power sector.

The IMF and the World Bank dictated that wrong energy policies are causing the accumulation of the circular debt in equity to the government's bad governance. The deadline to remove the cap is the end of June, according to the report. The IMF has also imposed a condition that Pakistan will prepare a plan based on the assessment conducted to fully phase out all incentives in relation to Special Technology Zones and other industrial parks and zones by 2035. The report has to be prepared by the end of this year. Finally, in a consumer-friendly condition, the IMF has asked Pakistan to submit to the Parliament all required legislation for lifting all quantitative restrictions on the commercial importation of used motor vehicles (initially only for vehicles less than five years old by the end of July. Currently, only cars up to three years old can be imported).

17 killed...

unconscious state. There was only one escape route, the staircase, which was very narrow and the inmates could not run to safety, he said. Telangana Fire Department in a statement said the fire broke out on the Ground floor (G+2 building) and spread to the floors above. In a post on X, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish over the loss of lives due to the fire tragedy. He announced Rs 2 lakh for the kin of those who died and Rs 50,000 to the injured.

"Deeply anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy in Hyderabad, Telangana. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000. PM," the post said. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy expressed shock over the incident and directed senior officials to take all necessary measures to rescue those trapped in the building.

Earlier, a fire department official said they received a call at around 6.16 am and rushed to the spot. Several people were found unconscious and shifted to various hospitals. Addressing reporters after visiting the spot, Transport and Hyderabad District in-charge Minister Ponnann Prabhakar said a short circuit caused the fire. The Minister said, "We will order an inquiry into the fire incident. There is no conspiracy angle in it..." "Four families related to one another were residing in the building and many of them came to spend their vacation, he added.

Access to the site has been restricted, police said adding a case has been registered. Union Minister G Kishan Reddy also visited the spot. He alleged that he was informed that fire tenders arrived late. The allegation was dismissed by Nagi Reddy. An official release from the CMO said directions were issued to immediately shift the injured to hospitals and ensure proper medical treatment.

Preparations...

August via two routes - Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand and Nathu La in Sikkim. "Sikkim is a peaceful state and this is the main USP of travelling via the Nathu La border," Bhutia said in the presence of officials of the forest, tourism and rural development departments.

He said the Nathu La route, with availability of good roads, would provide the pilgrims with a safe and better travelling experience again. The Yatra was suspended initially in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently because of the military standoff between the two sides on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. The militaries of India and China completed disengagement of troops at the two remaining friction points of Demchok and Depsang under a pact sealed on October 21 last year. In January, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra visited Beijing and held talks with his Chinese counterpart Sun Weidong. In the meeting, the two sides decided to resume the Kalash Mansarovar Yatra and agreed to take certain people-centric steps to "stabilise and rebuild" ties. "This year, five batches, each consisting of 50 Yatis, and 10 batches, each consisting of 50 Yatis, are scheduled to travel through Uttarakhand State crossing over at Lipulekh Pass, and through Sikkim state crossing over at Nathu La Pass, respectively," the MEA earlier said in a statement.

The MEA said that public representatives and officials from various government departments had accompanied him during visits to facilities and also look at avenues to further develop the existing infrastructure. "We have discussed many development initiatives for the area. We will now prepare a detailed estimate and submit it to the Tourism department," Bhutia said.

BJP....

envisaged the country as a participatory democracy, "so where is the participation of Muslims?" "When it is a question of India's integrity and security we will come forward and stand by the Indian military.

But we do have to talk about the problems inside our homes, no?" He pointed out that despite being the largest minority group in the country with nearly 15 per cent population, Muslims have only 4 per cent participation in legislatures and Parliament. Asked why that is so, he said it's because political parties don't give tickets to Muslims to contest elections, and then people don't vote for Muslims. He cautioned that India cannot achieve the "Viksit Bharat" goal by 2047 by keeping such a large community marginalised and weak. Political parties should stop looking at Muslims as vote banks, and instead work to uplift them, educate them, treat them fairly and give them jobs, he added.

"Our fight is that we don't want to remain voters. We want to be citizens." Owaisi's attempts to emerge as a leader with an electoral appeal outside his citadel have met with some success as his party has won a few seats, especially those with a large Muslim population, in states like Bihar and Maharashtra in past elections. His unabashed championing of Muslim grievances and aspirations has won him admirers in the community across the country.

Constitution...

regarding the representation of the Bombay High Court in the Apex Court.

"I candidly admit that the contribution made by Bar of Maharashtra in the development of law, whether it is civil law or criminal law, and most importantly, in the development of the constitutionalism, constitutional morality, constitutional principles, constitutional basic structure theories, the contribution made by your High Court is remarkable. It is unparalleled," he said. Justice Surya Kant is set to be the next CJI after Gava's retirement in November. Supreme Court justices Abhay Oka and Dipankar Datta and Chief Justice of Bombay High Court Alok Aradhe also attended the event.

MLA Pahalgal distributes ex-gratia relief among Human-Wildlife Conflict victims

Chairs consultative meeting on the management of Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary

ANANTNAG MAY 18: In a compassionate gesture towards the victims of human-wildlife conflict, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Pahalgal, M Altaf Kaloo, today distributed ex-gratia relief cheques at Townhall Aishmuqam.

Addressing the gathering, MLA Kaloo emphasized the urgent need for a comprehensive and strategic plan to mitigate rising incidents of human-wildlife conflict in the region. "While the ex-gratia relief provides temporary support to the victims, our main focus should be on preventing such incidents from occurring in the first place," he said.

On the occasion, DFO gave a detailed presentation highlighting the department's



ongoing efforts, achievements, and future strategies

aimed at minimizing human-wildlife conflicts and

ensuring safety for both communities and wildlife.

Later, MLA also chaired the consultative meeting on the management of Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary, besides, inferred that he saw first time a detailed and scientific plan for Overa-Aru WLS for 10 years from 2025-2035, also detailed DPR for Mini Zoo Pahalgal was appreciated.

The initiative was appreciated by the victims, who expressed hope for more proactive measures and increased community engagement in wildlife management.

DFO Wildlife Protection South along with concerned Wildlife Rangers, field staff, human-wildlife victims and civil society members were present on the occasion.

Drugs Free J&K Initiative: Distt admin Srinagar organizes anti-drugs awareness programme at Safakadal

SRINAGAR, MAY 18: To sensitise masses about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encouraging them to eradicate menace of drugs from the society, District Administration Srinagar today organized an awareness programme on Drug De-addiction at Community Hall Gassi Mohalla Safa Kadal.

The event was held on the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, as a part of an ongoing Drug Free Jammu and Kashmir initiative of the Government to educate students, staff members, and local residents about the growing menace of drug addiction and the collective responsibility to curb it. During the event, infor-



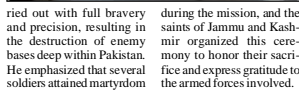
mative sessions addressing the physical, mental, and social consequences of substance abuse were held to effectively sensitize the participants. The program witnessed active participation from students, local community members, and officials from various Departments.

Departmental Resource persons representing Social Welfare, Police, Health, Education, Excise and SMC, others, together raised awareness among students and the local population. Students contributed through speeches, skits, and discussions, further emphasizing the message.

Jammu-Kashmir Saints Pay Tribute to Soldiers Martyred in India-Pakistan War During Operation Sindoor



Jammu, May 18: A heartfelt tribute ceremony was held at the Jeevan Nagar Ashram under the leadership of Swami Hridayanand Giri to honor the brave Indian soldiers and civilians who were martyred during the tense India-Pakistan conflict that followed Operation Sindoor. The event was conducted with solemnity and reverence, beginning with the national anthem, followed by a two-minute silence to pay for the peace of the departed souls. The stage was managed by Mahant Rajesh Bittu.



Speaking to the media, Swami Hridayanand Giri praised the Indian Army for the successful execution of Operation Sindoor, stating that the operation was carried out with full bravery and precision, resulting in the destruction of enemy bases deep within Pakistan. He emphasized that several soldiers attained martyrdom during the mission, and the saints of Jammu and Kashmir organized this ceremony to honor their sacrifice and express gratitude to the armed forces involved.

Swami Hridayanand affirmed that the entire saint community stands united with the Indian Army and the government. He added that the saints are committed to supporting the nation in every way, even pledging their lives if necessary to defend the country. Mahant Rajesh Bittu highlighted that tricolor rallies were being held under the leadership of saints across the region, with saints leading the marching holding the national flag. He underlined that the duty of saints extends beyond spiritual practices—when the nation calls, they are ready to offer their blood. Mahant Rameshwar Das Ji stated that India's Army, Navy, and Air Force are the pride of the nation and that Operation Sindoor has set a strong example. The event was attended by several prominent saints and spiritual leaders who collectively saluted the valor of the Indian armed forces and condemned Pakistan's support of extremist activities in Kashmir. And other present in the occasion Mahamandleshwar Rameshwar Maharaj, Mahant Dutt Giri Maharaj, Mahant Rameshwar Giri, Dr. Satya Narayan, Ramsumitadas Radley Das Kusum Hindu, Mahant Shanti Giri, Vijay Krishna Parashar, Mahant Mohan Bharti, Mahant Ram Narayan Shastri, Mahant Gopalanand Maharaj

ACR Poonch visits Bandi Kama Khan after tragic incident

POONCH, MAY 18: Assistant Commissioner Revenue Poonch, Mohammad Sayeed today visited the village of Bandi Kama Khan following the tragic drowning of a 14-year-old boy, Imtiaz Ahmed, son of Khalil Ahmed. He was accompanied by Tehsildar Mandi and the In-Charge of Police Post Sathra. The visit was conducted under the directions of the Deputy Commissioner. During the visit, the officials assessed the situation on the ground and met with the grieving family to express their condolences. As an immediate relief measure, financial assistance of Rs. 20,000 was provided from the Red Cross fund. The authorities extended their heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family and urged the public to exercise caution near water bodies, particularly during the summer months when such incidents are more likely to occur.



Slathia leads Tiranga Rally, salutes armed forces for avenging pahalgam massacre

SAMBA, MAY 18: J&K Pradesh BJP Vice President and former Minister Mr. Surjeet Singh Slathia today led a spirited Tiranga Rally in Samba, organized to honor the nation's victory in Operation Sindoor, launched to avenge the Pahalgam massacre. Addressing the enthusiastic rally, Mr. Slathia, who is also MLA Samba, lauded the bravery and patriotism of India's armed forces, saying that Operation Sindoor was a decisive and righteous response to the heinous massacre of innocent civilians in Pahalgam, carried out by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists. "India has made it clear that the blood of its citizens will not go unavenged. The enemies of peace and humanity have been given a fitting



lesson," he declared to thunderous applause. Mr. Slathia emphasized that the rally was not just an event, but a symbol of national resurgence and collective resolve to stand united against the forces of terror. He underscored the fact that India is no longer a passive observer in the face of terror. "The time of restraint in the face of provocation is over. Pakistan, the epicenter of global terrorism, has served a strong message. Our forces are not just responding—they are eradicating the very roots of terror from our soil," Mr. Slathia said. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Vijaypur Mr. Chander Parkash Ganga said that India's response to terrorism, both diplomatically and militarily, is now being recognized globally as a firm and

moral stand against forces that threaten civilised societies worldwide. "Terrorism is a crime against humanity. What happened in Pahalgam was not just an attack on India—it was an attack on the values of peace, tolerance, and coexistence that define the modern world," Mr. Ganga added. MLA Ramgarh Mr. Davinder Kumar Manyal, while addressing the rally highlighted the achievements of security forces, saying that it was an attack on the values of peace, tolerance, and coexistence that define the modern world. The rally witnessed participation from senior BJP leaders, youth activists, ex-servicemen, local residents, Sarpanches, Panches Corporators and civil society members, united in their respect for the nation.

SAMBA POLICE FOILS TWO BOVINE SMUGGLING ATTEMPTS; ARRESTS 02 BOVINE SMUGGLERS, RESCUES 11 BOVINES

Samba, May 18, 2025: Continuing its drive against bovine smugglers and their propagators, Samba Police has successfully foiled two bovine smuggling attempts in the jurisdiction of Police Station Samba, arrested two bovine smugglers and rescued eleven bovines from the clutches of bovine smugglers. The vehicles used in the illegal transportation of bovines were also seized. Acting on reliable information regarding smuggling of bovines in a Mahindra Bolero load carrier bearing registration No. JK02CN-0704, a Police team headed by SHO PS Samba successfully intercepted the said vehicle at Mananu for its checking. During checking of the vehicle, six bovines were found inside the vehicle which were tied in a cruel manner and were being transported illegally without any valid permission. A case FIR No. 142/2025 u/s 223 BNS, 11 PCA Act has been registered at Police Station Samba and investigation started. In another bovine smuggling incident, a Police team headed by Incharge PP Mansar has intercepted a Load carrier Mahindra bearing registration No. JK21L-0245 at Naka Mansar and rescued five bovines which were being transported illegally without any



valid permission. The bovine smugglers identified as Shaheel Ahmed S/o Mohd Anwar R/o Chani Mansar, Akrai district Udhampur and Shabir Ahmed S/o Jaleel Ahmed R/o Sumb district Samba have been arrested. A case FIR No. 144/2025 u/s 223 BNS, 11 PCA Act has been registered at Police Station Samba and investigation started.

SAMBA POLICE SEIZES 7 VEHICLES INCLUDING 4 DUMPERS FOR ILLEGAL MINING

Samba, May 18, 2025: Continuing its drive against illegal mining, Samba Police has seized seven vehicles including four dumpers in the jurisdiction of Police Stations Samba and Ramgarh which were being used for illegal transportation/mining of the construction material. Police teams headed by SHO PS Ramgarh and Incharges of Police Posts Rakh Amb Talli & Mansar of PS Samba while performing patrolling duty in their jurisdictional areas, have seized seven vehicles including four dumpers bearing registration Nos. JK21E-9535, JK02DC-4809, HP73A-7023, HP73A-6023 and two tractor-trolleys bearing registration Nos. JK21D-3815, JK21H-7908 & one tractor trolley without No. which were being used for illegal transportation/mining of the construction material in the area. The above mentioned vehicles have been seized by Samba Police and handed over to the Geology & Mining Department, Samba for further legal action.



Annual Training Camp- for cadets of Kashmir region Kickoff at NTA Nagrota with Enthusiastic Cadet Participations



Nagrota: 18 May 2025 The Annual Training Camp (ATC-2025), organized at the National Training Academy (NTA) Nagrota, commenced today with spirited participation from NCC cadets mostly from the Kashmir region. The 10-day camp, from 17 to 26 May, brings together cadets from Senior & Junior Divisions / Wings (SD & JD) for focused training in physical fitness, leadership, & personality development. Day One, featured high-energy sapping Physical Training, drill training sessions, aimed at building discipline, synchronization, & unity. It was followed by Live Firing Practice aimed to improve precision and focus. The day also marked the launch of inter company-cadet sports competitions in Basketball, Volleyball, & open Gym activities, promoting physical wellness, teamwork, & strategic thinking. The opening day set a vibrant tone for the camp, fostering camaraderie & enthusiasm among the young cadets.

Tiranga rally living expression of national pride: MLA Jasrotia

Tiranga reminds us of brave-hearts who gave everything for nation at borders: Operation Sindoor is roaring expression of honouring Nari Shakti

Jasrota: In honour of the success of Operation Sindoor and the indomitable courage, valor and heroism of the Indian Army, BJP MLA Jasrota, Rajiv Jasrotia, Sunday led a grand 5 Km Tiranga Yatra Bike Rally from Bela to Badholi in Block Dinga, Amb. The rally, filled with patriotic fervour and slogans of Bharat Mata Ki Jai was a mark of respect to the brave security personnel who were part of the operation and a tribute to those who sacrificed their lives defending the country's integrity and sovereignty. The objective of the rally was to commemorate the successful operation targeting terrorist camps in Pakistan, honor the security personnel and civilians who lost their lives in the line of duty, including those who fell victim to Pakistan's shelling. Prominent among those who participated in Tiranga rally included Mandal President Deepak Sharma, Sarpanch Kewal Krishan, Sushil, Ex Mandal President Samar Singh, Yatra Incharge Suresh Kumar Sethu, Vikram Singh, Panch Sham, Ashok Jasrotia and other prominent workers. Later MLA Jasrotia also organized public meeting at Badholi to listen to their grievances and assuring mitigation of their grievances in time bound manner. Speaking on the occasion, Jasrotia appreciated bold decision led by PM Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh giving free hand to security forces to target



terrorists camps in Pakistan at their will which they successfully accomplished making every Indian proud of them. Following the rally, MLA Jasrotia organized a public meeting at Badholi, where he listened to Grievances, heard the concerns of the local residents and promised to address their grievances in a time-bound manner. The event showcased the MLA's commitment to the welfare of his constituents and his pride in the nation's security forces. In his address, Jasrotia paid rich homage to the unwavering courage of the Indian armed forces, including paramilitary forces, BSF, CRPF and local police, who continue to protect the country against terrorism and subversive forces. "India has never bowed to terrorism, and this is because of the selfless service of our brave men and women in uniform," he stated. A special commemoration and interfaith prayer followed the rally, held in memory of those who laid down their lives in the line of duty. The event concluded with a collective message of national pride and unity. He stated that this event was not just a

rally, but a living expression of national pride. He said that every time the Tiranga waves, it echoes our soul, our identity, and the legacy of sacrifice. The flag reminds us of the bravehearts who gave everything for the nation at the borders. Jasrotia described Operation Sindoor not merely as a military operation but as a symbolic retaliation and a reflection of the resolve of India's Nari Shakti to protect the sanctity of sindoor (vermillion). He said that by demolishing terror strongholds on Pakistani soil, India has made it clear that any threat directed towards the daughters of the nation will now be answered from across the border. He further said that while India stands for peace and compassion,

NOTICE
Mr. Bushan kumar R/o Village Neota Tepri Teh Bhalha Distt Doda is applying for Change /correction of name word in his son name Ritish kumar in his school record from other documents 1.Ritish Kumar son of the individual with this two different name words is one and the same children anybody having any objection may file the same with the appropriate authority within 7 days of publication of this notice no claim with will be entertained thereafter

NOTICE
M/s Jammu Rubber Industries, IID Centre SICOP Govindsar permanently registered with DIC Kathua vide no. 070051201160 dated 28.11.2017 for the line of activity Mfg of Red Lead /Lead oxide Only with proprietor as Sh. Ramesh Kumar Aggarwal is applying for change of constitution of the unit from M/s proprietorship to Limited concern due to take over by management of M/s Jammu Pigments Limited as per Business Transfer Agreement executed between the two parties and its subsequent change in name and style to M/s Jammu Rubber Industries (A Unit of M/s Jammu Pigments Limited). Any person or any Government/Corporation /Semi-Government/ Financial Institute having any objection regarding change of constitution from proprietorship to Limited concern may file objection to the office of General Manager, DIC Kathua within a period of 07 days positively.

SD/
GENERAL MANAGER
DIC KATHUA

BEFORE THE COURT OF TEHSILDAR (EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS) BHADARWAH.
Sharafat Ali S/o Mohd Sharif R/O Village Punga Tehsil Bhadarwah, District Doda (Applicant)
Versus
1. Block Development Officer Bhadarwah (Non-Applicant)
IN THE MATTER OF: Application for issuance of directions to Block Development Officer Bhadarwah for recording the Birth particulars of applicant's children namely Mohd Ayan (D.O.B: 08-07-2020) and Mohd Sarwar (D.O.B: 10-11-2021) R/O Village Punga Tehsil Bhadarwah, District Doda. **PROCLAMATION**
Whereas, the applicant has filled the application in this Office for the issuance of directions to Block Development Officer Bhadarwah for recording the Birth particulars of applicant's children namely Mohd Ayan (D.O.B: 08-07-2020) and Mohd Sarwar (D.O.B: 10-11-2021) R/O Village Punga Tehsil Bhadarwah, District Doda. Now, by way of this proclamation the general public, interested persons are hereby informed that if any person has any objection with regard to subject matter, he/she can file his/her objection in this Office within 07 days from the date of publication failing which an appropriate order shall be passed. Given under my Hand and Seal of this Office 17-05-2025 at Bhadarwah.
SD/
(EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS)
BHADARWAH

Farmers imparted Training on Commercial Floriculture at Village Kumhari- Doda

DODA, MAY 18: The Department of Floriculture, Parks and Gardens organized a one-day training program on Commercial Floriculture for farmers at Kumhari Panchayat Shangroo in Block Bhalla Doda. The program was held under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme ATMA, with the objective of promoting commercial floriculture practices and enhancing farmers' income.

A large number of farmers participated in the event, reflecting their growing interest in floriculture and aromatic crops.

The session included a detailed discussion on commercial floriculture practices and cultivation of aromatic crops like lavender and rosemary. Farmers also shared their concerns related to the cultivation of



marigold, lavender, and other commercial flowers. Experts responded to their queries and assured continued support from the department.

Assistant Floriculture Officer Pawan Kumar briefed the participants about the Centrally Sponsored

Schemes being implemented in the district. He emphasized that apart from technical support and latest farming technologies, the department also offers financial assistance in the form of incentives to the farmers.

The training program was

conducted under the overall guidance of Director General Vivek Sharma and the supervision of Landscape Officer Vikrant Kumar. The event also saw participation from prominent progressive farmers including Rajinder Kumar, Pritam Singh and Bans Raj, along with several women farmers.

The participants appreciated the efforts and regular support provided by the Department of Floriculture, Parks and Gardens, Jammu. The training program served as a valuable platform for farmers to interact with experts, gain knowledge, and explore new opportunities in floriculture, ultimately aiming to improve their livelihoods through sustainable agricultural practice.

BJP only Party that truly empowers youth to lead: Kavinder

Asks youth cadre to actively participate in BJP's mission for Viksit Bharat

Jammu, May 18: In a significant development that underscores the growing influence of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) among the youth, a large group of young individuals from various areas of Jammu joined the party at an impressive event held at Party Headquarters here today. The joining program was held in the presence of senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, Arun Prabhat, President of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), Vibodh Gupta, State General Secretary BJP, Baldev Singh Billawaria, Parduman Singh and BJYM Spokesperson Rinku Chohan reflecting the increasing trust of the younger generation in the BJP's vision and leadership. Welcoming the youth into party fold, Kavinder Gupta



stated that the BJP is the only political platform that has consistently empowered youth and offered them the opportunity to lead from the front. He said, "The growing support from young minds is a testimony to the party's transparent policies, dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and the strong grassroots connect that BJP

maintains." Arun Prabhat welcomed the new members and said that the BJYM has become the most vibrant and active youth force in the country, inspiring lakhs to contribute toward nation-building. He emphasized that the organization is committed to grooming young leaders who are dedicated to serving society. Vibodh Gupta

and other senior leaders reiterated BJP's vision of a developed and self-reliant Jammu and Kashmir and called upon the youth to play a proactive role in shaping the future of the region. The event concluded with the distribution of party literature and a pledge by the youth to work with full dedication for the party's mission of "Nation First."

Modi Govt. pursuing Ahilya Bai's vision by giving preference to underprivileged: Dr. Alka Gurjar

BJP holds workshop to commemorate legacy of Ahilyabai Holkar

Jammu, 18 May 2025:

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, organized a one-day workshop in honor of Punyashlok Ahilyabai Holkar, the legendary queen of the Holkar dynasty, known for her visionary governance, inclusive leadership, and tireless social reforms. The event aimed to educate party activists and dignitaries about her exemplary life and how her values continue to inspire modern-day governance.

BJP National Secretary Dr. Alka Gurjar, former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, BJP State General Secretary Adv. Vibodh Gupta, former Minister Priya Sethi, State President Mahila Morcha Sanjita Do-



gra and social worker Anika Gupta inaugurated the workshop by the traditional lighting of ceremonial lamp.

Dr. Alka Gurjar while denoting Ahilya Bai as one of the greatest social activists, reflected on her people-oriented governance and leadership. She remarked that Ahilyabai's rule is a golden chapter in Indian history, where development, spiritu-

ality, and justice flourished together. She built roads, ghats, temples, and pilgrimage facilities throughout India without discrimination of caste or creed. She emphasized the unparalleled role of Ahilya Bai in the education of women and the property and the child adoption rights for the widows. Alka Gurjar said that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been pursuing the

vision of Ahilya Bai by giving representation and preference to the neglected, and the underprivileged. She said that the Modi's stress on the 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat, Start-Up India, Stand-Up India, the vision to provide good governance minimizing the corruption is the reflection of the Ahilyabai's ideology. Priya Sethi delivered a detailed overview of Ahilyabai Holkar's life, stating that she was a rare example of courage, compassion, and character. Despite personal tragedies, she emerged as a powerful administrative leader who built temples, "Dharmshalas" (restrooms free for public), and public utilities across India. Her reign is still remembered for

justice, peace, and prosperity. Anika Gupta emphasized Ahilyabai Holkar's contributions as a reformer, noting that she was far ahead of her time in empowering women and uplifting the underprivileged. She personally looked into the needs of widows and the poor and ensured their dignity and security in society. Adv. Vibodh Gupta presented the outline of upcoming programs based on Ahilyabai Holkar's ideals. He explained that BJP will carry forward her message through social awareness drives, women empowerment programs, and grassroots initiatives inspired by her service-oriented model of governance.

DC Rajouri assesses damages in shelling affected Gonni village

RAJOURI, MAY 18: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today visited Gonni village in the Dhangri area to assess the damages caused due to recent incidents of cross-border shelling. He was accompanied by Revenue Officers and other concerned officials. During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner took stock of the losses suffered by the residents and issued on-the-spot directions to the Revenue Department to expedite assessment of damages to property, livestock, and crops. DC Abhishek Sharma also interacted with the affected families and other members of the general public at their doorsteps. He patiently listened to their concerns and



assured them of swift redressal of genuine grievances. He emphasized that the district administration stands firmly with the affected families and is committed to ensuring timely relief and rehabilitation. The

Deputy Commissioner directed the officers to maintain close coordination with the locals and ensure that all necessary support is extended to the affected households without any delay.

Gandhi Global Family Extends Relief to Affected Families in Poonch

Poonch, 18.05.2025: In response to the recent cross-border firing that have disrupted lives in district Poonch, Gandhi Global Family J&K (GGF) extended humanitarian assistance to affected families, reaffirming its commitment to United Nations SDGs, which highlights the importance of partnerships in crisis response.

The initiative was carried out in collaboration with The Daffodils Project, Border Welfare Organization, Pulastya Foundation and Sangarsh, demonstrating the power of collective civil society action under Goal No 17 of UN SDGs. The Women's Wing of GGF Jammu led the distribution of essential supplies includ-



ing food items and sanitary pads, while indoor sports kits were also provided to support the well-being of children. The relief consignment was dispatched under the guidance of Jenab Ghulam Nabi Azad, District President Global Family, former Chief Minister of J&K and former Union Minister, in the presence of Dr. S.P. Varma, President Gandhi

Global Family J&K. Dr. Alka Sharma President GGF Women Jammu Wing, Summi Sahi Sethi Vice President GGF Women Jammu Wing, Dr. Parvinder Kour, Renu Anthony, Joginder Kour and Punit Kour. A dedicated team comprising Dr. Nitam Sharma Regional Secretary GGF Jammu region, Adv. Waqar Hussain Shah and Avinash Choudhary formally handed

over the relief material to Sh. Panikaj Magotra, ADC Poonch. Tahir Malik, ADC Poonch and Mohd. Sayeed, ACR Poonch in the presence of prominent civil society members including Adv. Sunil Sharma, President Bar Association Poonch, Nareesh Kumar, Ex-Councillor, Adv. Sanjeev Sharma, Syed Nurat Shah, Adv. Navjot Sharma, Dr. Mehak Sharma, Er. Rameek Singh and Nirjot Singh. This marks Gandhi Global Family's first visit to Poonch post war crises and the organization has expressed its willingness to supplement the efforts of the district administration as and when required.

Billawaria warned power department on the ongoing power crisis in Jammu

Jammu, May 18: Former Jammu Deputy Mayor Baldev Singh Billawaria warned the power department in a press conference on the ongoing power crisis in Jammu, particularly in view of the severe summer heat and its impact on the general public. Billawaria expressed deep concern over the extended power cuts, which have been affecting several areas including Bishnah, Gangyal, Digiana, Kunjwani, and surrounding localities. He stated that the Bishnah power grid, which has a capacity of 50 MW, did not properly work, and as a result, the electrical load was redirected to some parts of Gangyal. However, these areas are unable to bear the excess load, caus-



ing power outages lasting up to 16 to 18 hours daily. "These power cuts are severely affecting senior citizens, children, and patients who cannot withstand the current heatwave conditions," the Billawaria said. He also noted that despite the Central Government having sanctioned substantial funds for improving power infrastructure in Jammu & Kashmir, mis-

management by the Power Development Department (PDD) has led to poor distribution and system failures. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged the cooperation of the public, particularly in accepting and utilizing smart electric meters, which were installed with the assurance of 24/7 power supply. "The people of Jammu are paying their electricity bills regularly and in good

faith. They deserve uninterrupted power, especially during these challenging summer months," he added. He called upon higher authorities to take urgent and strict action against those responsible for the mismanagement, and urged the Electricity Department to restore the power supply at the earliest. He said that it is the duty of the administration to provide essential services like electricity and water. Billawaria further said that he stands with the people to ensure that they get basic facilities and will continue to work towards solving every issue of the public. Ex-Corporator Neena Gupta, Prema Nanda & others were present in the press conference.

BJP leadership visits shelling-hit Chamb & Akhnoor, assures swift relief and security

Jammu, 18 May 2025: J&K BJP leadership led by its President Sat Sharma, visited several shelling-affected villages and listened to the problems of the people in Kharah Balli, Panjtooth Pallanwala, Kot Maira, Pahariwala, Naraina areas of Khour under Chamb Assembly Constituency, and Nai Basti, Narsinghpura, Garkhal, and Bhalwal Parth of Pargwal Mandal under Akhnoor Assembly Constituency. Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, Lok Sabha MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, BJP National Secretary and MLA Dr. Narendra Singh, Vice President and MLA Sham Lal Sharma, MLA

Mohan Lal Bhagat, DDC Vice-Chairperson Suraj Singh, former MLAs Rajiv Sharma & Dr. Krishan, DDCs Bhushan Bral, Suresh Sharma, & Sharda Bhau, Prabhari Brijeshwar Rana, District President Kuldeep Sharma and other senior leaders of the party accompanied BJP President during the tour.

Senior BJP leadership, besides interacting with the people at the ground level, conducted back-to-back public meetings.

Senior BJP leadership also joined the Tiranga Rally in Pargwal area of Akhnoor to honour the sacrifices and bravery of brave Indian Forces. The Tiranga Yatra



was organized by the Civilians for National Security, Akhnoor. Sat Sharma, lauding, the brave Indian forces who

gave befitting reply to the Pakistan's bewildered aggression, said that the Indian forces metaculously and professionally proved the

India's might and made it very clear that India won't tolerate any misadventure risking the lives of innocent Indian nationals. Sat Sharma

assured the people that the Modi government and the BJP family stand like a rock with them. He further said that the party leadership will

advocate for the quick disbursement of claims, and all the needed infrastructure for the civilians to lead their lives with dignity and security. Sunil Sharma highlighted the commitment of the Central Government to establishing lasting peace in the region. Referring to 'Operation Sindoor', he said the action had sent a strong message globally that India stands resolute in defending its peace and sovereignty.

Jugal Kishore Sharma strongly condemned Pakistan's targeting of civilians and assured the affected families that the government is committed to timely relief, and compensation for damaged property. Dr.

Narinder Singh reiterated BJP's 'Nation First' ideology and stated that the New India has both the capacity and the will to act decisively against any threat. Sham Lal Sharma assured the public that the BJP leadership is closely monitoring the situation and is actively involved in relief, rehabilitation, and long-term development efforts in the affected villages. Mohan Lal Bhagat appreciated the people living in these villages, and acknowledged their determination in facing difficulties, as well as the strong sense of patriotism they displayed. He admired their consistent and heartfelt support for the Indian Armed Forces.

Dogra Art Museum Celebrates International Museum Day

Jammu, May 18: Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, J&K proudly joined the global celebration of International Museum Day 2025 at Dogra Art Museum, Jammu. Every year 18th May is being celebrated as International Museum Day across the world. The day is observed to celebrate the diversity of our cultural heritage and the efforts being made for the preservation of our tangible and intangible heritage. The Theme for this year's International Museum Day was: "The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities".

To mark the occasion, a special exhibition on Basohli Miniature Paintings was organised, showcasing the intricate artistry and historical significance of this unique painting style. The exhibition provided visitors with a rare opportunity to explore the vibrant colours, detailed compositions, and rich heritage of



Basohli art, which has long been recognized as an integral part of India's artistic legacy. The event was organised on the directions of K.K. Sidha (UKAS), Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, J&K and has further directed for free entry of the visitors to the museums of the Department in J&K for this day. The event started by way of lighting of traditional lamp by Prof. Poonam Choudhary, Director, Centre for Studies in Museology, Uni-

versity of Jammu, Prof. Vishal Sharma, Dean, School of Social Science, Cluster University of Jammu, Prof. Ranjodh Singh, H.O.D. History, Govt. Degree College, Samba, Prof. Surinder Parihar, H.O.D. History, G.C.W., Gandhi Nagar and Sh. Mukul Magotra, Curator, Dogra Art Museum, Jammu.

Speaking at the event, Prof. Poonam Choudhary from the University of Jammu emphasized the importance of museums in fostering cultural ex-

change and education. She applauded the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museum's efforts in curating exhibitions that not only preserve history but also inspire future generations to appreciate and engage with traditional art forms.

The celebration of International Museum Day 2025 at the Dogra Art Museum underscored the evolving role of museums as dynamic spaces for learning, innovation, and community engagement. By offering free entry, the museum ensured accessibility for all, encouraging a wider audience to participate in the festivities and deepen their understanding of Jammu's rich artistic heritage.

The event is curated and coordinated by Mukul Magotra, Curator, Dogra Art Museum, Jammu under the supervision of K.K. Sidha, Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, J&K.

Destruction of Unexploded Shells in Border Areas of Jhullas, Salotri, Dharati and Salani, Poonch

Poonch: 18 May 2025

Indian Army in close coordination with local police authorities, successfully conducted a controlled operation for the safe destruction of 42 unexploded shells in the border areas of Jhullas, Salotri, Dharati and Salani of Poonch District. These shells, remnants of recent cross-border shelling, posed a serious threat to the lives and safety of local residents. The operation was carried out with utmost precision, adhering to all standard safety protocols to prevent any risk to civilian life or property.



Trained Bomb Disposal Teams from Indian Army, in coordination with police, ensured the complete neu-

tralization of all explosive remnants. This proactive effort reflects the organization's continued commitment to safeguarding

civilian populations in conflict-affected zones and restoring a sense of normalcy in vulnerable border communities.

Shiv Sena Hindustan pays tribute to Martyrs

RS Pura: Shiv Sena Hindustan members under the leadership of Jammu Kashmir President Pt Rajesh Kesri Sunday paid homage to the brave soldiers and civilians who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty, particularly those martyred in Poonch. The tribute was offered at Sher Chak village in RS Pura block. Shiv Sena Hindustan paid respects to the martyrs, praying for their souls' peace and strength for their families. Kesri strongly condemned Pakistan, stating that it is akin to a dog that cannot be straightened, and accused it of using IMF funds to sponsor terrorism. Kesri emphasized that Pakistan's intentions are dishonest, evident from its support to terrorists like Masood Azhar. He



praised the government's efforts to eliminate terrorism and expressed confidence that the government will continue to take strong action against Pakistan. Kesri emphasized that the entire nation, including the government and citizens, stands united against terrorism and narcotics. He expressed gratitude to the security forces for their bravery and

appreciated their efforts in eliminating terrorists. The event was attended by prominent figures, including Sher Chak Sarpanch Suresh Kumar, State Vice President Balvir Kumar, and other village dignitaries. The event reflected the organization's solidarity with the security forces and its commitment to fighting terrorism.

J&K NGOs Association Hosts Successful Conference to Strengthen Collaboration Among NGOs Across the Union Territory

Srinagar 18 May: The J&K NGOs Association convened a highly impactful open meeting today, at Tagore Hall, Srinagar. The event brought together a wide spectrum of Non-Governmental Organizations operating across Jammu and Kashmir to discuss collaborative efforts, current challenges, and strategic directions for the NGO sector in the region. The session opened with a warm welcome to all participating organizations, setting the tone for a day of meaningful dialogue and collective brainstorming. Representatives from various NGOs highlighted the pressing issues they face in their areas of work, ranging from resource mobilization and legal hurdles to the need for greater coordination and knowledge sharing. The meeting underscored the importance of



building a unified platform for NGOs to enhance their social impact, avoid duplication of efforts, and better serve the communities across the Union Territory. Discussions also touched upon potential partnerships, government collaboration opportunities, and future joint initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development, youth engagement, and grassroots empower-

ment. Participants expressed their appreciation for the association's initiative in organizing this timely and much-needed gathering. The conference concluded with a strong resolve to continue such collaborative dialogues and to form a permanent coordination committee to address shared concerns and amplify the collective voice of civil society in Jammu and Kashmir.

MSMEs make up 80% of 70 bids for electronic component manufacturing scheme

New Delhi, May 18:

The government has received 70 applications for Rs 23,000-crore electronics component manufacturing scheme, and majority of applicants are small and medium enterprises, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said.

These applications have come within half a month of opening the window for the scheme. "Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme has received tremendous response. Within 15 days of opening the application, around 70 applications have come," Vaishnaw told PTI.

The minister did not disclose the name of applicants. However, sources have earlier mentioned that Tata Electronics, Dixon Technologies, and Foxconn were among the big players that have shown interest in the scheme.

Vaishnaw said that while some of the big players have applied, there has been huge interest in the scheme from small and medium players.

"80 per cent of the applications have come from small and medium enter-



prises," the minister said.

The government opened applications for the Rs 22,805-crore electronics component manufacturing scheme (ECMS) on May 1.

The scheme aims to address demand-supply deficit in the electronic component segment. Electronic Industries Association of India (Elicina), the country's oldest industry body of the Indian electronics sector, estimates that the demand-supply deficit for inputs in the

electronics segment will increase to USD 248 billion (about Rs 21 lakh crore) by 2030 to cater to projected USD 500 billion electronics production, and it would be met largely by imports in absence of any measure from the government.

The major portion of the scheme, Rs 21,093 crore, is earmarked for sub-assemblies like camera module, multi-layered printed circuit board (PCB), flexible PCB, passive components that are fixed on the PCB by

machines. A total of Rs 1,712 crore has been earmarked for making parts used in sub-assemblies and capital goods used in electronics manufacturing.

The scheme classifies display module and camera module sub-assembly in A category, while category B products include bare components like non-surface mount devices (non-SMD), multi-layered printed circuit board, lithium-ion cells for digital applications, enclosures for mobile, IT hardware products and related devices.

Category C includes components like flexible PCB, SMD passive components.

Besides, components used in making items listed under A, B and C categories as well as capital goods used in electronics manufacturing have been clubbed under D category.

The government has opened the application window for A, B and C categories initially for three months starting May 1, and for a period of two years for D category items.

India, EU conclude another round of FTA talks; deal likely in two phases

New Delhi, May 18:

India and the European Union (EU) chief negotiators have concluded another round of talks on the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) here and agreed to reach a deal in two phases, according to an official.

"The 11th round of talks concluded on May 16," the official said. The two sides have agreed to conclude the agreement in two phases on account of the uncertain global trade environment, particularly due to the US tariffs under President Donald Trump. The talks focused on areas like market access offers in goods, services, and investment. India has followed the practice of negotiating trade



pacts in two phases with Australia. It is following a similar approach to the US. Commerce Secretary Sushil Kumar Shinde last month stated, "If some of the issues which may not be very core to the

trade, maybe taking some more time, then it is better to focus on core trade issues. So, we say that first things first... We are also discussing with the EU what can be the early harvest of the first

tranche, where we can do faster". Besides demanding significant duty cuts in automobiles and medical devices, the EU wants tax reduction in products like wines, spirits, meat, poultry and a strong intellectual property regime. Indian goods' exports to the EU, such as ready-made garments, pharmaceuticals, steel, petroleum products, and electrical machinery, can become more competitive if the pact gets concluded successfully. On May 1, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was in Brussels to discuss progress on the agreement. In June 2022, India and the 27-nation EU bloc resumed negotiations

after a gap of over eight years. It stalled in 2013 due to differences over the level of opening up of the markets. On February 28, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the European Commission President agreed to seal a much-awaited free trade deal by the end of this year. The India-EU trade pact negotiations cover 23 policy areas or chapters, including Trade in Goods, Trade in Services, Investment, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Technical Barriers to Trade, Trade Remedies, Rules of Origin, Customs and Trade Facilitation, Competition, Trade Defence, Government Procurement, Dispute Settlement.

'India's port restrictions on Bangladesh imports to help domestic MSMEs'

New Delhi, May 18:

Restrictions imposed by India on certain Bangladeshi goods will help the domestic ready-made garment industry, particularly MSMEs, to enhance their competitiveness, according to experts.

On May 17, India restricted imports worth USD 770 million from Bangladesh, covering nearly 42 per cent of bilateral imports. Key goods like garments, processed foods, and plastic items are now limited to select sea ports or barred from land routes entirely. Ready-made garments, valued at USD 610 million, now face strict routing through only two Indian seaports. This severely limits Bangladesh's most valuable export channel to India.



"Indian textile firms have long protested the competitive edge enjoyed by Bangladesh exporters, who benefit from duty-free Chinese fabric imports and export subsidies, giving them a 10-15 per cent price advantage in the Indian mar-

ket," think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said. The port restrictions will help Indian MSMEs (micro, small, and medium enterprises) from the textiles sector. GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava said.

Sharing similar views, Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEP) Vice Chairman A Sakthivel said there is a demand of domestic exporters to impose these restrictions. "It is a good decision now taken by the Indian govern-

Foreign investors welcome in shooting league, says NRAI president

New Delhi, May 18:

The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) is not averse to foreign entities buying stakes in the franchise-based Shooting League of India, said its president Kailash Singh Deo following a meeting of the federation to take key decisions on the event. The inaugural edition of the league is scheduled later this year. The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF), the global governing body for the sport, has officially allotted a November-December window for SLI and the event is likely to be organised from November 24 to December 7. A total of 6-8 city-based franchises will own the teams and bid for players via an auction. Each team will consist of 12 athletes (6 men, 6 women), including up to four foreign players (two men, two women). "We have started conversation with (prospective) franchisees. But I don't see the reason why a foreign franchisee would be interested; that they can't have a stake, given of course subject to any conditions in the law of the land," said Singh Deo following the NRAI governing council meeting on Saturday. Despite India boasting of nearly one lakh registered shooters and accounting for about 50 per cent of

the medals the country wins internationally, shooting continues to be a sport with low spectator fallout and viewership, even in the premier arenas like the Karni Singh Ranges here. Singh Deo acknowledged that getting mass audience continues to be a "challenge" and SLI will bring in equipment and technology to make the sport more exciting. "Certainly, it is actually one of the biggest challenges for the league, for shooting sport as a whole. In fact, even the ISSF and NRAI have been thinking about how to make shooting more viewer-friendly. "So, one of course is the kind of equipment and technology we use that we can make the sport more exciting. We have 95,000 registered shooters. And, of course, eSports, which has become a major thing in India, is also a major platform where shooting is, in one way or the other, attractive. "So we plan to use a variety of platforms, social media, and also maybe bringing some innovative gaming technologies, whereby we can actually reach out to a wider audience, and make sure that we popularise the sport of shooting across the spectrum," said Singh Deo about SLI, which will be based on the mixed team format.

North in News

EDITORIAL

COMBATING TERRORISM

Projecting India's national consensus & approach

While, OPERATION SINDOOR continues, the Defence Minister- Sh. Rajnath Singh says that current ceasefire means that India has kept Pakistan on 'probation' on the basis of its behaviour; India having pressed the International Monetary Fund, to reconsider its USD one billion assistance to Pakistan saying Islamabad could use a large part of it to fund the terror infrastructure, India's Seven All Party Delegations are set to visit key partner countries. The delegations will project India's national consensus and resolute approach to combating terrorism in all forms and manifestations. In a loud and clear message to Islamabad, Sh. Rajnath Singh has made it clear that the Operation Sindoor is not yet over. He also confirmed the use of the 'BrahMos' supersonic missiles in the operation Sindoor. Pakistan must have experienced its might. 'Our actions were just a trailer, we will show the full picture, if need be. Attacking and eliminating terrorism is the new normal of new India,' he said. It is well known to the world that Masood Azhar- UN designated terrorist is the head of the terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad. Pertinent to mention here that under Operation Sindoor, India on May 7, had destroyed nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Jammu & Kashmir in retaliation to the Pahalgam terror attack. Appreciating the highest level of enthusiasm and patriotism among the soldiers, the defence minister said that whatever they did during operation Sindoor, has filled the country with pride. The Bhuj air force base was one of the military installations that Pakistan targeted during the four-day confrontation between the two militaries. The worst of the matter is that the Pakistan government has announced financial assistance to rebuild the terror infrastructure of Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad. There are reasons to believe that the financial assistance will be used to fund the terror infrastructure. This can be said to be an act of indirect funding IMF, an international organisation. India may ask IMF to reconsider USD one billion support to Pakistan. The two sides reached an understanding on cessation of hostilities on May 10. Presently, India's seven All Party Delegations are set to carry to the world India's strong message of zero-tolerance against terrorism in the context of Operation Sindoor and India's continued fight against cross border terrorism. These seven All-Party Delegations are set to visit key partner countries, including members of the UN Security Council, later this month. They will project India's national consensus and resolute approach to combating terrorism in all forms and manifestations. They would carry forth to the world the country's strong message of zero tolerance against terrorism. Members of Parliament from different parties, prominent political personalities, and distinguished diplomats will be part of each delegation. The Members of Parliament leading the delegations include, 1) Sh. Shashi Tharoor, INC, 2) Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, BJP, 3) Sh. Sanjay Kumar Jha, JDU 4) Shri Baijyanti Panda, B.J.P., Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, DMK, 6) Smt. Supriya Sule, NCP, and 7) Shri Shrikant Eknath Shinde-Shiv Sena.

RAJNI SHARMA.....

SABYASACHEE
DASH

In a compelling conversation, noted economist Montek Singh Ahluwalia, one of the key architects of India's 1991 economic reforms, has shared his insights on India's policy transformations, ongoing economic challenges, and the road ahead. His reflections provide a rare glimpse into the behind-the-scenes decision-making that helped shape modern India's economic trajectory. Ahluwalia began by recalling the economic turmoil India faced in 1991, marked by a severe balance of payments crisis.

At the time, foreign exchange reserves had dwindled to a precarious level, and a radical shift in economic policies was the only way forward. The reforms that followed, including trade liberalization, delicensing of industries, and opening up to foreign investment, were a watershed moment in India's history. While the reforms were spearheaded by then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, Ahluwalia emphasized that their success lay in a collective effort. He dismissed claims that the World Bank and IMF dictated India's economic policies, clarifying that discussions on structural reforms had already been taking place within the government. The crisis merely acted as a catalyst, allowing long-pending reforms to materialize.

He also recounted how his policy paper, later dubbed the M Document, influenced the government's approach to economic restructuring.



He highlighted that resistance to change existed even within the bureaucracy, but strong leadership and a strategic approach helped push reforms forward. Shifting focus to current economic challenges, Ahluwalia addressed India's fiscal health, particularly the rising debt-to-GDP ratio. While India's public debt remains below that of many advanced economies, he cautioned that sustaining long-term growth requires a disciplined fiscal policy. He pointed out that India needs to balance its social spending with fiscal prudence. Excessive debt, if not managed well, can crowd out essential investments in infrastructure, education, and healthcare. He also discussed how government borrowings impact private investment, suggesting that a measured fiscal deficit is crucial to ensuring macroeconomic stability. Ahluwalia reflected on the evolving global trade landscape, particularly the increasing protectionism seen in the US and other developed

economies. While globalization had initially benefited emerging economies like India, late trends indicate a shift towards economic nationalism. He criticized the US's approach of imposing tariffs on allies and competitors alike, warning that such transactional policies create uncertainty in global trade. He stressed the need for India to remain engaged with international markets while also building domestic competitiveness through trade reforms and strategic tariff adjustments.

On the subject of India's currency, Ahluwalia supported a managed exchange rate rather than a completely free float. He argued that some level of rupee depreciation is beneficial for boosting exports and maintaining economic competitiveness. Countries like China and other East Asian economies had historically kept their currencies weak to support exports, and India should take a pragmatic approach rather than aiming for an artificially strong rupee. A critical area of concern, accord-

ing to Ahluwalia, is India's human capital development. While India boasts a large young workforce, a significant portion lacks employable skills. He pointed out the mismatch between the education system and industry needs, arguing that mere degree acquisition does not translate to employability.

He emphasized that states must take a more proactive role in education reforms. While the Centre can provide a framework, execution lies with state governments. He also urged for better governance in educational institutions and stronger linkages between academia and industry to bridge the skill gap. Discussing climate change, Ahluwalia acknowledged the growing global pressure on India to reduce carbon emissions. While India has committed to achieving net zero by 2070, he stressed that immediate policy actions are required. He advocated for accelerating the transition from coal to renewable energy while simultaneously investing in cli-

mate-resilient agriculture. He warned that climate change could significantly reduce agricultural productivity, underscoring the need for better water conservation, agricultural research, and sustainable farming practices. He highlighted that some states, like Tamil Nadu, have begun working on climate action plans, but a nationwide coordinated effort is necessary. He called for greater cooperation between the Centre and states, labeling climate adaptation as an opportunity for true 'cooperative federalism.' Addressing the growing culture of populism and welfare schemes, Ahluwalia cautioned against excessive reliance on government handouts. While targeted welfare policies are necessary, indiscriminate giveaways often come at the cost of long-term economic sustainability.

He noted that fiscal discipline is essential to ensuring that social schemes do not compromise essential investments in infrastructure and development. Political parties across the spectrum, he argued, must rethink their approach to welfare to strike a balance between social security and economic prudence. Ahluwalia concluded by emphasizing that economic reforms are not a one-time event but an ongoing process. The 1991 reforms laid the foundation for India's economic rise, but newer challenges demand fresh policy innovations. He stressed that India must continue improving its business climate, integrating with global markets.

MAD vs. SAD

DEVENDRA SAKSENA

The four-day Indo-Pak War 2025, was the first war between two nuclear-armed countries. This war was unique for another reason also; troops of no country crossed the borders of the other, and the war was fought entirely with aircraft, missiles and drones. The short duration, and unusual character of hostilities, has resulted in myriad 'what if' scenarios being passionately debated; for one, there has been intense speculation whether there would have been a nuclear war had the conflict continued for a few more days. The animosity between India and Pakistan dates back to the time of their creation.

Following Gandhian principles, India trod a peaceful path, and ultimately became a military and economic power; contrarily, Pakistan took the path of militarism and religious extremism, and soon morphed into a rogue state openly sponsoring terrorism, and deploying terrorists as a part of State policy. At the time of the Cold War, Western powers, particularly the USA, viewed Pakistan as a bulwark against Russia, and deliberately shut their eyes to Pakistan's shenanigans. Taking full advantage of the situation, Pakistan

would often strike India directly, or through terrorists, and when India retaliated, like in Kargil, Pakistan would shamelessly play the victim card.

After the Cold War era, Pakistan has ceased to be a valuable asset for the West. Therefore, Western powers have often left Pakistan to fend for itself; no Western help was forthcoming after the Indian surgical strike, in 2016, or the Balakot airstrike, in 2019. While not abandoning America fully, a miffed Pakistan has walked into the Chinese camp. Sometimes, like the Mumbai bombers of 26/11, Pakistani terrorists have inadvertently, or otherwise, targeted US citizens. In such cases, Pakistan adopted a totally different approach - it cooperated fully with US authorities, e.g., in the case of David Headley and Tahawwur Rana.

More recently, Pakistan deported the dreaded terrorist Mohammed Sharifullah who was involved in the Abbey Gate suicide bombing during the 2021 withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan - an attack that took the lives of 13 US Army men, and also the suicide bombing at the Canadian embassy in Kabul in 2016. Sharifullah was also involved in the terrorist incident that killed 130 people in Moscow, in 2024.

Therefore, Sharifullah was an invaluable asset for Pakistan, and his deportation to US, raises some fundamental questions, both for Pakistan and the US.

On the other hand, no terrorist has ever been deported to India from Pakistan, which always keeps asking for proof. So far as the US is concerned, it deported Tahawwur Rana to India, sixteen years after he was apprehended in the US, but refused to extradite Headley, who was Rana's handler, and a much more valuable asset. Thus, there is something subterranean to the US-Pakistan relationship - which neither side is eager to disclose. In this context, there appears some credibility to a startling claim doing the rounds, that

a) Pakistan is a nuclear base for the US,

b) the nukes allegedly belonging to Pakistan are in reality owned by the US and meant for use against Russia. Ergo, the US halted the Indo-Pak war, because its nukes were under threat from Indian air attacks. India's nuclear policy was formulated in 2003, by strategic analyst K Subrahmanyam, the father of Foreign Minister S Jaishankar. The policy is centred on four principles:

a) 'No First Use' (NFU),
b) Credible Minimum Deterrence,

i.e., India's nuclear arsenal exists, so that other countries do not use nuclear weapons against India,

c) Massive Retaliation, and
d) Nuclear weapons will be used against countries attacking India, with biological or chemical weapons.

Only the Prime Minister, as head of the political council of the Nuclear Command Authority, can authorise a nuclear strike. Pakistan has not spelt out its nuclear policy so far, giving it full flexibility in the deployment of nuclear weapons. However, the country seems to be following the 'four triggers' nuclear policy laid out by Lieutenant General Khalid Ahmed Kidwai, in 2001. Briefly put, Pakistan will deploy nuclear weapons on the crossing of

a) Spatial threshold i.e., after the loss of a large part of its territory. Since Pakistan lost East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971, this would justify use of nuclear weapons against India;

b) Military threshold - destruction or targeting of a large area of its air or land;

c) Economic threshold - an attack that cripples the Pakistan economy, and, d) Political threshold - an attack leading to political destabilisation or large-scale internal disharmony.

Rahul undermining national security with 'ties with Maoist sympathisers': Chhattisgarh deputy CM

Raipur, May 18: Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Vijay Sharma on Saturday launched a blistering attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during his visit to the insurgency-hit Bastar region, accusing him of "betraying the nation" by allegedly maintaining ties with Maoist sympathisers.

His comments came at a time when security forces are intensifying counterinsurgency operations across the state's Red Corridor.

Speaking to the media at the Circuit House in Jajpur, Sharma contrasted the BJP-led Centre's approach with that of the Congress, stating that the Modi government has adopted a zero tolerance policy towards Maoist-backed terrorism, whereas the Congress leadership continues to engage with those



aligned with extremist ideology. He accused Rahul Gandhi of meeting individuals known to sympathize with Maoist causes and claimed such gestures embolden left wing extremists. Sharma alleged that Rahul Gandhi had prevented Telangana Minister Sitakka Mulugu from attending the closing ceremony of the 2023 Bastar Olympics after

learning that she had been invited to symbolically encourage the Maoists in the affected region to embrace peace and join mainstream society. The deputy CM argued that the Congress leadership deliberately obstructed an event that could have sent a powerful message in favour of national integration. He also accused Telangana Chief Minister

Revanth Reddy of "speaking the language of Maoists" referring to his recent statements and meetings with individuals linked to Maoist fronts. He said such conduct undermines the sacrifices of soldiers and police personnel who risk their lives daily in Bastar's dense and dangerous terrain. The deputy CM's remarks follow a sharp escalation in anti-Maoist operations under Operation Kagar, a state-backed campaign targeting senior Maoist leadership across Chhattisgarh's southern districts. Fresh deployments of CRPF battalions in Bijapur and Sukma, recent IED blasts targeting convoys, have intensified political and security activity in the region. Sharma warned that political double-deal from national leaders demoralizes security forces and threatens to undo years of progress.

CM orders urgent measures to prevent forest fires in Himachal Pradesh

Shimla, May 18: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has directed the Forest Department to make prompt and effective arrangements to prevent forest fires during the ongoing summer season. He emphasized that forest fire operation services must respond immediately to control such incidents and called for greater involvement of local communities in preventing them.

The Chief Minister also urged the Department to focus on improving the survival rate of saplings. During a Pricing Committee meeting chaired by CM Sukhu on Sunday, new rates for timber, forest produce and royalty were approved. The



last meeting of this committee was held in 2022. Sukhu instructed the Forest Development Corporation to independently undertake the extraction of cedar wood stumps, ending the current practice of hiring private contractors. He also called for the preparation of a roadmap for extracting approximately 10,000 cedar wood stumps. On the occasion, the Cor-

poration presented a cheque of Rs 41.30 crore to the Chief Minister as royalty revenue earned from the silvicultural felling of khair and sal trees. He stated that the felling of khair and sal trees, carried out with the approval of the Apex Court, has not only benefited the ecosystem but also contributed significantly to the state exchequer.

Bribery case against ED's Kochi official: Complainant makes serious revelations

Kochi, May 18: In a Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB) bribery case involving an Enforcement Directorate (ED) officer, the complainant, a Kollam-based businessman, came forward on Sunday with serious revelations pointing to a nexus between a middleman and ED officials.

Aneesh Babu, who runs a cashew export-import firm, said the ED officer contacted him on the phone number he had used to call Wilson Varghese, one of the accused from Thammannam, Kochi, who introduced himself as an ED agent. Speaking to the media in Kochi, he revealed that Wilson acted as an inter-



mediary between him and ED officers. Wilson allegedly initiated contact via phone and relayed information about the ED's actions beforehand. Aneesh said whenever he (Wilson) anticipated a forthcoming call from the ED, it followed, suggest-

ing coordination between Wilson and ED officials. He claimed that ED Assistant Director Sekhar Kumar, the first accused in the case, never asked for a bribe directly but was identified by Wilson as the person behind the scheme.

Three held in Amritsar with 10.2 kg heroin

Chandigarh, May 18:

Dealing a major blow to a cross-border drug smuggling racket amidst the ongoing anti-drug campaign 'Yudh Nashian Virudh' campaign launched on the direction of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, Commissionerate of Police Amritsar has busted an international narco trafficking cartel with the arrest of its three operatives and recovered 10.2 kg heroin from their possession. said Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav here on Sunday. The arrested drug smugglers have been identified as Akasheep Singh, 22, and Akash alias Mota, 19, both residents of Cheema Kalan in



Tarn Taran; and Sandeep Singh, 30, a resident of Kotli Vasava Singh in Tarn Taran. Apart from recovering haul of heroin, police teams have also impounded their two motorcycles, which were being used to deliver the heroin. DGP Gaurav Yadav said that a preliminary probe has revealed that arrested accused Akasheep Singh and

Sandeep Singh remained in touch with Pakistan smugglers from across the border for the past 6 years. The latter were using drones to deliver heroin consignments across the border, which was then distributed at various locations for further distribution, he said. The DGP said that further investigations are underway to trace backward

and forward linkages in this network. Sharing operation details, Commissioner of Police (CP) Amritsar Gurpreet Singh Bhullar said that acting on reliable inputs, a team under the supervision of DCP Detective Ravinderpal Singh, ADCP Detective Jagbinder Singh and ACP Detective Harinder Singh Sandhu and led by in-charge CIA Staff-1 Amolakdeep Singh, successfully apprehended the accused Akasheep Singh and Akash alias Mota from Gurudwara Bohri Sahib Road, along with 1.01 kg heroin and a motorcycle. He said that based on the interrogation of arrested accused persons, police

teams have also arrested their accomplice Sandeep Singh from Chhabal Road along with 9.2 kg of heroin and a motorcycle. The CP said that accused Sandeep had been involved in supplying heroin since 2018-19 and is suspected to have smuggled over 200 kilograms of heroin so far. Police remand has been obtained to interrogate the accused and uncover their entire network, he said, while adding that more arrests and recoveries are expected in the coming days. A case FIR No. 127 dated 16-5-2025 has been registered under Sections 21-C, 23 and 29 of the NDPS Act at Police Station Islamabad in Amritsar.

8 children among 17 family members killed in devastating Hyderabad building fire

Hyderabad, May 18: Seventeen people, including eight children, were killed in a devastating fire that broke out in a three-storey building near Gulzar House Chowrasta in the Old City area of Hyderabad on Sunday. The fire started in a jewellery shop on the ground floor of the old building located in a congested area on the road leading to the iconic Charminar, and thick plumes of smoke caused the deaths due to asphyxiation in the residential quarters on the first and second floors.

All the deceased belonged to the same family. Locals and firefighters said a single narrow entrance, blocked by two-wheelers and the use of inflammable materials,



hampered the rescue. The family members blamed the delay in the arrival of ambulances and the lack of oxygen masks for the death of a seven-year-old child. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of those killed, while the state government announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh.

The fire started in the early morning, and the fire department was informed at 6:16 am. However, local people were the first to enter the smoke-engulfed building after hearing the cries of women urging them to save their family mem-

bers. Fire services personnel rescued people trapped on the first floor of the building. According to the fire department, there were "access constraints", and 11 vehicles, one firefighting robot, 17 officers, and more than 70 personnel were pressed into service. It took two hours to bring the inferno under control. Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated, "Deeply anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy in Hyderabad, Telangana. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PM-NRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs 50,000." Announcing Rs

5 lakh compensation for the next of kin of the deceased, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu said, "The fire might have been caused by a short circuit in the shop on the ground floor, and the smoke reached the first floor and the second floor, causing the death of the 17 people." Local MP and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi said, "Seventeen members of a family, who had been staying in the premises for 125 years, died in the tragic incident. Only two people from the family survived. The DG of the fire services told me most of the deaths occurred due to asphyxiation and smoke inhalation. Some people had even locked themselves in."

UP fake degree racket busted: Monad University Chairman and Pro-Chancellor arrested

Hapur, May 18:

The Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF) has uncovered a massive fake degree racket operating out of Monad University, a private institution in Pilkhuwa, Hapur. On Sunday, the STF arrested 10 individuals associated with the university, including its Chairman Chaudhary Vijendra Singh Hooda and Pro-Chancellor Nitin Kumar Singh. According to the STF, Vijendra Singh, previously accused in the infamous bike boat scam, had been running the fake degree operation through Monad University. Thousands of fake degrees were recovered during the raid.

The racket involved the production and sale of counterfeit degrees across various courses, including LLB, B



Pharma, D Pharma, and B Tech. Authorities seized over 1,372 fake degrees and 262 fake provisional and migration certificates. Fake degrees were reportedly sold for amounts ranging from Rs 50,000 to Rs 5 lakh, often to secure private and government jobs. In addition to the forged documents, the STF recovered several electronic devices and Rs 6,54,800 in cash during the operation. The arrested individuals in-

clude Chaudhary Vijendra Singh, Chairman, Monad University; Nitin Kumar Singh Pro-Chancellor, Mukesh Thakur, Personal Assistant to the Chairman, Gaurav Sharma, Head, Verification Department, Imran, Director of Admissions, Anil Batraya, Accountant, Vipul Talayan, Verification Department, Kuldheep, Sunny Kumar alias Sandeep Sehrawat, employees.

Prashant Kishor launches signature campaign in Bihar, faces blockade by local administration at CM's village

Patna, May 18: In a political move, Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor initiated a signature campaign on Sunday in Kalyan Bigha, the native village of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The campaign, aimed at spotlighting pressing issues affecting people across the state, comes as Kishor accuses Bihar CM of failing to fulfill key promises and curbing widespread corruption in government departments.

However, the local administration stopped him from entering the village for a face-to-face interaction with the residents. Kishor wanted to engage directly with villagers to gauge the impact of Nitish Kumar's policies, particularly those designed to uplift margin-



alised communities based on the Caste Census. He said, "I wanted to see the situation in Kalyan Bigha as it will serve as an indicator of the situation in the rest of Bihar." He had a brief interaction with a group of villagers at the border of Kalyan Bigha, who said that the government has failed to pay them the financial assistance and plot of land as promised. They also complained that they were not able to

complete formalities required for land survey and mutation because they could not afford to bribe the officials. Following the Caste Census report, the Bihar government had approved financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh each to over 94 lakh families, with a monthly income Rs 6,000 or less, for entrepreneurship and self-employment. The government had also approved the scheme to provide 3 decimal

Hyderabad, May 18: Seventeen people, including eight children, died in a devastating fire that broke out in a three-storey building near Gulzar House Chowrasta in the Old City area of Hyderabad early this morning.

The blaze began in a jewellery shop on the ground floor of the building, situated in a congested lane leading to the iconic Charminar. Thick smoke spread rapidly to the residential quarters on the first and second floors, leading to deaths due to asphyxiation. All the victims belonged to the same family. Rescue efforts were hampered by the building's single, narrow entrance, which was blocked by



parked two-wheelers, and the use of inflammable materials within the premises, according to locals and firefighters. The bereaved family members alleged delays in ambulance response and a lack of oxygen masks, claiming that a seven-year-old child could have been saved with timely medical support. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi expressed deep anguish over the tragedy and announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased, and Rs 50,000 for the injured. The Telangana state government also announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh for the families of those killed. The fire broke out in the early hours, and the fire department was alerted at

6:16 am. Local residents were the first to respond, rushing into the smoke-filled building after hearing cries for help. Firefighters rescued 17 people trapped on the first floor.

Fire services officials cited "access constraints" as a major challenge in rescue efforts. A total of 11 vehicles, one firefighting robot, 17 officers, and over 70 personnel were deployed. It took nearly two hours to bring the blaze under control. Prime Minister Modi posted on X: "anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy in Hyderabad, Telangana. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. An ex-gratia

of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs 50,000." Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, while announcing the state compensation, said, "The fire might have been caused by a short circuit in the ground-floor shop. The smoke quickly reached the first and second floors, causing the deaths of 17 people." Local MP and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi said, "Seventeen members of a family died in this tragic incident. The family had lived in these premises for 125 years. Only two members survived. The DG Fire Services told me that most of the deaths were due to smoke

Whitening products may damage teeth

Teeth whitening products – that promise to make your smile brighter – may also be causing tooth damage, a study has found.

Scientists at Stockton University in the US found that hydrogen peroxide, the active ingredient in over-the-counter whitening strips, can damage the protein-rich dentin tissue found beneath the tooth's protective enamel. The tooth is made of three layers: the outer tooth enamel, an underlying dentin layer and connective tissue that binds the roots to the gum.

Most studies of whitening strips have focused on tooth enamel, which contains very little protein.

The team focused on dentin, which makes up most of the tooth and has high lev-



els of protein, most of which is collagen.

It is well established that hydrogen peroxide can penetrate the enamel and dentin. Previous work by the researchers showed that collagen in the dentin layer decreased when teeth were treated with whitening strips.

"We sought to further characterize what the hydrogen peroxide was doing to collagen. We used entire teeth for the studies and focused on the impact by the researchers showed that collagen in the dentin layer decreased when teeth were treated with whitening strips.

The researchers demonstrated that the major protein in the dentin is converted to smaller fragments when treated with hydrogen peroxide.

In additional experiments, they treated pure collagen with hydrogen peroxide and then analysed the protein using a gel electrophoresis labora-

tory technique that allows the protein to be visualised.

"Our results showed that treatment with hydrogen peroxide concentrations similar to those found in whitening strips is enough to make the original collagen protein disappear, which is presumably due to the formation of many smaller fragments," Keenan said in the statement.

The researchers point out that their experiments did not address whether collagen and other proteins in the teeth can be regenerated, so it is unknown if the tooth damage is permanent. Next, they plan to further characterize the protein fragments released when collagen is treated with hydrogen peroxide and determine if hydrogen peroxide has the same impact on other proteins in the teeth.

Grass pollen can help predict asthma, hay fever

The presence of different strains of grass pollen in the atmosphere can help predict when hay fever and asthma could strike, researchers have found. A team led by the University of Queensland (UQ) researchers, tracked grass pollen for seasonal variations and found it was released into the atmosphere later in areas further from the equator.

"Using this method, we may be able to better predict when allergenic pollen is present and allow people affected by asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and rhinitis to more effectively manage their condition," said Nicholas Osborne, Associate Professor at UQ's School of Public Health.) with the advent of personalized



medicine, more and more people are becoming aware of which allergen is responsible for their allergy," Osborne said. He said the research would help allergy sufferers prepare for the hay fever season and doctors to prescribe more personalised treatments. "Who fail to manage their asthma are at greater risk of asthma attack and being forced to visit hospital emergency departments," Osborne said. "Having a more accurate forecast of when a patient is at risk will allow people to better

manage their disease." Scientists hope to expand on the research to create a unique profile of each grass pollen species to determine the most harmful strains.

For this, they are examining hospital and GP records and seeing if demand for these services involving asthma and rhinitis correlates with the presence of one grass species over another. "Eventually—possibly within three to four years—we hope this will allow us to produce a better forecast of when and where exposure

Dogs can sniff out cancer in blood with 97% accuracy

Your canine friend can use its highly evolved sense of smell to pick out blood samples from people with cancer with almost 97 per cent accuracy, a finding that can lead to new low-cost and non-invasive screening approaches for the disease, finds a study.

Dogs have smell receptors 10,000 times more accurate than humans', making them highly sensitive to odours we cannot perceive. "Although there is no cure for cancer, early detection offers the best hope," said lead researcher Heather Junqueira, at BioScentDx, a US-based healthcare company. "A highly sensitive test for detecting cancer could save thousands of lives and change the way the disease is treated," he said. For the study, the team used a form of clicker training to teach four beagles to distinguish between normal blood serum



and samples from patients with malignant lung cancer. Although one beagle—aptly named Snuggles—was unmotivated to perform, the other three correctly identified lung cancer samples 96.7 per cent times and normal samples 97.5 per cent times. "This work is very exciting because it paves the way for further research along two paths, both of which could lead to new cancer-detection tools," said Junqueira. "One is using canine scent detection

as a screening method for cancers, and the other would be to determine the biologic compounds the dogs detect and then design cancer-screening tests based on those compounds," he said. The results will be presented at the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology annual meeting in Florida. The team plans to use canine scent detection to develop a non-invasive way of screening for cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Excessive calcium supplements may up cancer risk: Study

Taking excessive calcium tablets may increase the risk of cancer, according to scientists who say that getting adequate nutrients from food sources is more beneficial than consuming supplements.

The study, published in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*, also showed that adequate intake of certain nutrients reduces risk of death from any cause, when nutrient source is foods, but not supplements.

Researchers found that supplemental doses of calcium exceeding 1,000 milligrams per day is linked to an increased risk of cancer death. "As potential benefits and harms of supplement use continue to be studied, some studies have found associations between excess nutrient intake and adverse outcomes, including increased risk of certain cancers," said Fang Fang



Zhang, associate professor at Tufts University in the US.

It is important to understand the role that the nutrient and its source might play in health outcomes, particularly if the effect might not be beneficial," Zhang said.

The study used data from more than 27,000 US adults ages 20 and older to evaluate the association between dietary supplement use and death from all causes, car-

diovascular disease (CVD), and cancer.

The researchers assessed whether adequate or excess nutrient intake was associated with death and whether intake from food versus supplement sources had any effect on the associations.

The researchers found that adequate intakes of vitamin K and magnesium were associated with a lower risk of death, while adequate intakes of vitamin A,

vitamin K, and zinc were associated with a lower risk of death from CVD.

Excess intake of calcium was associated with higher risk of death from cancer, they said.

When sources of nutrient intake were evaluated, the researchers found that lower risk of death associated with adequate nutrient intakes was limited to nutrients from foods, not from supplements.

In addition, the researchers found that dietary supplements had no effect on the risk of death in individuals with low nutrient intake. Instead, the team found indications that use of vitamin D supplements by individuals with no sign of vitamin D deficiency may be associated with an increased risk of death from all causes including cancer. Further research on this potential connection is needed.

Rest may be best medicine to treat some pains: Study

Getting rest may be as effective as taking medication to treat common musculoskeletal disorders such as carpal tunnel syndrome and low back pain, which caused by repeated moderate-strain activity, scientists have found.

In a study conducted in rats, researchers showed that a four-week period of rest was nearly as effective as an experimental drug at reducing discomfort and regaining function.

"Rest appears to be a good first treatment choice," said Amanda White, a postdoctoral

fellow at Temple University in the US. treatments following rest should include exercises to improve tissues, and pain reducers if needed. If symptoms do not subside and strength does not return following this approach, then pharmacological treatments may be needed to aid recovery," White said in a statement.

The researchers trained rats to repeatedly pull a lever in order to model the types of repetitive-strain injuries humans experience.

After 12 weeks, the rats showed a weaker grip strength, discomfort and increased collagen production in the forearm—evidence



of strain-induced tissue damage. The researchers then

allowed the rats to rest for four weeks. During this rest period

one group of rats received an experimental

drug that

blocks a neurotransmitter, Substance P, which is associated with the sensation of pain, while the other group did not. "We found that the four-week rest treatment reduced collagen production, improved strength and decreased discomfort," said White. "The drug blocking Substance P signaling also had similar effects, and was somewhat better at improving grip strength, but at the same time made the animals less sensitive to very hot temperatures, which is concerning. This led us to conclude that rest may

be the better treatment," she said. There appears, however, to be a tipping point at which rest is not sufficient and medications are needed, researchers said. While the study showed rest was sufficient for recovering from repeated moderate-strain activity, previous studies indicated it was not sufficient when the lever was harder to pull, causing more strain. In investigating the Substance P-blocking agent and other drugs, the researchers are focused on developing ways to help the tissue actually recover

Russia launches one of biggest drone assault on Ukraine, at least 1 killed

Kyiv, May 18:

Russia overnight on Sunday launched one of its most intense drone attacks on Ukraine since the beginning of its full-scale invasion in 2022. Russia fired a total of 273 exploding drones and decoys overnight, Ukraine's air force said. Of those, 88 were intercepted and a further 128 lost, likely having been electronically jammed. The attacks targeted the country's Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk regions. According to data from Ukraine's air force, this would be the largest drone attack Russia has launched against Ukraine since the start of the war, but Ukrainian officials have not confirmed this. The number of drones fired exceeds Russia's previous largest known single drone attack of the war, when Russia pounded Ukraine with 267 drones on the eve of the war's third anniversary.

Kyiv regional Gov. Mykola Kalashnyk said a 28-year-old woman was killed in a drone attack on the region and three other people, including a 4-year-old child, were wounded. Meanwhile, Russia's Defence Ministry said its air defences shot down seven Ukrainian drones overnight, and a further 14 on Sunday



morning. The attacks came after the first direct talks between Moscow and Kyiv in years on Friday failed to yield a ceasefire. Russian President Vladimir Putin spurned Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's offer to meet face-to-face in Turkey after he himself proposed direct negotiations although not at the presidential level as an alternative to a 30-day ceasefire urged by Ukraine and its Western allies, including the US. US President Donald Trump said he plans to speak by phone Monday with Putin, followed by Zelenskyy and leaders of various NATO countries, about ending the war in Ukraine.

Doha, May 18:

Indirect negotiations between Hamas and Israel resumed on Saturday in the Qatari capital Doha, according to senior Hamas official Mahmoud Mardawi.

Mardawi said the talks are being held under Qatari and US mediation in an effort to reach a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and finalize a hostage exchange deal, without preconditions.

A source close to Hamas told Xinhua on condition of anonymity that the talks are based on a proposal submitted by US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff, which Hamas had amended substantially.

According to the source, the guarantees provided by the United States in the current round of Gaza ceasefire



talks appeared to be "more serious," including clear commitments to implementing the terms of any potential agreement. Meanwhile, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz confirmed on Saturday the resumption of negotiations with Hamas, saying Hamas' return to the negotiation table marks a shift from what he described as a refusal position it has taken so far. According to Katz, the change followed the launch

of Israel's newly initiated military operation code-named "Gideon's Chariots" which aims to expand the scope of fighting in Gaza and advance key war objectives, including the release of hostages and the dismantling of Hamas.

On Friday night, the Israeli military announced that it had escalated operations in Gaza, carrying out a wave of airstrikes and deploying additional ground forces, noting that the intensified assault marks the start of the "Gideon's Chariots" operation. Israeli public radio Kan reported that the current proposal under discussion in Doha includes the release of approximately 10 or more hostages in exchange for a limited ceasefire. Israel estimates that 20 hostages are still alive in Gaza.

Despite the renewed efforts, Hamas has voiced reservations about proceeding with the talks while the Israeli blockade on Gaza, imposed since March 2, remains in place.

ECL waste-to-wealth project gets into takers

Kolkata, May 18:

The Indian Army has shown keen interest to purchase paver blocks manufactured by the central public sector undertaking Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) to further boost the safety of its bunkers for its jawans at the hilly terrains of the north eastern and northern borders in the country.

About a year ago, ECL started manufacturing plastic paver blocks from its waste as part of its 'waste to wealth' initiative in the Bankola area of Durgapur sub-division. The plastic paver blocks will not only be used to construct bunkers but also the boundary walls. Satish Chandra Jha, chairman cum managing director (CMD) of ECL has confirmed that the paver blocks or bricks manufactured by the company in Sirpur plant have already received good response from the defence



sector and buoyed by its success it has now set up its second unit in Sirpur under Sagarm area in West Burdwan district. Talking to The Statesman, Nidadi Roy, director (technical) of Eastern Coalfields Limited has informed that the paver blocks manufactured by ECL by treating its plastic waste collected from its township daily is about five to seven times more strong than the conventional concrete paver blocks and is also lightweight.

"We are presently manufacturing about 50 to 100 paver blocks per day from the Bankola plant and the second plant has been set up in the Sirpur-Sagarm area. Most of the bricks are turned for internal civil work of ECL and the rest has been supplied to the defence sector. The demand is growing and likewise we will enhance our production capacities," he added. He further added that about one kilogram of plastic waste is required to convert

into pellets and then manufacture one piece of brick. The waste plastic materials are segregated and collected daily from the civic body dumping grounds of solid waste and sent to the plants for paver block manufacturing. To tackle the menace of single-use plastic waste, ECL has set up a solid waste management unit which has transformed single-use plastic into a valuable resource. The campaign was executed in key steps:

Efficient Waste Collection: ECL proactively collected solid waste from the Bankola Area Colony and collaborated with registered vendors to gather plastic waste from outside the leasehold area.

For segregation of waste ECL's dedicated team sorted various waste types including plastic, paper, and other discarded items ensuring

that each material is reused or recycled.

Innovative Plastic Waste Processing: The most noteworthy practice is transformation of plastic waste into useful end products. ECL's plastic waste handling unit in the Bankola area ingeniously converted these discarded plastics into paver blocks and bricks creating valuable resources out of what was once considered waste. It is assumed that the indigenously developed plastic paver blocks or bricks can be heavily utilized by the Indian Army to further strengthen its bunkers and walls in the northern border areas and north eastern border areas particularly which have large hilly terrains. After the recent clash with Pakistan, India's indigenously developed weapons and artillery have generated a good demand globally.

Swiss lawmakers condemn China on 30th anniversary of Panchen Lama's disappearance

Washington, May 18:

The Swiss parliamentarians from the Swiss Parliamentary Group for Tibet on Saturday strongly condemned the Chinese government on the 30th anniversary of the 11th Panchen Lama's disappearance. In a strongly-worded statement, the parliamentarians condemned the Chinese government for abducting the then six-year-old boy Gedun Choekyi Nyima and his family on May 17, 1995.

The Swiss parliamentarians called on the Swiss government, or the Federal Council, to urge China to immediately release Gedun Choekyi Nyima and his family. "The goals of the PRC are obvious: through these massive propaganda shows with the 'official' Panchen Lama, the communist authorities of the PRC want to demonstrate pseudo-religious freedom in Tibet," said Nicolas Walder, Co-President of the Parliamentary Group for Tibet. The parliamentarians appealed to the Chinese government to report on the whereabouts of Gedun Choekyi Nyima and his parents, refrain from interfering in the process of finding Buddhist reincarnations and guarantee Tibetans in Tibet their full cultural rights to freedom of religion and education in the Tibetan language. "The



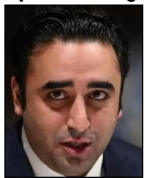
real goal of the PRC is to pave the way for the future appointment of the successor to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama according to the rules of the PRC by strictly controlling the reincarnations of Tibetan Buddhist personalities," Walder added. The lawmakers further urged their government to call on China to immediately end, in particular, the massive human rights violations against Tibetan Buddhists and their religious leaders, including violent disappearances, arrests, physical abuse, and prolonged detention of monks, nuns, and other persons without trial based on their religious beliefs.

'Rattled' Pakistan imitates India as Bilawal Bhutto to lead peace delegation abroad

Lahore, May 18:

In yet another move imitating India's actions, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has asked former Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari to present the country's "case for peace" on foreign capitals. In another example of imitating India after facing humiliation in a four-day military escalation from May 7 to 10 during Operation Sindoor, Pakistan has asked Bhutto to present its case on a global stage.

Announcing the same, Bhutto said on X that he was contacted by Shehbaz Sharif, who asked him to lead a delegation. "I was contacted earlier today by Prime Minister @CMShehbaz, who re-



quested that I lead a delegation to present Pakistan's case for peace on the international stage. I am honoured to accept this responsibility and remain committed to serving Pakistan in these challenging times," he posted on X. This comes as the Indian government have selected 7 MPs to lead respective delegations to assigned countries and present India's evidence and stance on the zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and the Pahalgarh terror attack, which led to Operation Sindoor. The seven Indian delegations comprising parliamentarians, political leaders and former diplomats, including Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, are set to travel to key capitals in North America, Europe and West Asia. However, India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar has already made it clear that India

gations to assigned countries and present India's evidence and stance on the zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and the Pahalgarh terror attack, which led to Operation Sindoor. The seven Indian delegations comprising parliamentarians, political leaders and former diplomats, including Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, are set to travel to key capitals in North America, Europe and West Asia. However, India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar has already made it clear that India

Vietnam: Sacred relics of Lord Buddha from India enshrined in Tam Chuc Pagoda

Vietnam, May 18:

The holy relics of Lord Buddha sent from India were enshrined at the famous Buddhist temple of Tam Chuc Pagoda in Ha Nam province of Vietnam on Saturday with ceremonial prayers and procession. The event saw participation of Chairman of Ha Nam Provincial People's Committee, Standing Vice President of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, former Vice President of Vietnam, Indian Ambassador to the country and venerable monks. A large number of people across Vietnam also gathered to pay respect to the sacred relics.

"Sacred Buddha Relics from India were enshrined today at the renowned Tam Chuc Pagoda, Ha Nam with due ceremonies, prayers and procession with the Chairman of Ha Nam Provincial People's Committee, Standing Vice President



of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, former Vice President of Vietnam, Indian Ambassador and venerable monks. The reverence of a large number of people across Vietnam for the Relics is very touching and

highly valued. The Embassy of India in Hanoi posted on X. The holy relics were brought from India on May 2 by an Indian delegation led by Union Minister of Parliamentary and Minority Affairs

Kiren Rijiju which also included Andhra Pradesh Minister Kandula Durgesh and senior monks and officials.

The holy relics will remain in Vietnam until May 21 as part of the UN Day of Vesak celebrations. The relics were earlier displayed at 'Thanh Tam Pagoda in Ho Chi Minh City, and then in Ba Den Mountain in Tay Ninh province and were in Quan Su Pagoda in Hanoi till Friday. Earlier this week, the Indian Embassy in Vietnam shared information on relics of Lord Buddha and upcoming projects with the local media. Terming it as a "national treasure" of India, the Embassy stated that the visit of Lord Buddha's relics to Vietnam is the result of the cooperation between both governments, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and other organisations.

Bangladesh: Army imposes indefinite ban on public gatherings in several areas of Dhaka

Dhaka, May 18:

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media division of the Bangladesh Armed Forces, on Saturday announced a ban on all kinds of gatherings, rallies, processions, demonstrations, and protests in several important areas of the Bangladesh's capital city Dhaka, effective from Sunday until further notice. The ISPR said the restriction has been imposed in the interest of ensuring smooth public movement and maintaining law and order. The prohibited areas in the capital city included Kachukhet Road, Bijoy Sarani to the Jahangir Gate via the Chief Advisor's office, BAF Shaheen College to Mohakhali flyover, Sainik Club intersection, Bhashantek, Matika, ECB Chatter, and surrounding areas. Bangladesh has recently been witnessing several protest movements against the interim government led



by Muhammad Yunus. On Saturday, several supporters of BNP leader Ishaque Hossain held a demonstration in front of the Nagar Bhaban, the main office of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), demanding that their leader should be considered for the mayoral post of DSCC. Later, the protestors backing Ishaque Hossain as Mayor looked

all the gates of Nagar Bhaban, effectively halting all service-related operations from the building. On Friday thousands of women thronged Dhaka, marching under 'Women's March for Solidarity' demanding that the interim government act against the threats that women and minority communities face in the country. They also alleged a misin-

formation campaign against the Women's Affairs Reform Commission, local media reported. The demonstrators said that women in Bangladesh continue to face daily harassment, exclusion from decision-making, and online abuse, aimed at deterring their political participation. Earlier on Thursday, several students of Jagannath University blocked Kakrail intersection in Dhaka, causing traffic congestion in surrounding areas. Additionally hundreds of students and some teachers, including the Vice-Chancellor, participated in a sit-in protest in Dhaka's Kakrail intersection, near Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus' official residence Jamuna, in order to press home their demands. Furthermore, students of seven colleges in Dhaka on Saturday also issued a 24-hour ultimatum demanding the issuance of a gazette notification for the formation.

RS Dy Chairman-led Indian delegation takes part in Pope Leo XIV's solemn ceremony

Vatican, May 18:

An official delegation of the government of India comprising Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh and Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Yanhango Patton on Sunday participated in the Solemn Ceremony marking the inauguration of the pontificate of Pope Leo XIV. Harivansh attended the inaugural mass of Pope Leo XIV at Saint Peter's Square in Vatican City in Rome.

"The participation of the Indian delegation in this important global ecclesiastical event reflects India's deep commitment to interfaith engagement, mutual respect among communities and diplomatic engagement with the Holy See," Rajya Sabha Secretariat said in a



statement. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had extended wishes to Pope Leo XIV and expressed India's commitment to continued dialogue and engagement with the Holy See to further shared values. He noted that Pope Leo XIV's leadership of the Catholic Church comes at a moment of profound significance in advancing the ideals of peace, harmony, solidarity and service. India remains committed to continued dialogue and engagement with the Holy See to further our shared values."

In a post on X, PM Modi stated, "I convey sincere felicitations and best wishes from the people of India to His Holiness Pope Leo XIV. His leadership of the Catholic Church comes at a moment of profound significance in advancing the ideals of peace, harmony, solidarity and service. India remains committed to continued dialogue and engagement with the Holy See to further our shared values."

Indian Grand Prix: Animesh Kujur excels in 100m, 200m sprints in second leg

New Delhi, May 18: Odisha's promising sprinter Animesh Kujur stamped his authority in the men's 100m and 200m events at the Indian Grand Prix 2 at LNCP Campus in Trivandrum on Saturday. The 21-year-old national record-holder in the men's 200m emerged fastest runner of the one-day event. He won the short dash in 10.31 seconds and the 200m in 20.55 seconds. Animesh, who broke the national record in men's 200m with a time of 20.40s at the Federation Cup last month, was followed by Vishal TK (21.06s) and Ragul Kumar G (21.10s). His season and personal best in the 100m dash is 10.27 seconds. His national record and season best in 200m is 20.40 seconds, which was clocked in April in Kochi. Lalu Prasad Bhoi



(10.56s) and Dondapati Mrutyam Ja (10.569) followed Animesh to the podium. Olympians Vithya Ramraj and Rajesh Ramesh won the women's 400m hurdles in 23.72s behind Sueha K, respectively. Vithya Ramraj, who equalled PT Usha's national record of 55.42s in the women's 400m hurdles at the Asian Games in 2023, won the event in 57.45s. She finished second over the 200m distance in 23.72s behind Sueha K, who won it in 23.59s. Vithya Ramraj is also part

of the Indian squad for the Asian Championships. Meanwhile, Rajesh Ramesh, part of the Indian quartet that clocked the 4x400m relay national record at the World Athletics Championships 2023 in Budapest, won the 400m run in 45.77s ahead of Jay Kumar (46.53s) and Rince Joseph (46.72s). Jay Kumar and Rince Joseph were part of the Indian team at the World Athletics Relays 2025. Two-time Olympian Subha Venkatesan won the women's 400m hurdles in 23.72s.

Men 100m (Race A): Animesh Kujur (Odisha) 10.31 seconds, Lalu Prasad Bhoi (Odisha) 10.57 seconds, Dondapati M (Odisha) 10.57 seconds. 200m (Race B): Mohammed H (Kerala) 10.83 seconds, Dhanush K (Karnataka) 10.90 seconds, Dheeraj K (Army) 10.98 seconds. 100m (Race C): Abhinash Sahu (Odisha) 10.74 seconds, Aryan Manoj (Karnataka) 10.79 seconds, Ajin R (Kerala) 10.83 seconds. 200m (Race D): Animesh Kujur (Odisha) 20.55 seconds, Vishal TK (NCOE Trivandrum) 21.06 seconds, Ragul Kumar G (Tamil Nadu) 21.10 seconds. 200m (Race C): Lalu Prasad Bhoi (Odisha) 21.23 seconds, Dharmveer Choudhary (NCOE Trivandrum) 21.32 seconds, Mohit Kumar (NCOE Trivandrum) 21.41 seconds. 200m (Race B): Abhay Singh (Madhya Pradesh) 21.43 seconds, Sam Vasanth S (Tamil Nadu) 21.73 seconds, Aryan Jagdish K (Maharashtra) 21.80 seconds.

BCB grants Mustafizur short-term NOC to play IPL for Delhi Capitals

New Delhi, May 18: The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has granted a No-Objection Certificate (NOC) allowing pacer Mustafizur Rahman to play for the IPL franchise Delhi Capitals between 18 and 24 May, 2025. This decision comes after Rahman fulfils his national duty in the first T20 International against the UAE on 17 May in Sharjah. The 29-year-old left-arm pacer was signed as a replacement for Australian batter Jake Fraser-McGurk. Rahman's availability is limited to the remaining league games, as he is expected to rejoin Bangladesh for their five-match T20 series against Pakistan starting 25 May in Faisalabad. Delhi Capitals, aiming for a playoff spot, have been impacted by foreign players withdrawing amid recent geopolitical tensions.



Rahman's brief participation brings much-needed reinforcement to their pace attack during a crucial stage of the IPL. The Bangladesh Cricket Board confirmed in an official statement that Mustafizur Rahman will be available to play in the IPL only from 18 to 24 May. This limited NOC period aligns with his national commitments, ensuring he can represent Bangladesh in their upcoming international fixtures. "As per the decision of BCB Cricket Operations, Mustafizur Rahman has been granted the NOC to participate in IPL 2025 during this period," the BCB said. National duty comes first. Rahman is currently in the UAE, where Bangladesh will face the host nation in two T20 Internationals on 17 and 19 May. Afterwards, Bangladesh will tour Pakistan for a five-match T20 series.

IPL 2025: New Zealand's Will O'Rourke replace Mayank Yadav in LSG squad



New Delhi, May 18: Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) have suffered a major blow with speedster Mayank Yadav once again sidelined due to a recurring back injury. The young pacer has been ruled out of the remainder of IPL 2025, prompting the franchise to bring in New Zealand's Will O'Rourke as his replacement for a fee of ₹2 crore.

"Yadav sustained a back injury and is ruled out for the remainder of the season," confirmed the IPL in a press release. O'Rourke, who made his T20I debut for New Zealand against Pakistan in 2024, will make his maiden appearance in the Indian Premier League. The BCCI's Centre of Excellence (COE), formerly known as the National Cricket Academy (NCA), is facing criticism following Mayank's second injury setback in just over a year. Once considered India's fastest bowler in the making, the 22-year-old's rehabilitation process and return to professional cricket are now being questioned by experts in the field. Mayank was one of three players retained by LSG ahead of the IPL 2025 mega auction. Returning to action after a six-month rehab spell, he featured in just two matches—against Mumbai Indians and Punjab Kings—before IPL 2025 was paused due to India-Pakistan geopolitical tensions. In those games, Mayank gave away 100 runs across eight overs and managed to pick up two wickets.

Formula 1: Piastri pips Verstappen for pole in drama-filled Emilia-Romagna GP Qualifying

New Delhi, May 18: McLaren's Oscar Piastri delivered a stunning lap in the dying moments of Qualifying to clinch pole position for the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix 2025 here on Saturday. The Australian upstaged Red Bull's reigning World Champion Max Verstappen and Mercedes' George Russell in a chaotic and incident-packed session. Verstappen looked set to continue his dominant run after leading the initial Q3 laps, but Piastri produced a blistering 1:14.670s on his final run, edging out the Dutchman by just three hundredths of a second. George Russell impressed by taking third, despite opting for medium tyres rather than the grippier softs for his final attempt. Lando Norris cos only managed fourth in the other McLaren, while Aston



Martin's Fernando Alonso rounded out the top five. There were surprises during the field, with Williams' Carlos Sainz and Alex Albon shining in sixth and seventh. Lance Stroll, Racing Bulls rookie Isack Hadjar, and Alpine's Pierre Gasly completed the top 10. It was a qualifying session to forget for Ferrari at their home race. Both Charles

Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton, who reported persistent brake issues during practice, failed to make it to Q3 and will start 11th and 12th. Hometown favourite Kimi Antonelli couldn't

match teammate Russell and was 13th. Alpine's Franco Colapinto advanced to Q2 on pace but was sidelined after a heavy crash in Q1, which brought out red flags and left his team with overnight repairs to deal with. Haas endured a difficult day as Esteban Ocon and rookie Ollie Bearman both exited in Q1. Bearman's best lap came just seconds too late following Colapinto's crash. The session's biggest scare came from Yuki Tsunoda, who suffered a high-speed crash and barrel roll early in Q1. Thankfully, he escaped unscathed, though his Red Bull sustained significant damage. All eyes now turn to Sunday, with Piastri leading the grid into what promises to be a thrilling race at Imola.

India A squad for ENG tour: Easwaran named captain; Nair, Kishan return

New Delhi, May 18: The BCCI on Friday evening announced the official India A squad which will be travelling to England to face England Lions in the Test series starting May 30. Abhimanyu Easwaran has been named the captaincy role for the team, while players like India's regular Test opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and out-of-favour players like Karun Nair and Ishan Kishan have also been named as part of the squad. Apart from them the other big names in the squad includes Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shardul Thakur, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Khaled Ahmed and Sarfaraz Khan. A squad for England:



Abhimanyu Easwaran (C), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Karun Nair, Dhruv Jurel (VC) (WK), Nitish Kumar Reddy, Shardul Thakur, Ishan Kishan (WK), Manav Suthar, Tanush Kotian, Mukesh Kumar, Akash Deep, Harshit Rana, Anshul Kamboj, Khaled Ahmed, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Sarfaraz Khan, Tushar Deshpande, Harsh Dubey. Window of opportunity for players. Most of the players in India A squad barring Nitish Kumar Reddy and Yashasvi Jaiswal are unlikely names that could have been considered by BCCI for down under Test series vs

England. However the impromptu Test retirement of two of the biggest names of Indian cricket cricket, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli has opened the window of opportunity for younger players to prove their skill and finally get a chance to be a regular member of India's red ball team. The tour with India A will for sure make a strong case for them if they can play well in the home conditions of English wicket, a weakness the Indian team just doesn't seem to be able to conquer. India A will kick off their England tour with a two-match four-day series against the England Lions, starting May 30 in Canterbury. The second game will be held in Northampton from June 6, with senior players like Shubman Gill joining. An intra-squad match with the senior India team is set for June 13-16 in Beckenham, serving as a key warm-up ahead of the first Test in Leeds on June 20.

IPL impact on selection. The ongoing IPL 2025 season was supposed to end by May 25 as per the initial schedule. However an unwanted 10 days break in the tournament has delayed the final date from May 25 to June 3. Which means many of the players will still be playing in IPL 2025 playoffs hence BCCI got themselves

'Asli fans MS Dhoni ke hain, baaki sab paid': Harbhajan Singh stirs debate

New Delhi, May 18: Former cricketer Harbhajan Singh stirred debate with comments that many interpreted as a subtle dig at Virat Kohli's fanbase. During a recent chat show on JioStar, Harbhajan remarked, "Kitna bacha hua hai aur jab tak dum hai, khelo bhai. Meri team hoti to shayad main kuch aur decision leta. (Whatever time is left, play as long as you can. If it were my team, I might have taken a different decision.)" He went on to praise Dhoni's fanbase, saying, "Seedhi si baat hai, fan to chahenge kyunki unke fan jo hain. Mujhe lagta hai ki sabse zyada asal wale fan unhe hee hain (Chennai Super Kings). Baki to ye bane



banaye hain, jo aajkal social media par hain. Aadhe to paid hee chalte hain par inke fan asal mein fan hain. Baki jo number sap dekhte ho, un par baad mein baith kar charcha karengi. (Simply put, fans will obviously want him to play because they are his fans. I believe Dhoni has the most genuine fanbase. The rest seem manufactured; nowadays, half of social media is paid. His fans are real. As for the numbers you see elsewhere, we can discuss that later.)" He added, "MS Dhoni iss baar dekhein to achha khele hain, theek thaak khaye (MS Dhoni has played well this season - decent, if not exceptional)."

IPL 2025: Punjab Kings beat Rajasthan Royals by 10 runs, inch closer to sealing play-off spot

Jaipur, May 18: Nehal Wadhwa and Shashank Singh struck half-centuries, while left-arm spinner Harpreet Brar took three wickets as Punjab Kings defeated Rajasthan Royals by 10 runs to enhance their chances of making the IPL playoffs, here Sunday. Thanks to Wadhwa's 37-ball 70, Shashank's unbeaten 59 and a valuable 30 by skipper Shreyas Iyer, PBKS scored a competitive 219 for 5. RR openers Yashasvi Jaiswal (50) and Vaibhav Suryavanshi (40) gave the home side a fiery start, scoring 76 runs in 4.5 overs. But once Suryavanshi was



dismissed by Brar (3/22) in the fifth over, wickets started tumbling at regular intervals and RR could managed 209 for 7 in the end. Dhruv Jurel (53 off 31 balls) was the highest run-getter for RR. PBKS pacer Azmatullah Omarzai (2/44) too played

New Delhi, May 18: Home favourite Jasmine Paolini made history at the Internazionali BNL d'Italia, ensuring that for the first time in four decades, the Italian International has an Italian champion in women's singles here on Saturday. Paolini thrilled the partisan crowd in Rome as the No. 6 seed Paolini defeated No. 4 seed Coco Gauff of the United States 6-4, 6-2 in the final at Campo Centrale to claim a historic title. Paolini is the first woman to prevail at her country's biggest event, overtaking her compatriot Francesca Schiavone, who won the title when the event was



held in Taranto, meaning Paolini was the first woman to win the Internazionali BNL d'Italia title in her national capital of Rome during the Open Era (since 1968). She thus became the third Italian

woman in the Open Era to reach the Rome final after coming from 4-1 down in the first set, saving two set points, to defeat Peyton Stearns 7-5, 6-1 in 1 hour and 39 minutes. In the summit clash between two Top-5 players, Paolini needed just 1 hour and 29 minutes to best Gauff and pick up her second career WTA 1000 title, following her triumph in Dubai in 2024. This is Paolini's third WTA singles title overall—and her first on clay. Gauff won their first two career matches over each other in Rome during the Open Era and were on hard court, and Paolini has taken control of their rivalry on clay. Paolini

beat Gauff for the first time last month in Stuttgart on indoor clay, and now she has backed up that win on the dirt in Rome, levelling their overall head-to-head at 2-2. Paolini is now projected to return to her career-high ranking of World No. 4 on Monday, just in time for a likely Top 4 placement in the Roland Garros seedings. Gauff, meanwhile, will still rise back to her career-high ranking of No. 2 on Monday. Paolini is not done yet this fortnight, either. She will go for the career-high ranking of No. 1 on Sunday when she and Sara Errani attempt to defend their doubles title in Sunday's doubles final.

DDMA Pulwama conducts CBP on Disaster preparedness & response

PULWAMA, MAY 18: District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Pulwama, in collaboration with the Civil Defence and SDRF component Pulwama/Awantipora, successfully conducted Capacity Building Programmes (CBP) on Disaster Preparedness and Response at Town Halls of Pulwama and Awantipora.

The programmes aimed to enhance the knowledge and preparedness of attendees in handling natural and man-made disasters. Comprehensive training and awareness sessions were conducted on key aspects viz. Disaster Pre-



paredness, Disaster Mitigation, Disaster Response, First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Techniques, and the effective utilisation of available resources during emergencies.

Participants received practical and theoretical insights into life-saving techniques and efficient response strategies, equipping them to act promptly and effectively in the event of a disaster.

Pathania On A Mission-Mode to Secure Drinking Water, Better Roads, Reliable Power & Irrigation facilities.

Udhampur, 18 May 2025 – Reaffirming that "water is life," Mr. Ranbir Singh Pathania, MLA Udhampur East, today conducted an extensive whirlwind tour of the constituency, holding public interaction programmes in multiple hamlets and town wards to gauge the ground-level status of essential services during the ongoing heatwave. Drinking Water: Emergency Measures Activated At a high-level review meeting convened at the District Headquarters, the MLA directed officers of the Jal Shakti Department to ensure round-the-clock availability of clean, potable water. Immediate repair, renovation & flushing of every non-functional hand pump district-wide. Seamless civil-mechanical coordination so that pumping



and distribution wings work in lockstep. Water-tanker deployment to habitations where groundwater depletion or technical faults have interrupted supply. "Come what may, no household should be left thirsting for safe drinking water," Mr. Pathania stressed. Roads & Buildings: Pothole-Free Push in Peak Working Season Reviewing the PWD (R&B) Division, the legislator designated the current

dry months as the prime working window: Pothole elimination and swift restoration of all damaged black-topped stretches. Upgradation of unmetalled link roads to all-weather metal standards under the PMGSY and other sectors. Close weekly monitoring to deliver 'Modi Sarkar' quality roads before monsoon onset. Irrigation & Flood Control: Har Khet Ko Pani for Paddy Season with sow-

ing weeks away, the MLA instructed the I&FC Department to: Desilt and repair canals, field channels and minors on war-footing. Guarantee designed discharge so that every paddy farmer receives adequate water. Power Supply: Quality & Continuity Taking note of peak-season demand, directions were issued to the Power Development Department for: Uninterrupted, quality electricity to domestic, agricultural and commercial consumers. Preventive maintenance of feeders and distribution transformers to avert downtime. Dedicated Multi-Department Helpline To strengthen real-time responsiveness, Shri Pathania also instructed every line department to establish dedicated helplines and control rooms. These hotlines will:

Provide a single-window channel for citizens to lodge complaints or request emergency assistance. Facilitate inter-departmental coordination, ensuring that issues spanning water, power, roads or irrigation are routed to the correct agency without delay. Enable officials to capture, sift and analyse public feedback holistically, driving evidence-based decision-making and ruthless follow-through on pending grievances. Senior officers from all line departments accompanied the inspection. Local residents lauded Shri Pathania's out-of-box, hands-on governance, expressing confidence that the multi-pronged push will cushion citizens against heat-wave hardships and catalyse long-term infrastructure gains.

Natrang presented a Hindi play 'Poorav Aur Paschim'

Jammu 18-05-2025: Natrang presented a Hindi play 'Poorav Aur Paschim' written by famous film comedian L.S. Johar and directed by Neeraj Kant in Natrang's weekly theatre series, Sunday Theatre. The situational comedy and its appropriate presentation by the artists generated ample laughter amongst the audience. The play 'Poorav Aur Paschim' showcased the contrast of beliefs between the east and the west world. Lala Ram Bhargose and his wife are highly superstitious and on the contrary their married son and daughters believe in the reasoning, logic and



scientific way of leading the life. A firm believer of horoscopes, stars and numbers, Ram Bhargose is always surrounded by the palmists, fortune tellers and priests. Confusion starts in the family when a horoscope reader

Bhargose blocks all east-entries to the house and starts suspecting even his family members offering him anything in white. This behavior of his creates an unhealthy environment in the family and life becomes hell for everyone. Despite all efforts of convincing him with scientific reasons and logics, he is not ready to buy anyone's arguments in the family. One after the other incident creates high tension and Ram Bhargose goes to the extent of beating and thrashing his family members. This funny drama attains anti-climax when horoscope reader visits the

family again apologizing for telling him the fortune of someone else as he was mistaken by assessing some other date of birth. Finally the fortune teller is treated with a big thrash by all the family members of Ram Bhargose. Natrang actors who performed in the play included Aryan Sharma, Adaksh Bagal, Perna Sharma, Kartik Kumar and Simran Bhagat. The lights of the play were executed by Neeraj Kant. The play was coordinated by Mohd. Yaseen and the presentations were done by Amit Rana.

All India Confederation of SC/ST/OBC Organisations organised a press conference to welcome the new CJI, also raised a few expectations

Jammu, 18.05.25: All India Confederation of SC/ST/OBC Organisations, led by State President, RK Kalsotra, and joined by Er B L Bhardwaj, Banshi Lal Choudhary, Amir-ud-din Kasana, Dr Ramesh Kaith, Prabhdayal, Ravi Panghi, Shiv Kumar Karayal, Ravi Pushey, organised a press conference today at their office to welcome the newly appointed Chief Justice of India, Justice Hrishikesh Dhanuka. Kalsotra said that the confederation had previously met the Hon'ble Chief Justice of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on 30th Oct, 2024 and highlighted the various issues like implementation of Reservation in Promotions, installation of a bust of Dr BR Ambedkar to highlight his achievements, strict implementation of SC/ST Atrocities Act, a re-



also reflect the diversity and inclusive spirit of our Constitution. Kalsotra said that the confederation had previously met the Hon'ble Chief Justice of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on 30th Oct, 2024 and highlighted the various issues like implementation of Reservation in Promotions, installation of a bust of Dr BR Ambedkar to highlight his achievements, strict implementation of SC/ST Atrocities Act, a re-

vision in the collegium system for appointment of judges, representation of SC/ST/OBC, minorities & women's in the judicial system. All the issues raised by the confederation were also addressed by Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice and he had recommended them to the Hon'ble Chief Justice of High Court J&K as well as the Chief Secretary of J&K. Kalsotra said that they hope and believe

DDMA conducts disaster preparedness training programme at Shopian

SHOPIAN, MAY 18: In a proactive step towards strengthening disaster preparedness and community safety, District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Shopian today conducted a training programme on Disaster preparedness and emergency response at Government Degree College (GDC) Shopian. Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz was the chief guest on the occasion. The training programme witnessed the participation of NCC/ NSS volunteers, student volunteers from GDC and school education, police and other officials, besides civil society members Experts from SDRF, Fire & Emergency Services, Health Services and Police conducted live



demonstrations on first aid & triage, fire-fighting techniques, search and rescue operations, and handling of disaster situations like accidents and other disasters. They highlighted the role and responsibilities of NCC/ NSS Cadets and students in supplementing the efforts during emergencies. Their timely response and

coordinated efforts save precious lives and help maintain order in the aftermath of calamities, it was emphasised. Principal, Government Degree College Shopian, Prof. Mohammad Shafiq, Chief Medical Officer and other senior officers from Police and Revenue Departments were present.

DDC Vidya Motton, Adv Devraj lead mega Tiranga Rally to celebrate success of operation Sindoor

RS Pura: A mega Tiranga rally was organized by BJP DDC member and senior BJP leader Advocate Devraj Sharma, along with hundreds of others, to celebrate the successful completion of Operation Sindoor. The mega Tiranga rally commenced at Miran Sahib, generating significant enthusiasm and response as it passed through the main bazaar. The rally starting from Miran Sahib set the stage for a vibrant display of patriotism. The rally traversed the main bazaar, drawing huge crowds and showcasing national pride. The rally concluded back at Miran Sahib, marking the end of a successful event. The rally's route and culmination point highlighted the community's spirit and solidarity with the security forces. The rally aimed to praise the



security forces for their successful operation targeting terrorist camps in Pakistan and demonstrate national pride and solidarity with the security forces. Operation Sindoor was notable for its effective collaboration among security forces, demonstrating expertise in targeting and neutralizing terrorist threats and forcing Pakistan to seek a ceasefire. The rally was a show of support for the security forces and a celebration of their bravery and professional-

ism. Hundreds of people participated in the rally, showcasing their support for the security forces. The rally featured the national flag, symbolizing national pride and unity. The event demonstrated solidarity with the security forces and their efforts to protect the nation. The Tiranga rally was a resounding success, highlighting the importance of national security and the need for continued support for the security forces. The participants of the Tiranga

rally expressed their admiration for the valor and bravery of the security forces, deep appreciation for those who have sacrificed their lives defending the motherland. The rally paid tributes to the families of the martyrs, acknowledging their sacrifice and expressing support and unity with the families who have lost loved ones in the line of duty. This gesture reflects the nation's appreciation for the sacrifices made by its security forces and their families. BJP DDC member and senior BJP leader Advocate Devraj Sharma express gratitude and appreciation for the bravery and professionalism of the security forces, emphasizing the importance of national security and the need for continued efforts to protect the country and fostering a sense of unity and

patriotism among citizens. Prominent among those who participated in Tiranga rally included Ravinder Sharma, Ex Panch, Kuldeep Sharma, Ex Madal Pradhan, Promod Sharma, Retd Headmaster, Jyoti Sharma, social activist, Kripal Chaudhary, social activist Pawan Kumar, Ex Panch, Pt Yashpal Raina, social activist Vijay Raina, social activist Surinder Choudhary, Ex Naib Sarpanch, Des Raj, social activist Priyansh Sharma, Micky, Roshan Malhotra, social activist Dayapaul, Ex Sarpanch, Sham Lal Bhagat, Ex Panch, Retd Sub Ashok Sharma, Ex Naib Sarpanch, Retd Capt Purnakrish, Retd Sr Lect Jatinder Singh, Retd Principal Subash Choudhary, Dara Singh, social activist Retd Principal Gurcharan Singh, Retd ZEO GL Raina.

BJP trying to take political mileage out of forces' bravery: Karra

Jammu, May 18, 2025: Congress today hit out BJP for its Cheap attempt to take political mileage of the operation 'Sindoor' which belonged to armed forces & not BJP and is a symbol of bravery of our armed forces. He said BJP leaders mis-set is reflected in the highly hateful statements by the BJP minister Vijay Shah in Madhya Pradesh and another by the Deputy Chief Minister of MP Jagdish Devda causing insult to armed forces who belong to nation and not to one political party.

Addressing a detailed Press conference at PCC HQ Jammu today, giving account of the situation all along border Districts, after extensive tour of Poonch, Rajouri, Jammu, Samba

borders, jkpc Chief Tariq Hameed Karra said that people of border districts have suffered immense damage while Poonch was worst affected in terms of human loss. He said all along the LOC and borders right from Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Rajouri and Poonch upto Baramulla 'Uri, Kupwara people have suffered in terms of damages to houses, live stock besides human loss or injuries.

Flanked by Working President Shri Raman Bhalla, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma, AICC Secretary Neeraj kundan, Incharge HQ Ved Mahajan Ex MLC & Th Balbir Singh Ex MLA, Karra said that on the first available opportunity, We had an extensive tour of Poonch, Rajouri, Borders of

Jammu, Samba to share the grief and pain of victims of Pakistan shelling. Poonch has been the worst target where we visited Temples, Gurudwaras and mosques where shelling caused damages. We tried to reach out to each and every family in grief and shock, he added.

He said this time Pakistan targeted civilian population which is highly condemnable and reflected inhuman face of Pakistan. Seeking Martyr status to all those killed for the sake of nation including those killed in Pehalgam and civilians killed in Pakistan shelling. Taking dig at BJP, he said this government even denied martyr status to Agniveers in the country. Those who laid down their life for the nation, should be



given status of martyr. Party shall take up with the government, the demand for gallantry award to JKAS officer Dr R K Thapa. Karra said that Prime Minister should announce a comprehensive special package for the border areas including large scale, Bunkers, Community bunkers, in all areas including thick populated townships which are under target in the new era.

He said It was noticed that bunkers are set up on pick and use basis as some areas in Zero line are without bunkers and shelter to people in shelling. Demanding immediate disbursement of Compensation to affected people, he said an Interim relief be immediately provided to those whose houses are damaged and not worth living, lie.

Complete compensation is assessed with engineering wing also in the teams at the earliest. He said Special Central package should include relief and rehabilitation and Special recruitment drive in border areas. Apart from this, people in camps demanded Weapons for self defense in border areas to fight infiltration/ border

crossings. Terming, Pehalgam carnage as a crime against humanity and most barbaric but the silver lining was the spirit of humanity & Hindu Muslim unity displayed by the people immediately after the carnage. The people in entire country stood together against terrorism and Pakistan giving full support to the government and forces to adopt the strong required course to give befitting response.

Our leadership Shri Malikanar Kharge and Shri Rahul Gandhi and entire opposition fully stood behind the nation without asking questions on the Pehalgam happening but now the questions are there, for which Congress has demanded all party meet and

special parliamentary session to take the 140 cr countymen into confidence about the details of entire happenings.

How the truce was announced by a third country and what were the circumstances, as it is against the stated policy and stand of nation on Kashmir throughout especially after the 'Shimla Agreement' by Smt. Indira Gandhi after 1971 war.

Referring to Killing of Religious teacher in Poonch, he lauded a BJP former legislator who was first to be called to shift the injured but regretted a section of media labeled him a terrorist without verifying & should be ashamed of labeling a martyr as Terrorist.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu visits shelling hit areas in Sub Division Mendhar

POONCH, MAY 18: Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar today conducted an extensive visit to Sub Division Mendhar to take stock of the situation in areas affected by recent unprovoked cross border shelling. The visit was aimed to assess the damage and ensure timely support to the affected families.

He was accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal and other senior officers of the district administration. During the visit, the Divisional Commissioner inspected several impacted locations and interacted with residents to personally understand their grievances and the extent of losses incurred.

He also visited the residence of the family where a woman lost her life due to the shelling. The Divisional Commissioner expressed deep condolences to the bereaved family and assured them of full support from the administration. He conveyed heartfelt sympathies to all those who have suffered due to the cross border shelling.



The Divisional Commissioner issued directions to the district administration for a comprehensive and time bound assessment of the losses to life, property, and livestock. He emphasized the need for immediate relief and compensation measures to alleviate the suffering of the affected people. He reiterated the administration's commitment to standing with the people in this hour of grief and urged the officials on ground to continue working with compassion and urgency to restore normalcy.

Sakeena Itoo conducts extensive tour of DH Pora Constituency

Engages with locals, assesses public issues, development needs



KULGAM, MAY 18: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, conducted an extensive tour of several areas of Damhal Hanjipora (DH Pora) Constituency and had on the spot assessment of public issues and development needs in these areas. During the tour, Sakeena visited several villages and

hamlets and held interaction with the local residents, Mohalla community members and representatives. The Minister, during the interactions, attentively listened to the concerns of people regarding healthcare, road connectivity, power supply, water supply and other day to day issues requiring urgent attention of the government.

Addressing the locals at various locations, Sakeena highlighted that the present government is formed by the vote and trust of people and therefore the Ministers are continuously on the ground to listen to the people's issues, reflecting commitment of Omar Abdullah led government to grassroots governance. She added that the public service is core objective of the present government. "Presence and responsiveness to public issues and concerns is main motto of this government," Sakeena stated. While responding to the issues and grievances of local populace, Sakeena assured them that these would be addressed promptly.

Over 42 unexploded shells from recent cross-border artillery firing destroyed in Poonch

JAMMU: Security forces on Sunday destroyed 42 unexploded shells in different forward locations near the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir in a major operation to clear civilian areas following a military confrontation between India and Pakistan, officials said. Indian Army, in close coordination with local police authorities, successfully conducted a controlled operation for the safe destruction of 42 unexploded ordnance in the border areas of Jhullas, Satri, Dharati and Salani, a defence spokesperson said. He said these shells, remnants of recent cross-border shelling, posed a serious threat to the lives and safety of local residents. The operation was carried out with utmost precision, adhering to all standard safety protocols to prevent any risk to civilian life or property, the spokesperson said. He said the bomb disposal teams from the Indian Army, in coordination with police, ensured the complete neutralisation of all explosive remnants. This proactive effort reflects the organisation's continued commitment to safeguarding civilian populations in conflict-affected zones and restoring a sense of normalcy in vulnerable border communities, he said. On May 7, India destroyed nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) under its Operation Sindoore. Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10.

Satish Sharma conducts extensive tour of Kakeeth, Battal, Kharah, Thakar, Jogwan areas of Jammu

Assesses ongoing return, rehabilitation process of displaced border residents

Also distributes Relief kits among affected families

JAMMU, MAY 18: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, today conducted an extensive tour of Kakeeth, Battal, Kharah, Thakar, and Jogwan areas to assess the ongoing return and rehabilitation process of displaced border residents. During the visit, Minister Sharma personally interacted with several families who have recently started returning to their homes after being displaced due to recent disturbances. He assured the residents of the government's full support in ensuring a smooth and dignified return. As part of the government's immediate relief measures, around 50 essential ration and relief kits, facilitated in collaboration with a supporting NGO (Aakashya Patra) were distributed among the affected households. These kits include food supplies and other daily-use necessities aimed at supporting families during the transition period. Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the visit, Minister Sharma said, "Omar Abdullah government is fully committed to the rehabilitation and welfare of every affected citizen. We are taking all necessary steps to ensure that no family is

left behind and that their return to normal life is facilitated with dignity and compassion." He further emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts between government departments, local administration and civil society organizations to ensure sustainable rehabilitation and long-term development of the affected regions. The Minister also directed local officials to maintain regular communication with the returning families and monitor the progress of infrastructure restoration, health care availability and other essential services.

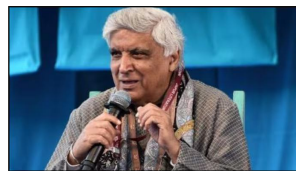
Students from Indra Priyadarshini Memorial High School, Krimchi actively participated in a drawing competition centered on heritage themes. A colourful cultural programme featuring local music and dance added vibrancy to the occasion. The event was organized under the guidance of Dr. Piyush Bhatt and supported by the dedicated staff of ASI, Srinagar Circle.

If choice is between Pakistan and hell, I would prefer hell: Javed Akhtar

New Delhi, May 18: Noted lyricist and screenwriter Javed Akhtar, who is often targeted for his views on patriotism and religion, says that if there comes a time he has to choose between Pakistan and hell, he would prefer to go to hell. Akhtar, 80, was speaking at Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut's book launch on Saturday night in

Mumbai. At the event, the lyricist - who identifies himself as an atheist - said extremists from both India and Pakistan shower abuses on him daily. "Some day, I'll show you my Twitter (now X) and WhatsApp. I am abused by both sides. I'm not thankful, so I'll say some people appreciate what I say, encourage me.

But it's true that extremists from both here and there abuse me. This is right. If one of them stops abusing me, I'll be a matter of concern for me." One side says "You are a kaafir (non-believer) and will go to hell. The other side says, 'Jihadi, go to Pakistan'. If the choice is between Pakistan and hell, I would prefer to go to hell," Akhtar said



amid a round of applause from the audience. The award-winning writer further said it's important to have citizens not subscribing to the ideology of any political party. "That way they can say what they feel is right and what is wrong. There should be no party loyalty. All parties are ours and yet no party is ours. I'm also one of those

citizens. If you speak from one side, you'll make the other side unhappy. But if you speak out from different points of view, you make many more people unhappy," he added. Akhtar, who came to Mumbai at the age of 19, credited the city and Maharashtra for all his achievements. In his last 30 years of living in Mumbai, the veteran

poet said he was given police protection four times on threat perception, out of which three times because of "mullas." Last month, Akhtar said in an interview with a news agency there is hardly "any warmth today" in India-Pakistan cultural ties, the veteran screenwriter-poet noted while saying that this is not the time to even.

DC Rajouri visits border villages; Assures assistance to shelling-affected families

RAJOURI, MAY 18: In a compassionate outreach to the border residents, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma visited shelling hit villages of Lam, Laroka, and Qila Darhal to assess the ground situation and interacted with the affected families.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner took first-hand stock of the damage caused to residential properties and other assets. While expressing solidarity with the affected persons, he assured them that the District Administration stands firmly with them in this hour of need. He directed the field functionaries to expedite the assessment of damages to private property so that relief and compensation can be provided to the affected as



per the norms. "The safety and well-being of border residents is our top priority. All possible support will be provided to the affected families," the DC assured. Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera, Priyam Lal Thapa, along with officers from Revenue, Police, and other concerned

departments, accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the visit. The Deputy Commissioner also reiterated the commitment of the administration to maintain continuous coordination with the security forces and other stakeholders to ensure the safety and timely support to the border population.

Kishtwar hosts 52nd State-Level Science Exhibition & National Science Seminar 2025

KISHTWAR, MAY 18: District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) Kishtwar successfully hosted the 52nd Rajya Satriya Bal Vaigyanik Pradarshani and Rashtriya Bal Vaigyanik Pradarshani 2025 alongside a one-day seminar on "Millets for Health and Sustainable Planet."

The event witnessed vibrant participation from over 50 schools of the district, showcasing the theme "Science and Technology for a Sustainable Future" through seven innovative sub-themes.



The event was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan, who extended his best wishes to the young participants. A cultural welcome by students and faculty members marked the opening, setting an enthusiastic tone for the day-long activities. The exhibition featured student-led scientific exhibits under sub-themes including Food, Health and Hygiene, Transport and Communication, Natural Farming, Dis-

aster Management, Mathematical Modelling and Computational Thinking, Waste Management and Resource Management. A panel of esteemed judges - Sr. Lecturers Ramesh Kumar, Apram Sharma, Rashid Hamid Kamal, Ali Imran, and Baber Amin - evaluated the displays based on creativity, scientific approach, and practical relevance. In the seminar on "Millets for Health and Sustainable Planet" six students from different schools presented well-researched papers, with a Class 12 student from GHSS Girls Kishtwar winning first position, advancing to the divisional level competition at SCERT Jammu.

The seminar was effectively conducted by Lecturer Shameema Banoo and her team, with full coordination by Monika Gupta, Teacher DIET Kishtwar.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner Pawan Kotwal graced the concluding session and felicitated all the winners. He lauded the creative thinking and scientific temper displayed by the students and emphasized the critical role of science in shaping a sustainable future. Seven top-performing students from across secondary and senior secondary schools - including remote subdivisions like Paddar - secured first positions and were awarded trophies and certificates. They will now represent District Kishtwar at the divisional level. Participants securing second and third positions were also felicitated. District Nodal Officer RS-BVP 2025, Riaz Ahmed Gori, along with Zonal Nodal Officers and the DIET Kishtwar team, was commended for meticulous planning and successful execution of the event.

Editor, Publisher, Printer & Owner: Rajni Sharma, Published at: Sec-2, Channi Himmat, Jammu

Early Times Printing Press Samadhian Road, Jammu

E-Mail: editor.northinnews@gmail.com

All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Jammu City

