

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper

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**Happy didn't get typecast doing only special songs in films: Tamannaah Bhatia**



**Rahul accuses govt of 'misusing' governors to 'obstruct' elected state govts**



**Japan minister quits after saying he doesn't buy rice, gets it "for free"**

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## BRIEFLY

### South Kashmir residents urge govt to restore Anantnag-Lal Chowk SRTC bus service

ANANTNAG, May 21 (Agencies): Residents of Anantnag and adjoining areas of South Kashmir have appealed to the government for the immediate restoration of the direct State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC) bus service from Anantnag to Lal Chowk, Srinagar.

The curtailment of the service, now terminating at Pantha Chowk, has caused immense inconvenience to commuters especially patients, students, women, and employees who are now forced to change vehicles to reach the city center. A group of locals told news agency JKNS that the direct bus route was a reliable, affordable, and safe travel option. The disruption has led to longer travel time, increased fares, and daily difficulties, particularly for elderly patients who require frequent visits to Srinagar hospitals. Students face delays in reaching colleges and universities, while women have expressed serious safety and comfort concerns over switching to overcrowded local cabs.

Daily wage earners and employees said that their productivity has taken a hit due to additional commute time and expenses. "We are only asking for the restoration of a basic transport facility," said a commuter.

We appeal to J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Transport Minister Satish Sharma for the immediate restoration of the direct State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC) bus service from Anantnag to Lal Chowk, Srinagar.

Responding to the issue, J&K Transport Minister Satish Sharma told JKNS, "There is some issue with regard to SRTC buses and the traffic department. Have called the meeting with all concerned, will sort out the matter very soon." He added that a detailed discussion with SRTC's General Manager and traffic officials will be held today to resolve the matter without further delay.

### Leh admin directs meat shops to install black glass panels within 15 days

LEH, May 21 (Agencies): The Executive Officer, Municipal Committee, Leh has issued a public order directing all meat shops operating within its jurisdiction to install black/tinted glass panels or similar opaque partitions at the front

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## LG Sinha visits Poonch shelling victims, Promises Jobs, Bunkers, and Rehabilitation Support

### Top News Report

POONCH, May 21: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday visited victims' families who were affected by recent shelling along the Pakistan border in Poonch, offering condolences and pledging comprehensive support to those impacted.

Addressing the victims' families, LG Sinha acknowledged the irreplaceable loss of life but assured that maximum financial assistance has been provided to the



next of kin. He further informed that injured individuals are receiving timely treatment and are on the path to recovery. "While no compensation can replace the

loss of life, we have provided maximum financial assistance to the families of the deceased and support to the injured, who are thankfully recovering...

We've also reviewed the need for bunkers and other security infrastructure—this will be prioritised under security-related funding," he said. Highlighting the damage caused, the LG noted, "Many homes and businesses have been destroyed. The administration will prepare a comprehensive rehabilitation plan to restore normalcy."

Speaking on the recent escalation of violence, including the Pahalgam attack where 26 civilians lost their lives, Sinha praised the Indian

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## Rahul Gandhi and Kharge pay tribute to former PM Rajiv Gandhi on his 34th death anniversary



NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge paid floral tribute to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 34th death anni

versary at Veer Bhumi, Delhi. Other Congress leaders, including Sachin Pilot, also paid tribute to the former PM at the memorial site.

In a post on X, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge called

the former PM "a great son of India" and highlighted the key decisions taken under his leadership such as lowering the voting age to 18, strengthening Panchayati Raj, spearheading the Telecom and IT revolution.

"Rajiv Gandhi — a great son of India, inspired hope among millions of Indians. His visionary and courageous interventions were instrumental in preparing India for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century. These include lowering the voting age to

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## FIR filed against BJP IT cell Chief, Journalist Arnab Goswami

BENGALURU, May 21 (Agencies): An FIR has been registered against BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya and Editor-in-Chief of Republic TV, Arnab Goswami for allegedly running false information, police said.

The case was registered at High Grounds police station on Tuesday, based on the complaint from the Indian Youth Congress's legal cell head Shrikant Swaroop B N against the duo under section 192 (wantonly giving provocation with an intent to cause riot) and 352 (Intentional insult to provoke breach of peace) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, they



said. Swaroop accused Malviya and Goswami of "masterminding a heinous and criminally motivated campaign to disseminate patently false information." He alleged that the accused have "maliciously propagated the fabricated claim" that the Istanbul Congress Centre in Turkey is the office of the

Indian National Congress (INC).

"This act was executed with clear and undeniable criminal intent to deceive the Indian public, defame a major political institution, manipulate nationalist sentiments, incite public unrest, and undermine national security and democratic integrity," he stated.

Swaroop further stated that the actions of Malviya and Goswami are set against the volatile backdrop of strained relations between India and Turkey, driven by the latter's perceived support for Pakistan.

"The actions of Malviya

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## Hajj flights to resume from May 25

SRINAGAR, May 21 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Hajj Committee Monday issued a revised schedule for the Hajj chartered flights, which are now set to resume from May 25, 2025. The revised schedule comes in continuation of the committee's earlier notification dated May 14, 2025.

According to the fresh notification, the flight

dates for several batches of pilgrims have been rescheduled.

Pilgrims originally scheduled to travel on flight SG-5107 dated May 7, 2025, will now depart on May 25, 2025; those booked on flight SG-5108 dated May 8, 2025, will now travel on May 27, 2025, and May 28, 2025, in two separate batches.

Flight SG-5109 dated

May 9, 2025, and SG-5110 dated May 10, 2025, have both been rescheduled to May 30, 2025.

Pilgrims on flights SG-5111 dated May 11, 2025, and SG-5112 dated May 12, 2025, will now depart on May 31, 2025.

Officials from the Hajj Committee said that a separate notification

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## ED conducts Multi-City raids in money laundering case

KOLKATA, May 21 (Agencies): The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted search operations in various cities, including Mumbai,

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## J&K Govt orders physical verification of stores in R&B department

JAMMU, May 21 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Public Works (R&B) Department has directed physical verification of all stores at the divisional level.

As per an order, Committees have been formed at the zonal level

with the Chief Accounts Officer as Chairman, and Executive Engineer and Assistant Accounts Officer as members.

These committees will verify store records, assess the condition of items, and recommend disposal of surplus, obsolete, or unservice-

able items within one month.

The process will be carried out under the supervision of the Chief Engineer, following GFR guidelines, and responsibility will be fixed in cases of loss due to negligence or fraud.

## Former MLA Amin Bhat rejoins Congress



ANANTNAG, May 21 (Agencies): Former MLA Devsar Muhammad Amin Bhat on Wednesday rejoined Congress party in presence of its top leadership here.

Bhat returned to the party during a function held at Dak Banglow here.

J&K Congress Com-

mittee president Tariq Hamid Karra and senior leaders Ghulam Ahmad Mir, Raman Bhalla, Ravinder Sharma and others were present on the occasion.

With this joining, the Congress has got a boost in the south Kashmir region where the National Conference swept the 2024 Lok Sabha as well as Assembly polls.

In the last Assembly polls, NC won 10 out of 16 seats in the region, while Congress and Peoples Democratic Party won two seats each.

The formation of the

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## J&K, Ladakh declared 'Hard Area' for IFS Officers under new AGMUT guidelines

JAMMU, May 21 (Agencies): The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has issued fresh guidelines for the transfer and posting of Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers under the Joint AGMUT Cadre.

As per the order dated September 5, 2024, the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh have now been

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# GupShup

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**TENTH DAY KRIYA**

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh Chuni Lal Bhat** S/o Late Damodhar Bhat originally R/o Kanipora, Sonawari Distt. Bandipora at present Srinagar Kmr.

The mourning will be held at Jammu at the residence of Avtar Krishan Bhat, Sharda Colony, Patoli Brahmana.

**Sh Chuni Lal Bhat**

**Tenth Day Kriya** will be held at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education on 26-5-2025 at 8.30 AM.

**GRIEF STRICKEN****Desha Bhat -Wife****Sumit Bhat -Son****Doora Dhar -Bhabi****Avtar Krishan Bhat & Girja Bhat -Brother & Bhabhi****R L Bhat & Dazy Bhat -Brother & Bhabhi****Samast Bhat & Raina Parivar****Cell:- 7006974366 9469334827 9958578555****10TH DAY KRIYA**

With profound grief we inform the sad demise of **Smt. Phoola Koul Wali** W/o Sh. Jai Krishan Wali originally from Checki-Raj-Wali, Vessu, Ananinagat present H.No 107, Lane 1A, Roop Nagar Enclave, Jammu on 13th May 2025.

The **10TH DAY KRIYA** will be performed at Muthi Ghat, near The Directorate of Education on 22nd May 2025.

The **ASSEMBLY** will be held at 8:30 am at the Muthi Ghat.

**IN GRIEF****Sh. Jai Krishan Wali - Husband****(Daughters-in-Law and Sons)****Smt. Rimple Bhan Wali and Sh. Kamal Wali****Smt. Basanti Raina Wali and Sh. Sushil Wali****(Daughter and Son-in-Law)****Smt. Durga Koul and Sh. Sunil Pandita****Smt. Sarita Koul (Sister-in-Law)****(Sister-in-Law and Brother-in-law)****Smt. Nancy Bhat and Sh. Ashok Ji Bhat****Smt. Girja Bhat and Sh. Jawahar Lal Bhat****Smt. Khema Wali and Sh. Ravinder Razdan****Keshvi, Karvin and Vaibhav (Grand Children)****Samast Wali Parivar of Checki-Raj-Wali.****Sh. Jai Krishan Wali - 9149504435****Sh. Kamal Wali - 9906905010****Sh. Sushil Wali - 9796667067****Smt. Phoola Koul Wali****TENTH DAY**

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Shanti Devi** W/o Lt Kapoor Chand R/o Biyawa, Kunzer, Baramulla A/P H. No. 26/D. Sec-1, Lane-2, Durga Nagar Jammu on 15-05-2025.

**Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed on 24-05-2025 at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education, Jammu at 8:30 am.

**Grief Stricken :****Sh Moti Ram & Smt Desha Devi (Brother & Bhabhi)****Sh Babu Ram S/o Lt Mangat Ram (Brother)****Smt Shakuntla Sharma W/o Lt Bansal Sharma (Sister)****Sons & Daughters-in-law****Sh Virender Kumar & Smt Saroj Najawan****Sh Shammi Kapoor & Smt Dazy Najawan****Sh Ravinder Kumar & Smt Deepa Najawan****Daughter & Son-in-law****Sh Shami Mahajan & Smt Renu Mahajan****Grand Children****Chahal, Daksh, Sarvi, Tushar, Gauranshi, Nshu, Ashu****Ph. No. 7006113164, 9858050432, 7005225110****Smt Shanti Devi****TENTH DAY KRIYA**

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad & untimely demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Jai Kishori Raina** W/o Late Sh. Gopi Nath Raina originally from Chattabal Srinagar P/A H.No. 90, Lower Laxmi Nagar Sarwal Jammu.

**Tenth Day Kriya** will be held on 26th May, 2025 (Monday) at Muthi Ghat (8 AM).

**GRIEF STRICKEN****Smt. Lalita Shouri Raina****Daughter-in-law & Sons****Smt. Veena Ji & Saroj Kumar Raina****Smt. Ushaji Raina - Daughter-in-law****Smt. Kanta & Lalit Khazanchi****Grand Children:****Smt. Sheeba Tickoo & Samir Tickoo****Smt. Nidhi Raina & Aditya Raina****Smt. Vaishali & Aditya Kachroo****Smt. Diksha & Shailan Mattoo****Smt. Mimica & Rahul Khazanchi****Grief Stricken:-****Samast Chattabali, Dhar, Parimoo, Saraf Parivar****M.No: 9419184840, 9622155869****SMT. JAI KISHORI RAINA****TENTH DAY KRIYA**

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Satish Kumar Bhat** S/o Anand Ram Bhat of Rajghat Baramulla A/p Block No. 47, Lane No. 8/9, Flat No. 2, Jagti left for heavenly abode on 16/5/2025.

**Tenth Day** shall be performed at Muthi Ghat, Jammu on Sunday 25/5/2025 at 9.00 am.

**GRIEF STRICKEN****Smt. Gudi Bhat (Wife)****Smt. Sheela Bhat W/o Late Kanya Lal Bhat****Smt. & Sh. Ashok Bhat****Smt. & Sh. Hari Krishan Bhat****Smt. & Sh. Tej Krishan Koul****Smt. & Sh. Arun Bhat****Smt. & Sh. Shrawan Bhat****Smt. & Sh. Mahesh Koul****Mob.: 789644842, 9419141454, 9082862816, 9419189542, 7006480435****Satish Kumar Bhat****TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA**

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of **Smt Kanta Sharma (Pooja)** W/o Sh. Sudesh Kumar Sharma R/o H.No. 4/45, Pandoka Colony, Paloura, Jammu.

**Tenth Day** will be performed on Thursday, 22nd May 2025 at Prachin Shiv Mandir, Pandoka Colony, Paloura at 11:00 am.

**Kriya** will be performed on Saturday, 24th May 2025 at our residence at 12:30 pm.

**Uthala** will be performed on Saturday, 24th May 2025 at Prachin Shiv Mandir, Pandoka Colony, Paloura from 4 pm to 5 pm.

**GRIEF STRICKEN:****Sh. Sudesh Kumar Sharma (Husband)****Priya & Dhara Sharma (Daughter & Son-in-Law)****Madhuri & Sunil Malhotra (Daughter & Son-in-Law)****Shivam Sharma (Son)****SMT KANTA SHARMA (POOJA)****OBITUARY**

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform about sad demise of **Sh. Dwarika Nath Bhat** S/o Late Sh. Sansar Chand Bhat R/o Dever Tral A/P RZF 43, Gali No-3, Mahavir Enclave, New Delhi -45 on 17th May 2025.

**TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be performed on 26th May 2025 ( 11.00 am ) at Upper GANGA, canal road Muradnagar Yusufpur, Manota, Uttarpradesh, Sh. Dwarika Nath Bhat

**Grief Stricken****Son and Daughter in law****Smt. Monika Bhat & Sh. Raj Kumar Bhat****Smt. Dazy Bhat & Sh. Manoj Bhat.****Daughter and Son in law****Smt Renu Bhat & Sh. Prince Jee Bhat****2025 at Prachin Shiv Mandir, Pandoka Colony, Paloura****Grand Children: Priyanka, Purvashi, Nisha, Sahil, Esha, Shreya, Nikunj, Namish****Mob: 7053631651, 7051076445 (Only Whatsapp call)****Sh. Dwarika Nath Bhat****BHOG & ANTIM ARDAS**

ਜੇਹਾ ਚੀਜ਼ੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਤੇਹਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਕਰਾਇ॥  
ਘਲੇ ਆਦਿ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਸਦੇ ਉੱਠੀ ਜਾਇ॥੧॥

With profound grief, we inform that our beloved **Prof. Sdr. Hernal Singh (Principa)** left for heavenly abode on 17th of May, 2025.

**Smt Akhand Path Sahib** is being organised to honour his life and legacy. We seek your presence for strength and comfort during this time of grief.

**Smt Akhand Path Sahib**  
Kashmir: Friday, 23 May, 2025, 9:00 am  
Bhog: Sunday, 25 May, 2025, 9:30 am

Venue: 312 Preet Nagar, New Poles, Jammu  
Kriya & Antim Ardas: Sunday 25 May 2025 from 10:30 am onwards,  
Venue: Kalgidhar Gurudwara, Rajat followed by Guru Ka Langar.

**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Sardar Inderjit Kaur (Wife)

Mrs. Sarveen Hans (Daughter) & Maj Gen HPS Hans (Son-in-law)

Mrs. Shivan Kaur (Daughter) & Mr. Anil Gupta (Son-in-law)

Col Anil Pratap Singh (Son) & Col Tarsem Kaur (Daughter-in-law)

**DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY THE GRAND CHILDREN**  
Eshwari, Sarita, Rajan, Samana, Samrith & Sila

**FAMILY:**  
Mrs. Pushpa Raj Kaur & Prof. Gurcharan Singh

Mrs. Pushpinder Kaur Bati & Late Mr. Gurpreet Singh Bati

Mrs. Sarvash Kaur Bati & Mr. Salinder Singh Bati

Mrs. Ravinder Kaur Bati & Mr. Rajinder Singh Bati

Late Mr. Harinder Singh (Harji) & Late Mrs. Navinder Kaur

Mr. Salinder Singh & Mrs. Gurneet Kaur

Mr. Inderjit Singh & Mrs. Salinder Kaur

**Prof. Sdr. Hernal Singh (Principa)****10TH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA**

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Vishno Khajuria** W/o Late Sh. N.N. Khajuria R/o 3/163, Shant Nagar, Jampur Jammu.

**10th Day** will be observed on May 19, 2025 (Monday) at our residence at 11 AM.

**Kriya** will be performed on May 20 (Tuesday) at 12 Noon at our residence.

**Uthala** will be performed at Geeta Mandir Bakshi Nagar, Jammu on May 26 (Monday) from 5 PM to 8 PM.

**GRIEF STRICKEN****Devar & Devrani****Sh. Yoginder Pal Khajuria & Smt. Veena Khajuria****Sons & Daughters-in-law****Er. Ajay Khajuria & Smt. Kanchan Sharma****Er. Vinay Khajuria & Smt. Preeti Khajuria****Daughters & Son-in-law****LI Smt. Kanchan Sharma & Sh. Subash Manotra****Smt. Suman Sudan & Dr. Faiznara Sudan****Nephew & Niece -in-law****Vikas Khajuria & Priyanka**

**Grand Children:** Tania Khajuria & Hitesh Sharma - Grand Daughter & Son-in-law  
Abhishek Khajuria, Tushar Khajuria, Tapas Sudan, Sidhart Sharma & Arushi Khajuria

**9419200501, 9419113883****Smt. Vishno Khajuria****TENTH DAY KRIYA**

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the untimely and sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Bushan Lal Warikoo** S/o Lt. Dina Nath Warikoo originally from Laloshashgary Bagh Hyderpora Budgam Kashmir presently residing at H.No. 32 Sec. B-1 Gali No. 02 Lane No. 04 Laximi Puram Chinore Bantalab Jammu on 15-05-2025.

**Tenth Day** will be held at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education on 24-05-2025 at 8.00 am.

**Grief Stricken****Smt. Nimmi Warikoo- Wife****Smt. Sunita Zutshi & Sh. Vinod Zutshi- Daughter & Son-in-Law****Smt. Jai Kishori Warikoo W/o Lt. Krishan Lal Warikoo - Bhabhi****Smt. Usha Jee & Sh. Praboo Jee Warikoo- Bhabhi & Brother****Samast Raina's, Warikoo's, Aima's, Naqail's, Bhat's****Ph.: 9697275275, 9796446568, 7006168452****Sh. Bushan Lal Warikoo****TENTH DAY KRIYA**

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the untimely demise of our beloved **Sunamika** W/o Sh. Ashutosh Raina. Originally from K.P. Road, Anantnag, presently residing in Virginia, USA, where she left us on May 15, 2025.

**Condolence** is being held at H.No. 209/P, Sector-2, EWS Colony, Lower Roop Nagar, near Green Land Palace, Jammu.

The **Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed on 24.5.2025 (Saturday) at 9 am at Muthi Ghat Near Director School Education department Jammu.

**Grief Stricken:****Sh. Ashutosh Raina - Husband****Anaya Raina - Daughter****Parents-in-law****Smt. Kishni Koul and Sh. Ashok Raina****Uncle and Aunt****Sh. T.N. Bhat****Smt. Kundan Raina****Smt. Vijay Fotedar and Mr. M.J. Fotedar****Smt. Asha Raina****Smt. Usha Kiran and Mr. Bal Ji Razdan****Smt. Sunita Raina and Sh. Roshan Raina****Smt. Annapurna Raina and Sh. Bansi Lal Raina****Bhabhis and Brothers****Natasha Raina and Dr. Pankaj Raina****Dr. Rinkoo Pandit and Dr. Rakesh Raina****Nisha Munshi and Dr. Sagar Raina****Shipra Raina and Vishal Raina****Riya Raina and Sahil Raina****Aneesha Raina and Rinkoo Raina****Premia and Akshay****Sunamika**

**Aditya Raina (Brother)**  
**Aditi Raina (Sister)**  
**Children:** Rodhi, Rishik, Varshika, Vaibhav, Riyaan, Pravya and Myra.  
**SAMAST RAINA (GUZARWAN) PARIVAR AND ALL NEARS AND DEARS.**  
**9418105533, 9419208682, 9419125050, 9418038155.**

**TENTH DAY**

Our beloved **Veena Pandita**, fondly called Tathi, who with her thousand invisible arms loved and nurtured extended branches of family, left us on May 15. She leaves behind a diffused warmth of home that we can only hope to preserve and safeguard like a square of sunlight on a harsh winter day.

Her **Tenth-Day Rituals** will be performed on May 24 at 8.30 am at Muthi Ghat, next to Directorate of School Education, Jammu.

**In grief:****Rakesh Pandita (Husband)****Anjali and Mayank Pandita (Daughter-in-law and Son)****Meena and Tej Krishan Raina****Anjali and Yoginder Handoo****And****PANDITAS, HANDOOS, RAINAS, GURTUS, AND REVOOS.****Veena Pandita****TENTH DAY KRIYA**

With profound grief & sorrow we inform about sad demise of **Sh Vijay Koul (Bona Ji)** S/o Lt. Prem Nath Koul R/o Rajghat Baramulla A/p Flat No. 16, Block No. 10, Lane No. 2, on 15-05-2025.

**Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed on 24-05-2025 at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education at 8.30 AM.

**GRIEF STRICKEN:-****Smt. Dulari -Wife****Sh. Ashok Kumar Koul & Smt. Phoola Ji -Brother & Bhabhi****Sh. Mahinder Koul & Smt. Vijay Ji -Brother & Bhabhi****Sons & Daughters-in-Law****Dr. Avash Koul & Dr. Simi Koul****Sh. Akshay Koul & Smt. Megha Koul****Sh. Abhay Koul****Daughters & Sons-in-Law****Smt. Anni Saproo & Sh. Avinash Saproo****Smt. Monika Bhat & Sh. Sandeep Bhat****Smt. Meenakshi & Dr. Gaurav Sharma****Smt. Neha Bhat & Sh. Ajay Bhat****Grand Children: Adhwik, Danik, Himani, Tiana, Soumit, Nishav**



## JK Govt orders shutdown of unauthorised websites, enforces use of official emails

SRINAGAR, May 21 (Agencies): In a significant push to secure the digital ecosystem across government departments, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has issued a comprehensive circular directing all Administrative Departments, Heads of Departments (HoDs), and Subordinate Offices to adopt standard cybersecurity practices, discontinue unauthorised digital platforms, and ensure strict compliance with IT governance protocols.

According to the circular issued by the General Administration Department, the directive follows extensive deliberations chaired by the Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir.

The government has ordered the immediate deactivation of all private departmental websites operating on domains such as ".com", ".org", or ".net". All government websites must now be hosted exclusively on official

domains like ".gov.in" or ".jk.gov.in". Future proposals for new websites must be routed through the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and approved by the IT Department.

The order further mandates the exclusive use of official NIC email IDs for all government communication. Emails sent from non-official domains such as Gmail, Yahoo, or Rediffmail will be treated as unofficial and may not be acted upon.

A comprehensive audit of IT infrastructure has also been ordered. Designated Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and Information Security Officers (ISOs) will carry out department-wide audits. These will include inventories of hardware and software, verification of licensed systems, firewall and antivirus status, and network security configurations. A uniform reporting format will be provided by the IT Department. NIC has been

assigned the task of organising training sessions on cyber hygiene and threat response for departmental IT personnel. These sessions will cover topics such as cyber safety, configuration of email systems, incident reporting, and guidelines from the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).

The circular also underlines that all IT hardware and software procurement must conform to the minimum technical standards notified by the IT Department. The use of pirated or outdated software is strictly prohibited.

All departments are required to submit detailed compliance reports within 15 days. Failure to comply will attract disciplinary action under the relevant administrative and IT conduct rules.

These directives mark a key step towards a secure, transparent, and policy-compliant e-governance framework in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Many Ex-Servicemen ready to serve Nation: Secy Jammu Zila Sainik Board

JAMMU, May 21 (Agencies): Given the deployment of ex-servicemen to protect vital installations after 'Operation Sindoor', secretary, Jammu Zila Sainik Board, Col (retd) Bhupinder Singh Sambyal on Wednesday said that not just 4,000 volunteers but many others were ready to serve the country.



The Sainik Welfare Board of Jammu and Kashmir had moved a proposal for mobilising Ex-Servicemen (ESM) to safeguard vital infrastructure across the Union Territory. This proposal has been formally approved by the Jammu and Kashmir government, setting the stage for a unique collaboration between veterans and civil authorities towards strengthening community-based security and harnessing the capabilities of former military personnel.

"As per the approved plan, 4,000 ex-servicemen volunteers have been identified, and among them, 435 individuals possess licensed personal weapons, significantly enhancing the capacity

to respond effectively to localised security situations," the Secretary told UNI. He stated that these volunteers will be employed to protect critical infrastructure in all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, including power stations, bridges, government installations, and other vulnerable points.

"The experience and discipline of ex-servicemen can be utilised professionally to protect the installations identified by the concerned authorities in the police and the administration," he expressed. "As the situation was antici-

pated much before, we had voluntarily offered our services. Not only 4000 are identified, but we can produce many others who are ready to serve for the integrity and pride of the nation," the Secretary said.

"On a daily basis, hundreds of ex-servicemen are visiting the office for registration, and with the required engagement of 4000 volunteers, the remaining will be kept as reserved." Col (retd) Sambyal said, adding, "It is our duty and ex-servicemen are well aware of handling various operations."

"A short capsule

course-cum-training is also underway for the identified volunteers in different parts of Jammu region to brief them of duties and responsibilities including patrolling and guarding," he said.

He said the deployment would be made with weapons (personal) and also without weapons based on the requirement.

Defence sources said the initiative of deploying ex-servicemen builds upon the previous success during the Covid-19 pandemic, where 2,500 volunteered to support the administration.

## J&K Congress targets Jaishankar over Op Sindoor statement

SRINAGAR, May 21 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) president Tariq Hameed Karra on Wednesday hit out at External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's statement that India had informed Pakistan beforehand about the missile strikes on terror infrastructure in the neighbouring country.

"Our external affairs minister says that we informed Pakistan that we are going to strike at terror training centres. Are wars fought like this? Do you give advance notice?" Karra said, while addressing a 'Jai Hind' yatra in Anantnag district.

The JKPCC chief also questioned the BJP-led central government over the cessation of hostilities on May 10 and the Pahalgam attack.

"A tweet comes from



America (President Donald Trump) that a ceasefire has been arrived at, and it is accepted here (in India). The issues between India and Pakistan are bilateral, be it a war or trade issues. There is

no scope of third-party intervention," he added.

Karra said the Centre will have to answer as to why security was not beefed up at Baisaran meadow in south Kashmir's Pahalgam despite having intelligence

about a potential terrorist attack.

"We are hearing that there was intelligence about an attack three days before the April 22 incident. Why didn't the government step up the security? How did the terrorists reach there, as the government always claims that militancy has ended and it is all peaceful? These are the questions that the nation wants answers to," he said.

Meanwhile, former MLA Devsar Mohammad Amin Bhat returned to Congress, three days after he resigned from the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) of Ghulam Nabi Azad.

Bhat, who was elected to the J&K Assembly on a Congress ticket in the 2014 elections, had quit the party to join DPAP.

However, he left Azad's party on Sunday without citing any reasons.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PROJECTS DIVISION  
JAMMU MUNICIPAL CORPORATION,  
TOWN HALL JAMMU  
NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

EOI NO 09(P) OF 2025-26

Name of work:-Engagement of Consultant for providing consultancy services for Construction of Parking cum Complex at Gulab Singh Marg opp. Fortune Hotel, Jammu

For &On behalf of the Commissioner, JMC, applications are invited through e-tendering mode on %age basis from the interested & eligible Architectural Firms/Landscape Architects in response to this request for "Engagement of consultants for providing consultancy services for construction of Parking cum Complex at Gulab Singh Marg opp. Fortune Hotel, Jammu"

Approved Cost for Consultancy Services	Rs. 15.89 Lacs
Period of downloading EOI document	From Date 19-05-2025 upto 04-06-2025 till 1600 Hrs
	Place(s) <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a>
Last Date & Time of uploading Bids	04-06-2025 upto 1600Hrs
Pre bid Meeting	27-05-2025 at 1300 Hrs in the office of Executive Engineer, Projects Div., JMC via online through the  Google Meet joining info Video call link: <a href="https://meet.google.com/jgz-uyvz-qwe">https://meet.google.com/jgz-uyvz-qwe</a>
Time and date for opening Technical Bid/ Bids	05-06-2025 at 1400 Hrs
Place of opening bids	Office of the Executive Engineer, Projects Division, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Town Hall, Jammu.
Officer inviting bids	Executive Engineer, Projects Division Jammu Municipal Corporation, Jammu  Address: Jammu Municipal Corporation, Town Hall, Jammu

DIP/J-586-P/25

(Er. Lokesh Gupta)  
Executive Engineer,  
Projects Division  
Jammu Municipal Corporation

No.- JMC/PD/25-26/Tech/342-49  
Dt.-19-05-2025

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR  
OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION KATHUA  
Email:- [XENPWDDIVISIONKATHUA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:XENPWDDIVISIONKATHUA@GMAIL.COM)  
FRESH NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NITNo: 06 of 2025-26/955-59/G Dated:17.05.2025

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways, MES and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works: -

S. No	Name of Work	Name of Division	Advertised cost (Rs.In lakh.)	Cost of Tender document (in Rs.)	Earnest Money in shape of CDR/FDR /BG	Time Allowed for completion	Time and date of opening of tender	Class of Contractor
1	Blacktopping of Lakhanpur Yard Component of road on requirement basis PWD Kathua, (Under Capex and Revex Budget on account of Shri Amarnath Yatra,2025)	PWD (R&B) Division Kathua	15.00	600/-	30000/-	Days-15	27.05.2025 on or after 1300Hrs	ABCD
2	Upgradation of Main Gate, Path and Tile Work at CHO Office Kathua(Under Capex Budget 2025-26)	PWD (R&B) Division Kathua	10.00	600/-	20000/-	Month-03	27.05.2025 on or after 1300Hrs	ABCD

(i) If the contractor / firms fails to complete the work within the time mentioned in the NIT / Contract, then the allotted contract will automatically have treated as cancelled after forfeiting the performance security of the contractor / firm andwork put to fresh tender without serving any notice from this office.

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
2	Date of publish	19-05-2025 at 1400 Hrs
3	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 19-05-2025 at 1400 Hrs to 26-05-2025 up to 1600 Hrs
4	Bid submission Start Date	From 19-05-2025 at 1400 hours to 26-05-2025 up to 1600 Hrs
5	Bid Submission End Date	26-05-2025 up to 1600 hours
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	27-05-2025 on or after 1300 Hrs in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kathua.
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation completed.

No:06 NIT/2025-256/955-59/G  
Dated:17.05.2025  
DIP/J-1295/25

Sd-  
Executive Engineer  
PWD (R&B) Division  
Kathua



## EDITORIAL

## International Biodiversity Day

International Biodiversity Day, officially known as the International Day for Biological Diversity, is celebrated annually on May 22 to promote awareness and understanding of the importance of biodiversity. Coordinated by the United Nations, this day highlights the vital role that biodiversity plays in maintaining life on Earth and emphasizes the need to protect it from growing threats. It serves as a global platform for governments, organizations, and individuals to reflect on the value of nature and commit to actions that ensure its preservation.

The origin of this observance dates back to 1993, when the UN initially declared December 29 as Biodiversity Day, marking the day the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) came into force. However, in 2000, the date was shifted to May 22, commemorating the adoption of the CBD during the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. This change allowed for better participation worldwide, especially by schools and communities that are more active during this time of year.

Biodiversity encompasses the variety of all living organisms on Earth, including plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms, along with the ecosystems they form. It is crucial for maintaining ecological balance. Each species, no matter how small, plays a role in the stability and productivity of ecosystems. Additionally, biodiversity ensures food security through a variety of crops and livestock, many of which are adapted to different environments and resistant to pests and diseases. It also holds medicinal value, as many drugs and treatments are derived from natural sources. Furthermore, biodiversity supports climate regulation, natural disaster resilience, and contributes significantly to economies, especially those dependent on agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism.

Despite its value, biodiversity is under severe threat. Human activities such as deforestation, pollution, urbanization, and overexploitation of natural resources have led to significant habitat loss and species extinction. Climate change and the spread of invasive species further disrupt ecological balance. Scientific reports indicate that nearly one million species are currently at risk of extinction, many within the coming decades, unless urgent action is taken.

Every year, International Biodiversity Day is celebrated under a unique theme that reflects current global concerns. For example, recent themes have included "Our Solutions Are in Nature" (2020), "We're Part of the Solution" (2021), and "From Agreement to Action: Build Back Biodiversity" (2023). These themes aim to inspire concrete actions by individuals, communities, policymakers, and businesses. Activities like planting trees, organizing biodiversity fairs, hosting seminars, and engaging in clean-up drives are encouraged to spread awareness and promote involvement at the grassroots level.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the foundation of global efforts to conserve biodiversity. It focuses on three main objectives: the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted in 2022, outlines new goals for 2030, including the protection of at least 30% of the planet's land and oceans and restoration of degraded ecosystems. These targets emphasize global responsibility in reversing biodiversity loss.

While governments and institutions play a significant role, individuals also have a crucial part in biodiversity conservation. Simple lifestyle changes—such as reducing plastic use, conserving water, supporting organic farming, choosing sustainable products, and spreading awareness—can collectively make a big difference. Participating in local conservation projects and advocating for stronger environmental policies are also effective ways to contribute.

International Biodiversity Day is more than a symbolic date—it is a call to action for all. Biodiversity is the foundation of life and is essential for the survival of ecosystems and humanity alike. By recognizing our dependence on nature and taking responsibility for its protection, we can ensure a healthier, more sustainable planet for current and future generations.

## Missiles and Myths: India's Technological Renaissance

By: Omkar Dattatray

India has travelled and traversed a lot from the Vedic period of Mahabharata and Ramayana when those good olden days warriors were using Brahmastras against their foes in the righteous wars to uphold justice and righteousness. In those days of Mahabharata, Brahmastra was used when other weapons failed to defeat the foes and so Brahmastra was used scarcely as it was considered as the weapon of last resort and was used as such. In the present day war fare when there is technology boom, the equivalent of Brahmastra that is called Brahmos is used to attack the foes and so were Brahmos missile used to attack the air bases and other military installations of Pakistan to silence her into submission and so has Pakistan came on its knees before India and requested for a ceasefire. As described in the Sastra, a Brahmagstra is an astra, or celestial weapon created by Lord Brahma. It is sometimes known as the Brahma Astra astra referring to missile weapon. As described in a number of the Puranas, Brahmastra is considered to be the very deadliest of weapons. When a Brahmastra is discharged, neither a counterattack nor a defense of any kind can stop it. In ancient Sanskrit writings, the Brahmastra was a weapon created by Brahma, along with its more powerful versions like Brahmashirsha astra and Brahmanda astra. Brahmastra and Brahmashirsha astra are said to be mythical equivalent of modern day atomic missile which is more lethal and deadliest and is used sparingly and not off and on but reserved for the final strike. India's journey from the mythical Brahmastra to the modern BrahMos missile is a story of technological advancement and strategic collaboration. The BrahMos, a supersonic cruise missile, represents a significant leap forward from purely mythological realm of the Brahmastra, showcasing India's growing defense capabili-

ties and its partnership with Russia. The BrahMos has garnered international attention and is being exported to various countries. Brahmastra is a legendary weapon in Indian mythology capable of destruction. As against it BrahMos is a supersonic cruise missile developed jointly by India's DRDO and Russia's NPOM. In 1998, India and Russia signed an agreement to establish BrahMos Aerospace, a joint venture for missile development. The BrahMos WAS showcased at the MAKS -1 exhibition in Moscow in 2001. The BrahMos was inducted into Indian defense system—Army, Air force and Navy. The BrahMos has been continuously upgraded and has evolved from a surface to surface missile to a versatile system capable of being launched from land, sea, air and even submarines. The BrahMos is being exported to countries like the Philippines, showcasing India's growing defense industry. In essence, the journey from Brahmastra to BrahMos represents the following---1—It is the transformation from a mythical concept into a real high-tech weapon system. It is the journey of India's growing capability in missile technology and defense manufacturing. The successful collaboration between India and Russia in developing and producing the BrahMos. The BrahMos is now considered a significant weapon in India's defense arsenal and is referred to as a "Brahmastra." The Indo-Russian missile manufacturer, BrahMos Aerospace, confirmed recently that it had completed the preliminary design of a new generation of BrahMos -NG missiles. According to Parvin Pathak, who serves as the missile producers export director, the shape of the BrahMos -NG missiles under development has been determined, and it won't be long before the new version of the weapon goes into production. Pathak's remarks about the BrahMos missile's newest version came during the international Maritime Defense Show in St. Petersburg

.BrahMos -NG will be a mini version of the missile. While it will have the same range and speed as the one currently operated by Indian Army, the missiles weight will be considerably lighter than its predecessor. That said, its length will also come down to 6 meters from the current 9 meters. The 1.5 tonne, 6 meter -long BrahMos -NG has entered India and it is really a great achievement for the two countries of India and Russia who have collaborated for the joint venture for its production and such updated versions of the BrahMos missile are currently in India's defense system and are being used in the times of any exigency. As far as New Delhi is concerned, the arrival of the new BrahMos is seen as a good news for the country's security forces, as it is expected to give a major boost to its burgeoning missile arsenal. With these newest version of BrahMos India's military, Sputnik looks back at the incredible journey of the world's fastest supersonic missile. The Brahmos missile is a product of Brahmos Aerospace, a joint venture between India's DRDO and Russia's NEPO which was formed in 1998 by the two countries. The name of the highly acclaimed missile originated from the names of India's Brahmaputra and Russia's Moskva rivers. Brahmos Aerospace markets this latest weapon as the world's fastest supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from land, air, sea and submarines. The missile has a range of 290 kilometers and a speed of 2.8 Mach or three, times the speed of sound. The Brahmos missile comes in three different models namely a surface -to-surface, air, and a submarine version. In 2009, a new navigation system was incorporated into the Brahmos and the missile was test fired again the same year. The following year, Brahmos scripted history, becoming the first cruise missile to breach the supersonic speed barrier while flying in a steep -dive mode. In September 2020, India tested an extended

version of the surface -to -surface Brahmos missile, that stretched out its reach from 290 km to 350 Km. A long -range version of the Brahmos-11 is currently being developed by its manufacturer. This new version is expected to more than double the range of the missiles from the existing 290km to 600km. Also speed is estimated to touch the Mach 8 mark, which would make it the fastest hypersonic missile in the world, thus providing India's triad of services with a potent weapon that would be able to strike deep into enemy territory and take out targets with remarkable accuracy. Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday confirmed that indigenously developed BrahMos missiles were used to destroy Pakistani air bases during the conflict in the aftermath of India's Operation Sindoor. During his address in Ahmedabad, Amit Shah also said that Pakistan's air defense system borrowed from China, remained unused during Operation Sindoor, which exposed its lies on terrorism to the world. Shah said Operation Sindoor will be written in golden letters when history is written on the boarder safety. To conclude India's journey from Brahmastra to BrahMos is the journey of technological development from a mythical concept and now various versions of the BrahMos missiles which are updated and designed to meet the air defense needs of India of today. This journey is a wonderful advancement of missile technology.

**(The author is a columnist, social, KP activist &Freelancer)**

By: Vijay Garg

Corona's crisis over the country and the world is cruising once again. Well the number of influencers in the country is minor. There were officially 257 cases until May 19. Right now the number is definitely less as per the fresh data of the past week but there is also the truth that the cases are either not understood or recorded. 69 cases reported in Kerala last week, 44 in Maharashtra and 34 cases in Tamil Nadu. But the way Covid cases are being registered in the rest of Asia, they seem to raise concerns. In Hong Kong and Singapore it is spreading fast. The new variant Jn-1 outbreak continues now. It was first found in August, 2023. The World Health Organization had declared it in December, 2023 by declaring the 'Variant of Interest' that it is a descendant of Omicron BA.2.86. It found almost mutations of 30 which had more number of LF7 and NB1.8. This new wave of Corona is showing more impact in South-East Asia. Covid cases have grown very fast in countries like Singapore, Hong Kong and Thailand. Singapore alone has more than 14,200 new cases in early May. In these places also, JN1 and its sub-variants are

## Reflexes on the corona knock must

getting more. Experts believe that increasing cases in these countries are also the cause of antibodies in the body of people there. Even in India, such a possibility is not ruled out. Slowly right in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Maharashtra, its growing is not a good sign. In the past, on May 18, the explosive batsman of the Australian cricket team Travis Head Corona was infected, Bigg Boss fame Shilpa Shirodkar was also hunted on the other day. So much has been understood that Singapore is now emerging as a new hotspot. The increase of 28 per cent in infections cases is alarming throughout the week itself. Even what is coming out of China, Corona cases have been significantly accelerated in the past one month. But as many variants came out of China, what destruction had happened in the world, everyone saw. Most people who are infected this time are those who are in comorbidities i.e. co-morbidities. In this, influencers have more than one disease at the same time. Some are common risk factors, while some are caused by symptoms or its treatments resulting from other conditions. Most of the symptoms right now, comorbidities, or those older than 65. In view of health risks, authori-

ties have advised to take the updated vaccine on doctor's advice. High-risk elderly, victims of comorbidities have already been advised to take the COVID-19 vaccine annually. There has been confusion after the death of two patients in a Mumbai hospital. The hospital told them the death caused by severe diseases that had no connection with Covid-19. The hospital says the deaths have been caused not by Covid-19, but due to severe diseases such as hypocalcemic seizures and nephrotic syndrome with cancer. But there is discussion that both the dead had symptoms of Covid. Don't think that such boring situations will lead to confusion like never before, over Covid? Corona virus cases have started increasing gradually again in India. Hong Kong health officer Albert Au's statement is worrying in which he believed that cases of Corona virus are increasing rapidly there. The number of patients with shortness of breath found to be Covid positive has just reached a high level in just the fifth month of the year. While it is alarming to have doubted cases of Covid virus found in patients who have undergone breathing ailments in China. People have been advised to take

booster shots. Also, according to Chinese Centre for Disease and Prevention data, the wave of Covid can also be fast. India is also cautious in seeing the conditions of South-East Asia. The Director General of Health Services, experts from National Disease Control, Disaster Management Cell, Indian Council of Medical Research and Central Government Hospitals, came to the conclusion that the current number of confirmed cases of Covid is 257. It is very low in terms of the population of the country. Hospitals have been asked to monitor serious cases of influenza-like diseases and respiratory infections. Although the Union Health Ministry is closely monitoring the situation. All hospitals and health-care providers across the country also have the responsibility to keep all adequate arrangements. Do not use Kotahi in medical consultation if there is a slight doubt. Be good that get conscious from now on.

**(Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab)**



# ABDPSS organizes prayer for world peace at Ram Mandir

## Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: The Akhil Bhartiya Dharma Prachar Seva Samiti continues its dedicated efforts toward the propagation of Sanatan Dharma and world peace by organizing collective prayers and religious events across Jammu province. In its latest initiative, the Samiti held a devotional program at Ram Mandir, Chhanni Himmat, with the primary aim of promoting global harmony and cultural values through prayer and scripture recitation.

The program began with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, followed by the chanting of Vedic mantras, immersing the atmosphere in divine devotion.

The event was presided over by Sunil Sharma, National Convener of the Samiti, and Kewal Krishan Sharma graced the occasion as the chief guest.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from people of all age groups, including children, youth, and women.

A special moment came when



young students sang the heart-felt prayer “Hey Prabhu, humein sukh do, humein gyaan do” (O Lord, give us joy, give us knowledge), creating a spiritually uplifting environment. This was followed by the collective recitation of Shri Ram Stuti and the Hanuman Chalisa, after which offerings (prasada) were made to the deity and a joint Aarti was performed.

In his address, Sunil Sharma emphasized the Samiti’s mission to instill cultural values and spread scriptural knowledge

among the masses, especially the younger generation. He expressed concern over the growing issue of drug addiction among youth, attributing it to a lack of spiritual grounding and values. He reiterated the Samiti’s commitment to shaping a future where children are spiritually and morally equipped to contribute toward India becoming a global leader.

Sharma also highlighted several key initiatives taken by the Samiti over the years, including free distribution of Shrimad

Bhagwat Geeta, Gangajal, spiritual discourses, and saint conferences. Since Durga Ashtami last year, the Samiti has been actively promoting the practice of holding Shri Ram Stuti and Hanuman Chalisa recitations in temples across India, aiming to strengthen cultural roots and uplift society.

The Samiti’s outreach efforts have extended beyond Jammu, gaining momentum in other districts as well. In the past 20 months, the campaign has seen increasing awareness and appreciation from the public.

Prominent individuals present at the event included Gopal Sharma, Bhuvneshwari Sharma, Pohli Devi, Surinder Sharma, Ranju Bansal, Kewal Krishan Sharma, Darshan Tagotra, Dharmendra Pandey, Ayushman Sharma, Om Prakash Sharma, Pankaj Sharma, Deepak Sharma, Deep Sharma, Vimala Gupta, Simmi Devi, and many others who contributed to the success of the program.

# Youth Congress hosts blood donation drive in tribute to Rajiv Gandhi, Pahalgam attack victims

## Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Youth Congress (JKPYC) held a blood donation camp at Shaheedi Chowk, Jammu, to commemorate the death anniversary of Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and to pay tribute to the martyrs of the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

The camp was organised by Anirudh Sawhney, State General Secretary JKPYC, along with Happy Randhawa, General Secretary JKPYC, and Secretaries Akhil Bogia and Dr. Suhaib Manhas.

The event witnessed the participation of senior Congress leaders including Ex-Deputy CM Tara Chand, Former Minister Yogesh Sawhney, Ex-MLC Ved Mahajan, and T S Tony, among



others.

Anirudh Sawhney, State General Secretary JKPYC, stated that this blood donation camp is a humble tribute to the sacrifices made by our former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Ji and in the memory of the martyrs of the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

Under the able IYC leadership, JKPYC continues to work on its commitment to serve society with compassion and courage, he added.

Happy Randhawa, General Secretary JKPYC, emphasized the significance of youth participation, saying,

“The youth of Jammu and Kashmir stand united in remembrance of those who laid down their lives. Through such initiatives, we aim to inspire young citizens to contribute meaningfully to society.” He also added that the

Akhil Bogia, Secretary JKPYC, said, “Blood donation is a noble cause and today’s turnout is a testament to the spirit of service among our youth. We are proud to be part of a movement that promotes peace, and unity.”

Dr. Suhaib Manhas, Secretary JKPYC, added, “We dedicate today’s camp to the memory of those who lost their lives to terrorism and to the ideals of Rajiv Gandhi Ji.

Their sacrifices will never be forgotten, and we will continue to uphold their legacy through positive action.”

# CUJ organizes Expert Talk on “Know Your Army” under theme “Nation First: My Role”

## Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: The Office of Dean Students’ Welfare (DSW) and the Department of National Security Studies (NSS) at the Central University of Jammu (CUJ), under the patronage of Vice-Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain, organised an expert talk on the theme “Nation First: My Role” and “Know Your Army”.

Two prominent army veterans, Lt. Gen. Jagbir Singh Cheema (Retd.) and Brigadier (Retd.) Harcharan Singh, VSM, graced the occasion.

The event commenced with a warm welcome address by Dr. Neeta Rani, Head of the Department, NSS. She highlighted the relevance of the theme in the backdrop of the current national security landscape.

She also introduced the speakers. Prof. Ritu Bakshi, Dean Students’ Welfare provided a detailed overview of the programme.

In an enlightening discourse, speaker Lt. Gen. J.S.Cheema (Retd.) shed light on the strategic execution and implications of Operation Sindoor, calling it a landmark in India’s



modern warfare history. Framing it within the broader national security architecture, he explained how India, post-Operation Sindoor, took the unprecedented step of suspending the Indus Water Treaty, thereby asserting a more assertive stance in the face of cross-border terrorism.

He emphasized how India has established a “New Normal” in responding to terrorist threats—marked by precision-based, non-escalatory strikes deep into Pakistan’s territory.

He provided a day-by-day account of the operation, detailing targets, timelines, and India’s calibrated strategic messaging. He also discussed India’s weapon system. Drawing comparisons, he questioned the credibility of Pakistan’s weapon systems while highlighting India’s

superior operational readiness and credible deterrence posture.

The General also hailed the multi-domain “Network-Centric Approach” adopted during Operation Sindoor as a benchmark in modern military doctrine, showcasing India’s preparedness to thwart offensive moves and strike decisively when required. In his concluding remarks, he discussed the strategic implications of the operation—highlighting India’s strategic autonomy, psychological victory and deep-strike capability—while cautioning about information warfare tactics deployed by adversaries to distort perception and morale.

Brigadier (Retd.) Harcharan Singh, VSM, in his address, shifted the focus towards nation building and environmental consciousness

through the lens of the armed forces. Speaking on “Environmental Awareness: Role of Army in Nation Building”, he opened by saluting “Nari Shakti”, emphasizing the critical role of women in national development and defence.

He lauded the indigenous success of the Make in India initiative achieved during Operation Sindoor and connected environmental principles in terms of security with Indian culture, national interest and the role of the army.

Brigadier Singh offered a wide-ranging geopolitical overview, analyzing India’s security dynamics in relation to the USA, Russia, China, Pakistan and Bangladesh. He also discussed regional rivalries, hybrid threats, and the broader strategic ecosystem affecting India. Highlighting

concerns such as the Two-Nation Theory, psychological warfare, infiltrator and termites nexus and the broader strategic nexus between Pakistan, China and Bangladesh.

He underlined the complex security challenges India is facing. In his concluding remarks, he charted a visionary path forward rooted in the performing fundamental duties under Article 51A of the Constitution, rising above partisan divides, empowering youth, and embracing the “Nation First” approach in all spheres of life.

Dr. Anuradha Choudhary moderated the interactive Q&A session and also delivered a vote of thanks.

She expressed gratitude to both the speakers. She also extended her gratitude to Vice Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Prof. Ritu Bakshi, DSW and Dr. Neeta Rani, HOD, NSS, for organising this event.

This event reflected CUJ’s commitment to fostering strategic awareness, civic responsibility and intellectual engagement on matters of national importance among students and the wider academic community.

# Punjab Technical University permits Aryans to start B. Sc. in Optometry

## Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: IK Gujral Punjab technical University, Jalandhar has granted approval to Aryans Institute of Management and Technology, Rajpura, near Chandigarh to start UGC approved Paramedical Courses, B. Sc in Optometry with 30 seats from this session (Reference number IKGPTU/CD/7083) from the session 2025-26.

Dr Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group mentioned that this program is envisaged to develop multipurpose ophthalmic manpower at allied health level. The training will enable a student to become competent in providing service as an Optician, Optometrist, In the past decade, there is a huge dearth of trained ophthalmic manpower using advance technology in vision care science, Kataria asserted.

It is worth mentioning that recently Punjab



Governor Gulab Chand Kataria has awarded Aryans Group of Colleges for Excellence in Paramedical and nursing education where Education Minister, Punjab Harjot Singh Bains was the Guest of Honour.

The award was received by Dr Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group.

It is to be mention that Aryans Group is already running Paramedical courses including Radiology, Cardiac Care, Operation Theatre, Anesthesia, Medical Life Sciences are under IKGPTU, Jalandhar. Aryans Institute of

Nursing is already running B. Sc. Nursing, GNM & ANM approved from Punjab Government & INC New Delhi affiliated to Baba Farid University of Health Sciences (BFUHS), Faridkot & Punjab Nurses Registration Council (PNRC), Mohali, respectively. B. Pharma & Physiotherapy are affiliated to MRSPTU, Bathinda & PCI, New Delhi while D. Pharma approved by Punjab Govt. Certificate courses including Home Care Helper, Operation Theatre Attendant, Ambulance & Hospital Attendant are also available under Punjab Govt.

# GDC Kishtwar hosts lecture on Traffic Awareness in collaboration with Traffic Police NHW Ramban



## Top News Report

KISHTWAR, May 21: The NCC Unit of Government Degree College (GDC) Kishtwar, in collaboration with the Traffic Police NHW Ramban, successfully organized a lecture on Traffic Awareness under the convenership of Dr. Tabassum Saleem and the abled guidance of Professor Basharat Iqbal, Principal of GDC Kishtwar.

The event aimed to sensitize students and faculty about road safety, traffic regulations, and responsible commuting practices. It was graced by the presence of Raja Adil Hamid, Senior Superintendent of Police, Traffic Police, who served as the Resource Person and Chief Guest.

In his address, Hamid shared valuable insights on the increasing challenges of traffic management, the role of youth in promoting road safety, and practical measures to reduce traffic-related incidents.

The college had the honour of welcoming Sub-Judge Salah hu Din as the Special Guest. His address emphasized the legal implications of traffic violations and the importance of civic responsibility.

The Guest of Honour, Prof. Basharat Iqbal, Principal GDC Kishtwar, appreciated the collaborative efforts of the NCC unit and the Traffic Police and encouraged students to act as ambassadors of traffic safety in their communities.

The event witnessed

enthusiastic participation from over 200 students and faculty members. Among the notable faculty present were Prof. Umar Din, Dr. Yasar Ahmed, Prof. Prithvi Raj, Dr. Sehriish Gagal, Prof. Esar UI Ayub, and Dr. Vijay Kumar.

The program started with Welcome address by Dr Tabassum Saleem concluded with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks delivered by DSP Traffic Udhampur Doda Sarbjeet Singh, who appreciated the active involvement of all stakeholders in making the event a success.

The initiative stands as a testament to GDC Kishtwar’s commitment to promoting awareness and fostering socially responsible citizens.

# GDC Darhal holds lecture on “evils of terrorism” on National Anti-Terrorism Day

## Top News Report

DARHAL, May 21: Government Degree College (GDC) Darhal organized a special lecture on “The Evils of Terrorism” on the eve of National Anti-Terrorism Day at the college campus.

The thought-provoking Programme aimed to raise awareness among students about the devastating consequences of terrorism and to promote peace and harmony in society.

The event witnessed active participation from students across various semesters and was attended by all faculty members.

The programme was held under the esteemed patronage of Prof. Zamir Ahmed Mirza, Principal, GDC Darhal, and was jointly coordinated by the IQAC and NSS Unit of the college.

Dr. M. SaleemWani, Head of the Department of English and IQAC Coordinator, was the keynote speaker for the occasion.

In his address, Dr. Wani elaborated on the multifaceted impact of terrorism on individuals, communities, and nations. He emphasized the importance of education in countering extremist ideologies and fostering a spirit of unity and tolerance.

The event was graced by the presence of Dr. Ghulam Abbas, the senior-most faculty member of the college, alongside a distinguished panel of academicians including Dr. Taseem Ahmed, Dr. Mohd Akhlaq, Dr. Anzaar Ahmed, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Dr. Sagir, Dr. Atau r Rehman, Dr. Shakeel Kataria, Dr. Mohd Shakoar, and Dr. Sumina, among others.



## ‘Bhumi Pednekar’s casting was a Netflix suggestion’: ‘The Royals’ director responds to critics

Netflix India’s latest romantic comedy ‘The Royals’ made a grand debut last week with its eight-episode run, boasting opulent sets, lavish costumes, and a glittering cast. However, while the aesthetics have drawn praise, reactions to the storyline and character dynamics have been far more divided.

Viewers and critics alike have pointed out that ‘The Royals’ lacks narrative depth. Some also questioned the chemistry between the lead pair, Ishaan Khatter and Bhumi Pednekar, while others critiqued certain creative choices, including Ishaan’s frequent shirtless scenes and a brief cameo by screen legend Zeenat Aman.

Now, director Priyanka Ghose has responded to the mixed reactions in an interview with India Today. Addressing the backlash, she said that Bhumi’s casting was a Netflix suggestion, and she was actually open to the idea of trying a new pairing.

“They are both such powerful actors,” Priyanka said.

“I was excited to see them embody glamorous roles, which



goes against both of their works so far. While Ishaan has not got a chance to play a mainstream hero role, Bhumi has always been the queen of heartland India,” she added.

On criticism regarding the lead pair’s on-screen chemistry, Priyanka acknowledged the polarised feedback, saying, “If it did not work for some people, I will try better next time,” adding “But there are also people who enjoyed the show and their chemistry. It is crazy how pola-

riased the feedback has been.”

Ishaan Khatter’s shirtless scenes also drew attention online, but Priyanka said they were part of the original script and felt natural.

“Ishaan is an intelligent actor, and he would not have agreed to take his shirt off at the drop of a hat. He was always conscious of how much was too much. There were times when we even discussed if we were overdoing it. There was actually a fashionable wardrobe for

him, and we would have loved to use more clothes on him,” she added.

Priyanka also addressed the brief appearance of Zeenat, whose cameo left fans wanting more.

“It was never meant to be a full track. Whenever legendary superstars make cameos, we naturally crave more. But the script had only those many scenes for her.”

Set in the fictional royal town of Morpur, ‘The Royals’ follows Aviraaj aka Fizzy (played by Ishaan Khatter), a carefree prince forced to take on the responsibilities of Maharaj after his father’s sudden death. With the royal estate on the verge of collapse, the family partners with a startup led by Sophia (Bhumi Pednekar), who pitches the idea of turning the palace into a luxury bed-and-breakfast. As the two try to save the crumbling legacy, sparks fly and class clashes.

The series also features Sakshi Tanwar, Milind Soman, Nora Fatehi, Vihaan Samat and Dino Morea.

## Actress Ruchi Gujar wears necklace featuring PM Modi at Cannes 2025



Actress Ruchi Gujar turned heads on the red carpet at the 78th Cannes Film Festival, not just for her outfit, but for wearing a necklace featuring PM Narendra Modi.

The actress described the statement piece as “more than jewellery,” calling it “a symbol of

strength, vision and India’s rise on the world stage.”

“By wearing it at Cannes, I wanted to honour our PM, whose leadership has taken India to new heights,” Ruchi said in a statement.

The necklace was crafted with tradition-

al Rajasthani motifs. Ruchi’s outfit also paid tribute to her roots. She wore a gold lehenga by designer Roopa Sharma, featuring mirror work, Gota Patti and embroidery, inspired by Jaipur’s regal fashion heritage.

To complete the look, Ruchi draped a hand-crafted Bandhani dupatta from designer Ram of Zaribari, adorned with Zardozi and Gota Patti embellishments.

“Wearing this dupatta felt like I was draping the soul of Rajasthan,” she said.

Still, it was the PM Modi-inspired necklace that stole the spotlight.

“PM Modi has redefined India’s image across the world,” Ruchi said.

“I wanted to carry that pride with me. Representing Rajasthan and India at Cannes is not just a moment for me—it is a message to the world about who we are.”

## ‘Pregnant or not, Kiara Advani is’: Internet ablaze with actor’s stunning bikini look in ‘War 2’ teaser

Move over action and explosion – Kiara Advani just stole the spotlight in the ‘War 2’ teaser, and the internet can’t keep calm.

Yash Raj Films unveiled the much-awaited teaser of ‘War 2’ on Tuesday, marking Jr NTR’s birthday with a bang. While the high-octane face-off between Hrithik Roshan and Jr NTR has fans hooked, it is Kiara Advani’s tiny teaser of a moment that is sending the internet into overdrive.

In the teaser, Kiara is seen confidently walking along a beach in a golden bikini, flaunting her toned figure and radiant glow. Another moment in the teaser shows Kiara getting romantic with co-star Hrithik.

The short but impactful shots have quickly become a viral sensation. Comments like “She is glowing even in a two-second shot” and



“Pregnant or not, Kiara is a total goddess” are just a glimpse into the buzz surrounding her appearance.

‘War 2’, directed by Ayan Mukerji and produced by Yash Raj Films, is the sequel to the 2019 blockbuster ‘War’. The film stars Hrithik reprising his role

as Kabir, ‘India’s best soldier’, now facing off against Jr NTR in what promises to be an epic spy-versus-spy showdown.

The film is scheduled for release in theatres on August 14, in Hindi, Telugu and Tamil – just in time for the Independence Day weekend.

## Paresh Rawal dropped from Hera Pheri 3; Suniel Shetty reveals why?

*Says he was left completely heartbroken after hearing the news*

The trio—Raju, Shyam, and Baburao Ganpatrao Apte, aka Babu Bhaiya—in ‘Hera Pheri’ are loved by fans across the globe.

When Paresh Rawal, who played the iconic Baburao Ganpatrao Apte in the film, recently confirmed he would not be a part of ‘Hera Pheri 3,’ fans weren’t the only ones heartbroken.

Rawal’s sudden exit from the popular franchise was also a big blow to actor Suniel Shetty, who played the calm and collected Shyam in the classic comedy.

Suniel, while speaking to ANI, expressed his “shock” over Rawal’s exit. He said he was left “completely heartbroken” after hearing the news.

“I mean, it’s an absolute shock to me, and



I’m here because I heard it yesterday, and then today, some more news came about. So, I need to call and find out, and I’m completely heartbroken because if there was one film that I was looking forward to, it was Hera Pheri, you know,” Shetty.

Suniel also made it

clear that he feels a third instalment cannot happen without ‘Babu Bhaiya.’ “It cannot happen. 100 per cent cannot happen without Paresh Rawal. It can have 1 per cent chance without me and Akshay, but 100% can’t happen without Paresh ji. No, it doesn’t. Raju

and Shyam, if they’re not hammered by Babu here, it doesn’t work,” he added.

Last week, Rawal posted a note on X (formerly Twitter) to confirm that he won’t be part of the third installment and clarify that his exit wasn’t due to any creative disagreement.

“I wish to put it on record that my decision to step away from Hera Pheri 3 was not due to creative differences,” he wrote on X, adding, “I REITERATE THAT THERE ARE NO CREATIVE DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE FILMMAKER. I hold immense love, respect, and faith in Mr. Priyadarshan, the film’s director,” Rawal wrote on X.

Directed by Priyadarshan, ‘Hera Pheri’ was released in 2000. It featured Akshay Kumar, Suniel Shetty, Paresh Rawal, and Tabu in the lead roles.

The second part, which came out in 2006, was directed by the late Neeraj Vora. It featured Akshay, Paresh, Suniel, Bipasha Basu, Rajpal Yadav, and Rimi Sen in the lead roles.

## Happy didn’t get typecast doing only special songs in films: Tamannaah Bhatia

Actor Tamannaah Bhatia says whether it is her special songs in movies, her performance in films or on OTT, as an entertainer, her aim is to reach out to her audience.

The actor, who has featured in special appearance in a song in some of the recent films like Kannada blockbuster “KGF: Chapter 1” starring Yash, Rajnikanth-led “Jailer”, “Stree 2”, John Abraham’s “Vedaa” and Ajay Devgn’s “Raid 2”, said song is “one of the many things” she does.

“It happens with a lot of people, they do get typecast. But it hasn’t happened with me because I do long format, features, and I work in different languages, and industries. I work on stage, I make reels. I’m an entertainer. I’m only interested in reaching people,” Bhatia told agency.

“I don’t consider any platform small or big. My job is to entertain people in some way, and whenever I get that opportu-

nity, I give it my all with respect and interest, I give it my all. I hope people like it.”

The actor said she has a slew of exciting films in the pipeline in Bollywood like “Ranger” with Ajay Devgn, Rakesh Maria biopic with John Abraham, “No Entry” sequel and folk thriller “Vvan” with Sidharth Malhotra.

“Everything leads to something. It’s a misnomer that if you do something, you become typecast. I’ve done a lot of songs, if you count how many songs I’ve done, you will be stunned. But every song has either given me a connection with the people or taught me a little dance.

“In my childhood, I didn’t have any dance training. So, whatever I’ve learnt is on a set. Every song either teaches you something or connects you to people,” Bhatia, who has appeared in special songs in many South films like “Alludu Seenu”, “Speedundodu”, “Jaguar”, and



“Jailer”, said.

The 35-year-old actor’s special appearances in hit songs like ‘Jokae Nannu’ from ‘KGF: Chapter 1’, ‘Kaavaalaa’ from Rajinikanth’s ‘Jailer’, ‘Aaj Ki Raat’ from ‘Stree 2’, and ‘Nasha’ from ‘Raid 2’ have captured the attention of the masses.

Bhatia, who features in South and Hindi language films, said she feels happy when a film with her special appear-

ance attains commercial success.

“It’s been on since maybe ‘KGF’, in which I did a song. Then I’ve done a song in Rajinikanth’s film, ‘Jailer’, a song in ‘Stree 2’, and now ‘Raid 2’. The fact that all these films have made this kind of money, it’s extremely validating. I’m just happy that even if I could contribute just through a song, and just the translation of the box office numbers

is validating,” she said.

The actor fondly recounted her childhood experiences with dance, and revealed that it became her language of happiness at an early age.

“At birthday parties, I was the kid who would catch all the kids and say, ‘let’s dance’. I was that over enthusiastic kid. I was maybe four or five years old. There are photos where I am happily dancing at birthday parties.

“I used to love the song ‘Tamma Tamma Loge’, I still love it. Back then I thought it’s my name because some people used to call me Tamma when I was little. I also loved ‘Saat Samundar Paar,’” Bhatia said.

The actor was speaking on the sidelines of 23rd Zee Cine Awards 2025, where she performed on stage on a medley of some of the most popular special songs like ‘Kajra Re’, ‘Sheila Ki Jawani’, ‘Kaala Chashma’, and ‘Aaj Ki Raat’, among others.

## Saiyami Kher recalls facing casting couch at 19: Was asked to make compromises



Actor Saiyami Kher, who made her Bollywood debut with Rakesh Omprakash Mehra’s ‘Mirzya’, recently made a revelation about her struggling days. Saiyami said that she was asked to compromise for a role in a Telugu movie.

Saiyami in an interview with agency, recalled the interaction with a female casting agent and said, “I have been very fortunate with regards to all the offers I have received. In the film industry, there was this one agent who called me for a Telugu film when I was 19 or

20 years old. She said, ‘You know, you will have to make compromises.’ I was trying to test her, because it was a woman saying it to another woman. I felt that deeply.”

She further added, “So I said, ‘Ma’am, I’m not understanding what you are saying.’ I kept repeating that. And then finally she said, ‘See, you have to understand.’ So I said, ‘I’m sorry that you feel I’m someone who needs to go down this route. There are certain limits I have never crossed in my life.’ So yes, I have experienced it once, but it was just that one time when a woman actually asked me this.”

Saiyami was paired opposite Anil Kapoor’s son, Harshvardhan Kapoor in ‘Mirzya.’ She later featured in movies such as ‘Choked,’ ‘Unpaused,’ and Telugu films like Nagarjuna’s ‘Wild Dog’ and ‘Highway.’ She was also praised for her roles in R Balki’s ‘Ghoomer,’ co-starring Abhishek Bachchan and Tahira Kashyap’s ‘Sharmajee Ki Beti.’

Saiyami was last seen in Sunny Deol-starrer action-drama ‘Jaat’ where she played Sub-Inspector Vijaya Lakshmi.

The Gopichand Malineni directorial also featured Randeep Hooda, Regina Cassandra, Vineet Kumar Singh and others in crucial roles.

Saiyami is the granddaughter of late actor Usha Kiran and niece of actor Tanvi Azmi.



## PM Modi pays tributes to Rajiv Gandhi on 34th death anniversary

NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday paid tributes to former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 34th death anniversary.

In a post on X, Modi said, "On his death anniversary today, I pay my tributes to our former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi Ji." Rajiv Gandhi was the last Congress prime minister to have headed a majority government, from 1984 to 1989. He was assassinated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a Sri Lanka-based terrorist organisation, on this day in 1991 while campaigning at Sripurumbudur in Tamil Nadu.

His son Rahul Gandhi is currently the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha.



## Rahul accuses govt of ‘misusing’ governors to ‘obstruct’ elected state govts

NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday accused the government of "misusing" governors to "stifle voices and obstruct elected state governments", saying this is a dangerous assault on federalism.

In a post on X, he said this must be resisted as each Indian state has its own voice.

"India's strength lies in its diversity – a Union of States, each with its own voice.

"The Modi government is misusing Governors to stifle those voices and obstruct elected state governments. This



is a dangerous assault on federalism and it must be resisted," the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha wrote.

Gandhi tagged Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin's post in which he condemned the Union government's presidential reference, saying, it "attempts to subvert the Constitutional position already settled by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the Tamil Nadu Governor's case and other precedents".

"This attempt clearly exposes the fact that the Tamil Nadu Governor acted at the BJP's behest to undermine the people's mandate.

"This is nothing but a desperate attempt to weaken democratically elected State Governments by placing them under the control of Governors serving as agents of the Union Government. It also directly challenges the majesty of law and the authority of the Supreme Court as the final interpreter of the Constitution," Stalin had said in his post on X.

## PM Modi sending delegations to divert attention from tough questions: Jairam Ramesh

NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has suddenly decided to send multi-party delegations of MPs to foreign countries in an attempt to divert attention from mounting criticism and questions about his leadership.

The Congress leader claimed that the move comes at a time when the prime minister's global image has taken a hit.

In a social media post marking the 34th death anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Ramesh said that the practice of sending MPs from various parties to the United Nations in New York every October-November had been in place since the 1950s. However, he noted that this tradition was halted after Modi took office in 2014.

"Now, desperate and facing serious questions, with his image globally shattered, Mr. Modi has suddenly revived the idea of all-party MP delegations abroad to deflect attention," Ramesh wrote.

Paying tribute to Rajiv Gandhi, Ramesh said what he described as Gandhi's "humanity, goodness, and decency"—traits he claimed were missing in the current prime minister.

He also shared a video of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee recalling how Rajiv Gandhi ensured Vajpayee was included in a UN delegation so he could receive medical treatment overseas at government expense, despite being a political rival.

Earlier this week, Congress had taken a swipe at Prime Minister Modi with Ramesh saying the same prime minister who had abused the Congress publicly in countries such as Australia, the US, South Korea and China, was taking the help of the opposition party in these delegations.



## 720 pilgrims to embark on Kailash Manasarovar yatra that begins after 5-year hiatus this summer

*This year's selection of pilgrims was made through a lucky draw, a computer-generated, random, and gender-balanced selection process*

NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): A total of 720 pilgrims, including 30 liaison officers, will go for Kailash Manasarovar Yatra this summer after five years, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced in a ceremony on Wednesday.

This year's selection of pilgrims was made through a lucky draw, a computer-generated, random, and gender-balanced selection process.

The yatra has remained suspended for five successive years. It has not taken place since 2020, following the Covid outbreak and the subsequent non-renewal of yatra arrangements by the Chinese side. It will resume this summer from the third week of June and will end on August 25th.

The pilgrimage will be held through two routes, one via Uttarakhand and the other via Sikkim. In all, 720 Indian nationals will be permitted to undertake the religious pilgrimage, while 30 liaison officers will accompany them.

Mount Kailash and Manasarovar Lake are holy sites for the Hindu religion and are located in Tibet.

Giving a breakdown of the 720 pilgrims, the MEA said 5 batches, each consisting of 48 Yatris, are scheduled to travel through Uttarakhand State, crossing over at Lipulekh Pass, and 10 batches, each consisting of 48 Yatris, are scheduled to travel through Sikkim State, crossing over at Nathu La Pass, respectively. Along with the pilgrims, 30 liaison officers have been deputed in service of the pilgrims.

This year, 5,384 total applicants were received for the pilgrimage, which included 3,898 males and 1,486 females. It also included 404 people over the age of 65 years who had registered for the yatra.

In his address, Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Kirti Vardhan Singh, said that apart from Hindus, this yatra is also sacred for Buddhists and Jains. "5,000



people had applied online. The roads have been made motorable towards Lipulekh pass and Nathula pass. This will benefit elderly pilgrims," he said.

He also informed that the pilgrims will stay at the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Bhawan at Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh before the commencement of their pilgrimage.

Singh urged pilgrims to ensure that this "sacred place" is not polluted with leftovers during their pilgrimage.

India now has a fully paved road to its side of Lipulekh Pass, a 16,870 feet high mountain crossing between Uttarakhand, India, and Tibet.

In 2020, the Border Roads Organisation, under the Ministry of Defence, opened the 80 km road between Dharchula and Lipulekh. This reduced the five-day one-way trek to a four-to five-hour car drive. The Sikkim route via Nathu La onwards entails a 4 to 5-day road journey into the Tibet autonomous region.

## 27 Naxalites killed in encounter in Chhattisgarh, ‘top leader among them’

NARAYANPUR, May 21 (Agencies): At least 27 Naxalites have been killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, officials said on Wednesday, with sources claiming that top Maoist leader Basavaraju was among them.

A member of the District Reserve Guard (DRG), a unit of state police, was also killed in action while some others sustained injuries, police said.

Security forces achieved "historic success" during the encounter as a top Maoist leader was eliminated, a senior police official said without giving more details.

Sources claimed that Nambala Keshava Rao alias Basavaraju, the general secretary of the outlawed Communist Party of India (Maoist) who was in his late 60s, was among the slain Maoists, though police did not confirm it officially.

The encounter took place in dense forests of Abhujmad on the tri-junction of Narayanpur-Bijapur-Dantewada districts, the senior police official said.

The operation involving personnel of DRG from Narayanpur, Dantewada, Bijapur, and Kondagaon was launched two days ago based on intelligence inputs about the presence of Central Committee and Politburo members of the Maoists, as well as senior Maad Division cadres and PLGA (Peoples' Liberation Guerilla Army) members, he said.

"So far, the bodies of



27 Naxalites and a large number of weapons have been recovered," the official said.

"One DRG team member was martyred, while a few other personnel sustained injuries during the encounter. All the injured have been administered medical aid and their condition is out of danger," the official added.

The search operation was still underway, he said.

Earlier in the day, deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma who holds the Home portfolio said some top cadres were among the slain Naxalites.

With the latest action, 200 Naxalites have been killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh so far this year. Of them, 183 were eliminated in the Bastar division which includes districts of Bijapur, Narayanpur, Dantewada and Kondagaon.

## Six killed in road accident in Karnataka's Vijayapura district



VIJAYAPURA, May 21 (Agencies): In a tragic road accident that occurred early Wednesday morning near Managuli village, a Mahindra XUV300 travelling towards Solapur jumped the median and collided head-on with a VRL bus coming from Mumbai and heading to Ballari.

The impact of the collision claimed six lives, including five occupants of the SUV and the driver of the bus. All the deceased SUV passengers belonged to the same family from Gadiwal, Telangana.

The deceased have been identified as T. Bhaskaran Manikanthan, a Canara Bank Manager, Pavithra, his wife, Abhiram, their son, Jyotsana, their daughter, Vikas Makani, driver of the SUV, and Basavaraj Rathor, the driver of the VRL bus, hailing from Talagutagi Tanda.

A 10-year-old boy, Praveen Tej, son of Bhaskaran sustained injuries and is undergoing treatment.

Superintendent of Police Laxman Nimbargi, along with other police officials, visited the accident site. A case has been registered at the Managuli Police Station, and further investigation is underway.

## Woman's body found in suitcase near Bengaluru, likely thrown out of train

*Police suspect the suitcase was thrown out of a moving train*

BENGALURU, May 21 (Agencies): A torn, blue suitcase was discovered near a railway bridge in Bengaluru on Wednesday and its contents were chilling - the body of a woman, who is suspected to have been murdered.

The suitcase was found near the old Chandapura railway bridge on the outskirts of Bengaluru by local residents, and police suspect it was thrown out of a moving train.

"Preliminary investigation suggests that the woman was murdered elsewhere and the body, which was stuffed in a suitcase, was thrown out of a moving train. We have not found any

identification document on the body and are trying to find out details about the woman, like her name, age and where she was from," an official said.

The Bengaluru police are registering a first information report (FIR) and the body has been sent for a post-mortem. Superintendent of



Police (Bengaluru Rural) CK Baba said, "We have begun our investigation. It appears that the suit-

case was thrown from railway property, most likely from a moving train.

Though such cases typically fall under the railway police's jurisdiction, we are involved since the incident may have ties to our area. The suitcase contained only the body - no ID or personal belongings

were found. The girl appears to be at least 18 years old, but her identity remains unknown."

In a similar case in March, the body of a 32-year-old woman, Gauri Anil Sambekar, was found stuffed in a suitcase at a house in Bengaluru's Hulimavu. Her husband, Rakesh Sambekar, was arrested

from Pune and he had reportedly called her parents and confessed to the murder.

The couple, who were from Maharashtra, had got married two years ago and had moved to Bengaluru in January. While Rakesh worked as a project manager at an IT firm, Gauri was looking for a job.



## Trump unveils plan for \$175 billion 'Golden Dome' missile defence shield, appoints leader

*Golden Dome missile defence shield aims to block threats from China and Russia*

WASHINGTON, May 21 (Agencies): President Donald Trump said that he had selected a design for the \$175 billion Golden Dome missile defence shield and named a Space Force general to head the ambitious programme aimed at blocking threats from China and Russia.

The programme, first ordered by Trump in January, aims to create a network of satellites, perhaps numbering in the hundreds, to detect, track and potentially intercept incoming missiles.

Trump told a White House press conference that US Space Force General Michael Guetlein would be the lead program manager for an effort widely viewed as the keystone to Trump's military planning.

Golden Dome will "protect our homeland," Trump said, adding that Canada had said it wanted to be part of it.

In a statement, the office of Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said he and his ministers were discussing a new security and economic relationship with their American counterparts.

"These discussions naturally include strengthening NORAD and related initiatives such as the Golden Dome," it added.

Trump said the defence shield, which would cost some \$175 billion, should be operational by the end of his term in January 2029, but industry experts were less certain of that timeframe and the cost.



"Ronald Reagan wanted it many years ago, but they didn't have the technology," Trump said, referring to the space-based missile defence system, popularly called "Star Wars", that Reagan proposed.

The Golden Dome programme faces both political scrutiny and funding uncertainty.

"The new datapoint is the \$175 billion, but the question remains, over what period of time. It's probably 10 years," said Tom Karako of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Silicon Valley and US software expertise can be leveraged to bring advances, while also using existing missile defence systems, he added.

This month, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that Golden Dome could cost as much as \$831 billion over two decades.

Democratic lawmakers have voiced concern about the procurement process and involve-

ment of Trump ally Elon Musk's SpaceX, which has emerged as a frontrunner alongside Palantir and Anduril to build key components of the system.

"The new autonomous space-age defence ecosystem is more about Silicon Valley than it is about 'big metal,'" Senator Kevin Cramer of North Dakota said at the White House event.

"So what's exciting about this is it makes it available to everybody to participate, to compete."

"Big metal" refers to legacy defence contractors.

The Golden Dome idea was inspired by Israel's land-based Iron Dome defence shield that protects it from missiles and rockets.

Trump's Golden Dome is much more extensive, including a massive array of surveillance satellites and a separate fleet of attacking satellites that would shoot down offensive missiles soon after lift-off.

Tuesday's announcement

kicks off the Pentagon's effort to test and ultimately buy the missiles, systems, sensors and satellites that will constitute Golden Dome.

Trump said Alaska would be a big part of the program, while Florida, Georgia and Indiana would also benefit.

Many of the early systems are expected to come from existing production lines. Attendees at the press conference named L3Harris Technologies, Lockheed Martin and RTX Corp as potential contractors for the massive project.

L3 has invested \$150 million in building out its new facility in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where it makes the Hypersonic and Ballistic Tracking Space Sensor satellites that are part of a Pentagon effort to better detect and track hypersonic weapons with space-based sensors and could be adapted for Golden Dome.

Golden Dome's funding remains uncertain. Republican lawmakers have proposed a \$25-billion initial investment for Golden Dome as part of a broader \$150-billion defence package, but this funding is tied to a contentious reconciliation bill that faces significant hurdles in Congress.

"Unless reconciliation passes, the funds for Golden Dome may not materialize," said an industry executive following the programme, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "This puts the entire project timeline in jeopardy."

## EU pushes to review trade pact with Israel in wake of humanitarian concerns



BRUSSELS, May 21 (Agencies): The EU on Wednesday decided to review Article 2 of its trade agreement with Israel, which was signed in 2000. The EU in its statement noted that Humanitarian principles matter for every conflict around the world and should be applied consistently in every warzone.

"Whilst we acknowledge indications of a limited restart of aid, Israel blocked humanitarian aid entering Gaza for over two months. Food, medicines and essential supplies are exhausted. The population faces starvation. Gaza's people must receive the aid they desperately need," the statement said.

"This means that if Israel is found to have

breached its human rights obligations, it will face sanctions. But for the time being, the EU is just trying to put further pressure on Israel, hoping that it will one day allow more aid into Gaza," the statement added.

Kallas, speaking to reporters after a meeting in Brussels, said that pressure is necessary to change the situation and that a strong majority of the bloc's nations favour this review, Al Jazeera reported.

Just a few months ago, there was no consensus here at the EU on the need to put pressure on Israel or to implement sanctions. But over the last few days, they've managed to build more momentum towards a new push and get this review of the trade

agreement, as per Al Jazeera.

If, in the future, there is no progress and the EU feels the Israelis are weaponising aid to continue the carnage in Gaza, then it will convene once again and decide on its next step, which could be imposing sanctions. This will still be a delicate task, because key players like Germany says that sanctions are off the table, but people do feel there is a new consensus building towards taking stronger action against Israel and that otherwise the EU will be blamed for betraying the Palestinian people.

Meanwhile, Israel's Foreign Ministry rejected the statement by the EU and claimed that the "war was forced upon Israel by the Hamas."

"This war was forced upon Israel by Hamas, and Hamas is the one responsible for its continuation. Israel agreed time and again to the American proposals to a ceasefire and to the release of the hostages. Hamas refused each and every one of these proposals... We call on the EU to exert pressure where it belongs -- on Hamas", Israel's Foreign Ministry stated in a post on X.

## Pope calls for 'sufficient humanitarian aid' into Gaza

VATICAN CITY, May 21 (Agencies): Pope Leo XIV called Wednesday for sufficient humanitarian aid to be allowed into war-ravaged Gaza, where humanitarian agencies say a total blockade has sparked critical food and medicine shortages.

"The situation in the Gaza Strip is worrying and painful," the pope said during his first weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square.

"I renew my heartfelt appeal to allow the entry of sufficient humanitarian aid and to put an end to the hostilities, the heartbreaking price of which is paid by children, the elderly, the sick," he said.

Leo, who was elected on May 8 to be the Catholic Church's first US pope, has made peace a theme of his



papacy so far, calling for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war.

Israel has come under massive international pressure to abandon its intensified military campaign in Gaza and allow urgent humanitarian aid into the besieged strip.

The UN announced Monday that it had been cleared to send in aid for the first time since Israel

imposed a total blockade on March 2, sparking severe shortages of food and medicine.

But aid groups say the amount allowed in is not enough to meet needs.

The Israeli army stepped up its offensive in Gaza at the weekend, vowing to defeat Hamas, whose unprecedented October 7, 2023 attack on Israel triggered the war.

## Japan minister quits after saying he doesn't buy rice, gets it "for free"

TOKYO, May 21 (Agencies): Japan's agriculture minister, Taku Eto, resigned on Wednesday following widespread uproar over his insensitive comment about receiving rice as gifts.

The agriculture minister said he always relied on rice as gifts from supporters and never purchased it on his own.

His statement over the country's traditional staple food drew public outrage, and he faced pressure to step down.

The minister initially expressed sympathy for the "hardship" that customers were going through after the government released over 300,000 tonnes of rice from emergency stockpiles earlier this year in an attempt to lower costs.

During a fundraiser by the Liberal Democratic



Party, he said that he had "never bought rice myself since my supporters donate so much to me that I can practically sell it."

Several Japanese perceived Mr Eto's statements as far removed from economic realities.

"I made an extremely improper remark at a time when consum-

ers are struggling with soaring rice prices," Mr Eto said after he handed in his resignation at the prime minister's office, the Associated Press reported.

"I submitted my resignation to Prime Minister Ishiba," Mr Eto told The Guardian.

The minister's blunder came in the middle of a growing political challenge against Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's government ahead of the next elections. Japan struggles with rice shortages spurred by poor harvests and rising production costs.

Mr Eto's resignation has heightened pressure on Ishiba, who has infuriated voters ahead of the July upper house elections by failing to control skyrocketing rice prices and address a broader crisis of cost of living.

The prices of rice at supermarkets increased to a record 4,268 yen (Rs 2,543) for 5 kg in the week ending May 11 from 4,214 yen (Rs 2,511) the week before. This was about twice the price in 2024, according to reports.

According to the most recent statistics from the agricultural min-

istry, the government has released tonnes of rice from its emergency stockpile, but the action has had little effect. Cheaper imported rice is now available at several supermarkets.

According to a recent Kyodo survey, 87 per cent of participants expressed dissatisfaction with the way the government has handled rice pricing, and Ishiba's cabinet's approval ratings have fallen to their lowest levels since he took office in October.

Several factors have been cited for Japan's rice shortage, including low harvests due to hot weather in 2023 and impulse purchases in response to a 2024 "megquake" prediction. It is also believed that distributors and wholesalers are stockpiling rice in case of any more shortages.

## What Israel is doing now in Gaza is close to a war crime: Former PM of Israel Ehud Olmert

JERUSALEM, May 21 (Agencies): "What Israel is doing now in Gaza is very close to a war crime," former Prime Minister of Israel Ehud Olmert has said, even as Israeli forces killed at least 42 Palestinians across Gaza since Wednesday morning.

The Benjamin Netanyahu's government were waging "a war without a purpose -- a war without a chance of achieving anything that can save the lives of the hostages."

A critic of the current Israeli leadership, Olmert told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that nothing but domestic and international political pressure will convince Benjamin Netanyahu to pull back

from a renewed offensive in Gaza.

Olmert, who was prime minister from 2006 to 2009 said that the "obvious appearance" of the campaign was that Israel was killing many Palestinians, and that "from every point of view, this is obnoxious and outrageous."

Thousands of children in Gaza are at risk of imminent death after a nearly three-month total Israeli blockade on the besieged enclave, which has spread famine, the United Nations relief chief warned.

That has put 14,000 babies at risk of dying in the next 48 hours, Tom Fletcher said in an interview with agency.

According to the emergency coordinator



in Gaza for the medical aid group Doctors Without Borders, the medical supplies are "critically low." "There is a small amount of aid that is inside, but it hasn't reached the communities at all," she said, adding Israeli officials are placing conditions on how it is distributed which are "not safe".

Meanwhile, homes and hospitals are "being targeted" and "the access to healthcare and to any

kind of assistance is becoming impossible", she said.

The condition of people there is "deteriorating", and the number of children coming in with third-degree burns is "horrific". The "agony" of children without pain medication, people on the streets "desperate for food", and mothers "watching their children starve", are things that are "getting worse every day", she added.

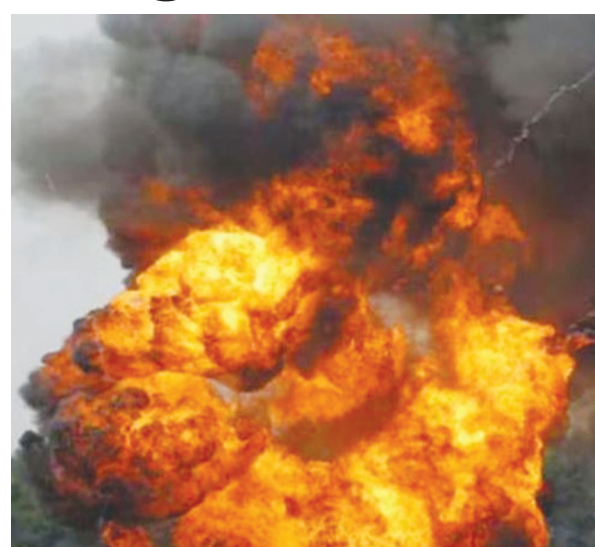
## Suicide bomber strikes school bus in Pakistan, killing 4 children, officials say

QUETTA, May 21 (Agencies): A suicide car bomber struck a school bus in restive southwestern Pakistan on Wednesday, killing at least four children and wounding 38 others, a government official said.

A local deputy commissioner, Yasir Iqbal, said the attack occurred in Khuzdar, a district in Balochistan province, as the bus was transporting children to school in the city.

No group immediately claimed responsibility, though suspicion is likely to fall on ethnic Baloch separatists, who frequently target security forces and civilians in the region.

Pakistan's Interior



Minister Mohsin Naqvi strongly condemned the attack and expressed deep sorrow over the children's deaths. He called the perpetrators "beasts" who deserve no leniency, saying the

enemy had committed an act of "sheer barbarism by targeting innocent children."

Balochistan has been the scene of a long-running insurgency, with an array of separatist

groups staging attacks, including the outlawed Balochistan Liberation Army, designated as a terrorist organization by the United States in 2019.

The latest attack came days after a car bombing killed four people near a market in Qillah Abdullah, a city in Balochistan province bordering Afghanistan.

Most of such attacks are claimed by BLA, which Pakistan says enjoyed the backing of neighboring India.

In one of the deadliest such attacks in March, BLA insurgents killed 33 people, mostly soldiers, during an assault on a train carrying hundreds of passengers in Balochistan.



# “Govt efforts’ should not be limited to Kashmir alone” Raman Suri urges revival of Jammu tourism amid post-Pahalgam decline

## Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: Raman Suri, Executive Member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), on Wednesday addressed the pressing issue of declining tourism in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the Jammu division, following the tragic Pahalgam incident.

He expressed deep concern over the steep decline in tourist inflow, which has severely impacted the region's economy, including a significant drop in pilgrimages to the revered Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji Shrine.

“Tourism is the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's economy, but the sector is currently grappling with a severe recession due to the situation arising from the Pahalgam massacre,” said Suri. “While the Kashmir Valley has been the focus of attention, the Jammu division and its adjoining areas, which are calmer and safer, are also suffering significant losses.

The decline in pilgrimages to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi is particularly alarming, as it is a major spiritual and economic driver for the region.”With two major events on the horizon—Mela Mata Shri Kheer Bhawani and the Shri Amarnath ji Cave Shrine Yatra, Suri urged the UT Government to act swiftly to restore confidence among tourists and pilgrims.

He acknowledged the government's commitment to formulating an effective action plan by engaging with stakeholders to revive tourism. However, he cautioned that the cur-

rent efforts appear to be disproportionately focused on the Kashmir Valley, leaving the Jammu division's potential untapped.

“The government's intentions are not in doubt, but the indications suggest that its efforts are largely limited to the Kashmir Valley,” Suri remarked. “The loss suffered by the Jammu division must be taken seriously. In the present circumstances, when Jammu is relatively peaceful and secure, there is immense potential to attract tourists and pilgrims to its scenic and spiritual destinations.”

Suri emphasized the untapped tourism potential of Jammu's remote hilly areas and picturesque locations situated 25-30 km from major highways. He highlighted destinations such as Chenani, Sudh Mahadev, Bani, Basohli and Latni, besides other such destinations located near the popular hill stations of Bhaderwah and Patnitop, as ideal spots for promotion. Additionally, he pointed to the ancient Krimchi Mansar Temple, believed to have been built by the Pandavas, located just before Pancheri, Udhampur. These areas, known for their serene climate and historical significance, are free from terrorism and far from the international border and Line of Control (LoC), making them safe and attractive for visitors.

“These locations in Jammu division have been overlooked from a tourism perspective,” said Raman Suri. “By promoting these safe and serene destinations, the government can not only boost

tourism in the region but also ensure that tourists feel secure, free from the threats of terrorist violence or cross-border shelling by Pakistan.”

Raman Suri called on the UT Government to develop a comprehensive strategy to promote Jammu's tourism and religious sites, including targeted marketing campaigns, infrastructure development, and collaboration with local stakeholders. He stressed that such measures would not only revive the region's economy but also provide a safe and welcoming experience for tourists and pilgrims.

“The BJP stands committed to supporting all efforts to restore Jammu and Kashmir's tourism sector to its full potential,” Raman Suri said. “We urge the government to act swiftly and inclusively, ensuring that the Jammu division's unique offerings are highlighted to bring tourism back on track across the Union Territory.”

# Vi launches new campaign; highlights addition of over 1,00,000 towers in 6 months

## Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: Vi, India's leading telecom operator, today unveiled its latest campaign, celebrating a significant milestone – the addition of over 1,00,000 towers across India in 6 months of FY2425. This achievement highlights Vi's commitment to strengthening its network infrastructure, underlines its scale and speed in network infrastructure expansion.

Taking its network narrative forward in a refreshing and engaging format, the campaign debuts Vi's all new Network Avatars – The Net-ties, - a set of animated characters inspired by mobile towers. Riding on the wave of IPL excitement, these avatars have been brought together as a dynamic team of cricket players, symbolizing they are the strongest team of the season. This fun and spirited squad embodies the strength, scale, and agility of Vi's evolving network by bringing to life its network credentials in a unique and memorable way.

In recent months, Vi

has made rapid progress in its network expansion. It launched 5G services in Mumbai, Chandigarh and Patna and is gearing up to launch in Delhi and Bangalore soon. In parallel, Vi has also strengthened its 4G network, expanding capacity and coverage through the deployment of new towers and upgrades across the 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, and 2300 MHz spectrum bands. These enhancements have resulted in stronger indoor and outdoor coverage, improved data speeds, and a wider service footprint – ensuring a robust 4G experience, which is now reaching a total of 1.07 billion population.

Speaking on the occasion Avneesh Khosla, Chief Marketing Officer, Vi said “Our network expansion is not just about scale, but also smart, strategic deployment. By prioritizing high-traffic areas, leveraging spectrum efficiently, and focusing on delivering a quality indoor experience, we're building a future-proof, high-performance network. The addition

of 1 lakh towers in six months and recognition for the best 4G experience underscores Vi's commitment to delivering consistent, quality

connectivity while creating long-term value for our customers.”

Rohit Dubey, Sr. ECD, Ogilvy said “When creating for Vi, we believe

every piece of communication should spark joy—that's why we chose animation to tell a technical story with heart.

# ACD Kishwtwar reviews MGNREGA implementation in District

## Top News Report

KISHTWAR, May 21: CEO KDA/ACD Kishtwar Sh.Kaiser Ahmed Bhawani (JKAS),convened a comprehensive review meeting today with all Block Development Officers (BDOs) to assess the ongoing implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the district.

The review meeting focused on critical components of the scheme, including the projection and estimation of works, execution timelines, and provision of wage employment to job card holders.

The ACD also evaluated the current status of the RR plan and underscored the need for timely completion of planned activities.

During the meeting,



the ACD emphasized the importance of coordinated and dedicated efforts to meet MGNREGA targets.

He instructed all officers to ensure transparency, timely payments, and resolution

of field-level challenges to maximize the impact of the scheme.

AD Planning RDD Kishtwar,AAO RDD Kishtwar besides other Concerned staff was also present during the meeting

# Life of Guru Ravidas has been symbol of equality, brotherhood: Balbir

## Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: Balbir Ram Rattan, National General Secretary of Guru Ravidas Vishwa Mahapeeth, General Secretary of the British Ravidasia Heritage Foundation (Indian Chapter), and member of the Begampura Vishwa Mahasabha, said that the life of great saint, social reformer, and spiritual teacher, Guru Ravidas, has been a symbol of equality, freedom, and brotherhood.

He raised his voice against social discrimination, casteism, and the evils of hierarchy, envisioning a society based on equality, where everyone

receives equal rights, opportunities, and respect.

While discussing Guru Ravidas' vision of the 'Begampura State' with retired Executive Engineer and BJP Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Co-incharge T.K. Sharma, Balbir said that Guru Ji dreamed of an ideal society where no one would have to sleep hungry, where there would be no sense of superiority or inferiority, and where every individual would receive the full reward for their hard work.

Referring to Guru Ji's famous hymn ‘Aisa Chahoon Raj Main, Jahan Mile Saban Ko Ann...’ (I long for such a kingdom where



everyone has food...), he said that these lines present a clear

vision of a welfare state where no one is poor, neglected, or

an outsider.

Guru ji's thoughts remain a source of inspiration even today and motivate us to reflect on whether we have truly built such a society where everyone receives justice, equality, and dignity.

Balbir Ram Rattan emphasized that today, more than ever, there is a need to adopt Guru Ravidass ji's teachings in our lives and eliminate all kinds of discrimination based on caste, religion, and class, to build an India that truly becomes 'Begampura'—a society where there is no place for sorrow, discrimination, or injustice.

# FromPage No: 1

## LG Sinha visits Poonch Shelling Victims, Promises Jobs, Bunkers, And Rehabilitation Support

Army's swift and strategic response.

He added, “The recent attacks by Pakistan, such as the Pahalgam incident, where 26 civilians were killed, were met with a firm and strategic response from the Indian Army... Pakistan responded with panic, realising that none of their military establishment is beyond the reach of the Indian Army. Within three days, they were seeking international intervention.”

He reiterated India's commitment to peace but warned, “India is not a supporter of war, but if provoked again, the response will be even more decisive.”

The LG also assured that efforts are underway to rehabilitate the affected families with the support of both the Central and J&K governments. Among the rehabilitation measures, at least one government job will be offered to the kin of those who lost their lives in cross-border firing.

LG Manoj Sinha added, “I pay homage to those who lost their lives in shelling by Pakistan... Multiple people were injured and J&K arranged for their immediate treatment... Efforts are being made to compensate for the loss of lives... The Central and J&K governments are rehabilitating people.”

“A government job will be given to at least one of the kin of those who died in the cross-border firing by Pakistan... Individual and commu-

nity bunkers will be made in huge numbers... Poonch hospital will be prepared for any kind of emergency,” Sinha told media reporters.

Earlier in the day, LG Sinha visited the Poonch Brigade headquarters, where he met Indian Army soldiers and Border Security Force (BSF) personnel stationed in the area.

During his visit, LG Sinha addressed the forces, saying, “Today, the whole world knows Indian Armed Forces destroyed nine terror sites in Pakistan... Within three days, the enemy came down on its knees and started reaching out to the world... The whole country is proud of your bravery and valour.”

## Rahul Gandhi and Kharge pay tribute to former PM Rajiv Gandhi on his 34th death anniversary

18, strengthening Panchayati Raj, spearheading the Telecom and IT revolution, implementing a computerisation program, securing sustained peace accords, launching a universal immunisation program, and introducing a new education policy focused on inclusive learning,” he said.

In a post on X, Pilot called Rajiv Gandhi a visionary leader who took India to new heights.

“I pay my heartfelt tribute to former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi ji on his ‘Balidan Diwas’. Rajiv Gandhi was a visionary leader who gave direction to the country by providing a progressive outlook through his leadership and modern thinking. His decisions took India to new heights,” Pilot

wrote on X.

“His contribution is an inspiration to us and his memory will always live in our hearts,” he added.

Congress, in a post on X, also remembered the former PM and said that Rajiv Gandhi's contribution in the creation of modern India is unforgettable.

“Respectful tribute to the former Prime Minister of the country, Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi ji, on his death anniversary. Rajiv ji's contribution in the creation of modern India is unforgettable. His vision, thoughts on science-technology and youth empowerment inspire us even today,” Congress said.

Former Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar highlighted that Rajiv Gandhi laid the foundation for a Digital India. He also shared his relationship with the former PM, calling him a mentor who inspired and empowered him.

“Remembering former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi on his death anniversary. A visionary, he laid the foundation for a Digital India and ushered in the IT and telecom revolution,” DK Shivakumar wrote on X.

“For me, he was more than a towering figure in Indian politics, he was a mentor. I am one among the many he inspired and empowered. Rajiv Gandhi avaru had a special place for Karnataka in his heart, and it remained even after he was gone, with his memorial in Sripurumbudur having a monolithic piece of granite from Kanakapura,” he added.

Rajiv Gandhi took over the charge of the Congress in 1984 following the assassination of his mother and then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He became India's youngest Prime Minister at the age of 40 when he assumed office in

October 1984.

He served as the Prime Minister of India till December 2, 1989. Born on August 20, in 1944, Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) suicide bomber during an election rally in Sripurumbudur in Tamil Nadu on May 21, 1991.

## FIR filed against BJP IT cell Chief, Journalist Arnab Goswami

and Goswami represent an unprecedented attack on India's democratic foundations, public safety, and national security. Their calculated misuse of influence to spread falsehoods with criminal intent demands the harshest response,” the complainant alleged.

Swaroop also appealed to the Press Council of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, CBI and other law enforcement agencies to treat this complaint as a emergency.

## Hajj flights to resume from May 25

would be issued shortly, which would inform the pilgrims about the reporting time at Hajj House, Srinagar, for each respective flight.

The committee has urged all concerned pilgrims to stay updated with official announcements and make necessary arrangements following the revised schedule.

## ED conducts Multi-City raids in

## money laundering case

Bengaluru, Jalandhar, Indore and Kolkata, in connection with its probe into alleged money laundering in a firm.

The searches were carried out under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, the agency said in a social media post.

During the search operations, the ED seized foreign currencies, including US Dollars, Singapore Dollars and Dirhams, amounting to around Rs 6.43 lakh, gold bullion worth Rs 55.74 lakh, and froze bank accounts with a total balance of around Rs 94 lakh, it said.

Property documents, several digital devices, and various incriminating documents were also seized, the agency added.

## Former MLA Amin Bhat rejoins Congress

Justice & Development Front (JDF) has added a new dimension to politics of South Kashmir.

## J&K, Ladakh declared ‘Hard Area’ for IFS Officers under new AGMUT guidelines

categorized as ‘Category B – Hard Area’ along with Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep. This amendment followed the merger of the J&K cadre into the AGMUT Cadre and aimed to

streamline postings across different regions. The guidelines also classified Delhi, Goa, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, and Puducherry as ‘Category A – Regular/Soft Area.’

## Leh admin directs meat shops to install black glass panels within 15 days

display of their premises.

As per an order, the directive is in compliance with public health and sanitation norms under the Jammu & Kashmir Municipal Act, 2000 and is aimed at ensuring that the display and handling of meat are not visible to the public from outside, particularly in market areas and public streets.

The purpose of this measure, as outlined in the order, is to maintain hygienic and sanitary conditions; protect public sensibilities, especially in areas frequented by children, tourists, and the general public; and uphold civic aesthetics while promoting responsible trade practices. The installation of black glass or opaque screening must be completed within 15 days from the issuance of this order.

The order further states that failure to comply within the stipulated period will invite action under relevant provisions of the Municipal Act, which may include imposition of penalties, sealing of the premises, and/or suspension of the trade license. Additionally, meat shop owners are also directed to ensure that all other applicable sanitary and licensing norms are strictly adhered to, failing which further legal and administrative action shall be taken.



# J&K continues winning streak in Khelo India Beach Games at Diu

## *Emerges victorious against Chhattisgarh by 2-1*

### Top News Report

DIU, May 21: The Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory Beach Volleyball team has made an impressive mark in the first edition of the Khelo India Beach Games currently being held at Diu (Union Territory). The team has entered victory mode, defeating strong contenders and earning nationwide recognition with their stellar performance.

In their second match, J&K emerged victorious against Chhattisgarh, winning by 2-1 sets (21-15, 18-21, 15-7). The dynamic duo Imtiaz and Azgar enthralled spectators with their powerful spikes and strong defensive tactics, securing another win for the team.

Earlier, the team had a spectacular start by defeating the host team of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu in straight sets (21-15, 21-9). Imtiaz and Azgar showcased exceptional teamwork and technique, leaving the hosts overwhelmed and setting the tone for the tournament.

Despite limited infrastructure and no access to coastal facilities, the players from J&K



demonstrated extraordinary grit and determination, earning their place among the top 8 beach volleyball teams in India. This achievement reflects not only their talent but also their unwavering discipline, determination, and devotion.

The championship features teams from Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chhattisgarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Jammu & Kashmir.

The J&K Sports Council, in collaboration with the Volleyball Association of J&K, selected and trained a six-member contingent, including players, a coach, and a manager, during trials held at MA Stadium, Jammu. The team is being coached by Mohd Tariq (Joint Secretary Volleyball Association of J&K) and managed by Vijay Kumar Magotra (General Secretary Volleyball Association of J&K). Kuldip Magotra, CEO of the Volleyball Association of

J&K, has been nominated as a Technical Official for the event.

During an interaction with players and officials of J&K UT, A.J. Martin Sudhakar, Director of Competition, and Rahul Kumar, SAI Coordinator, expressed their delight at the enthusiasm and growth of beach volleyball in J&K, a region geographically far from the sea.

Kuldip Magotra praised the efforts of the J&K UT Government and Sports Council, stating, "The exposure being provided to our athletes through such national platforms is invaluable. We are committed to ensuring the excellence of our players, no matter the challenges." He also lauded the "My Youth, My Pride" initiative, which is being powerfully represented through sports achievements like this.

The team's participation and performance reflect the growing sports culture and potential in Jammu & Kashmir, setting a new benchmark for excellence in beach volleyball and beyond.

The Volleyball Association of J&K would leave no stone unturned in excellence of players, come what may in the future, Magotra added.

# District Kathua hosts U-17 Football, U-14 Cricket Competitions



### Top News Report

KATHUA, May 21: A day full of energy, competition, and sportsmanship was witnessed as District Kathua successfully hosted inter-zone district level competitions in football (U-17 boys) and cricket (U-14 boys) under the banner of the Department of Youth Services and Sports, Kathua.

The U-17 football matches were held at the football ground of Higher Secondary School, Chandwan. The event began with an opening ceremony where Vice Principal Pankaj Kohli was the chief guest. He interacted with the players and extended his best wishes for a successful tournament.

The first football match saw Zone Sallan overpower Zone Barnoti with a convincing 5-1 victory. The second match, played between Zone Hiranagar and Zone Kathua, kept spectators on

edge.

After a goalless draw in regular time, the match went to penalty shootout where Zone Hiranagar emerged victorious with a score of 4-1.

Simultaneously, at the Sports Stadium Hiranagar, the U-14 cricket tournament was in full swing. In the second semifinal, Zone Kathua narrowly edged past Zone Hiranagar by just 1 run in a nail-biting finish. The final match, played between Zone Kathua and Zone Marheem, saw Zone Kathua clinch the title with a 5-run win.

The day's competitions saw enthusiastic participation from 131 young athletes, showcasing their skills, team spirit, and passion for sports. The event highlighted the commitment of the Youth Services and Sports Department in promoting sports at the grassroots level and nurturing young talent across the district.

# IIC of CLUJ organizes invited lecture on innovation and entrepreneurship

### Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: Institutional Innovation Council (IIC) of Cluster University of Jammu (CLUJ) on Wednesday organized an invited lecture on innovation and entrepreneurship in School of Sciences, which aimed at nurturing a culture of innovation, start-ups, and entrepreneurship within the university ecosystem.

The session was graced by expert Arshad Noomani (JKAS), Functional Manager at Directorate of Industries & Commerce, Jammu, Dr. Chander Shekhar, Dean Sciences & President (IIC).

The IIC, an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, is dedicated to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship among students in Higher Education Institutions. With a mission to promote a culture of innovation in the academic institutions, the IIC encourages collaboration and knowledge sharing among educational institutions, industries, and other stakeholders. The event started with a warm welcome speech by Dr. Chandra Shekhar, President of IIC and motivated the



students to give their ideas and avail the maximum benefit out of the schemes launched by the Government of India for making their career out of these schemes instead of running after Govt. Jobs. He also inspires students to be a job giver instead of job seeker. The event continued with an insightful presentation by Arshad Noomani, an expert in the field, under the theme "Fostering Industrial Ecosystem in J&K."

He highlighted key aspects of the New Central Sector Scheme 2021 and the J&K Industrial Policy 2021, focusing on the growth of dynamic and thriving industrial units.

Noomani also delved into the various incentives and policy support provided by the Government of J&K to promote start-ups.

The session included an engaging interaction with students, where he encouraged them to draw motivation from the government's schemes and pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations.

The program was attended by IIC members Dr. Banarsi Lal, Dr. Avtar Changotra, Dr. Biplob K. Maiti, and Dr. Satyapal Singh Rathore, along with contractual faculty and students from various constituent colleges and the School of Cluster University of Jammu.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Tsering Landol, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics expressing gratitude to the invited speaker and participant for their invaluable contributions to the enriching discourse on innovation and entrepreneurship.

# "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" – IEC awareness programme under Nasha Mukht Abhiyan held at GHSS Bahufort

### Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: In alignment with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir's flagship mega campaign Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, an impactful awareness programme titled "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" was held at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Bahu Fort.

The event aimed to educate and inspire the community to choose a healthy, drug-free life and ensure the message reaches every home and every individual.

With the participation of around 100 people, including social activist Sumit, Retd DySP Bishan Das, students, parents, local residents, and volunteers, the programme was a powerful community effort dedicated to spreading awareness and guiding those who may be struggling to find hope and recovery.

Dr. Seema, Medical Officer, Health Department, administered a collective pledge against drug abuse and emphasized the importance of physical and mental health.

Raspal Singh, Sub Inspector, Police

Department, discussed the role of law enforcement in curbing drug-related issues and encouraged vigilant community action.

Varsha Mangotra, Social Welfare Department, highlighted the emotional and societal impacts of addiction and shared ways to support affected individuals.

Tanav Rajput, Sub Inspector, Excise Department, spoke about the enforcement of drug laws and encouraged youth to be informed and responsible.

Subash Chander, Resource Person for Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, delivered an insightful address on how people can come out of addiction and rebuild their lives with support and willpower.

Karuna Chettri, SMDC Member, addressed the importance of community and school collaboration in spreading awareness.

Mehjabeen, representative from the Education Department and Nodal Officer for Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan in the school, highlighted the role of education in nurturing awareness and prevention.

A moving skit, per-

formed by students and directed by Anita and Aditi, portrayed the journey of an individual battling addiction and finding hope through support and awareness. Students also delivered speeches expressing their understanding and strong stance against

drug abuse.

The programme was conducted and anchored by Deepti, who ensured the event's successful flow. It concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by the Principal, Anuradha, who acknowledged the contributions of all

departments, guests, and especially the school faculty.

The main objective of the programme was to ensure that the message of drug prevention reaches a large number of people—especially those who may be silently suffering.

# Indian medical association national team meets Dr Jitendra, Offers voluntary emergency services

JAMMU/ NEW DELHI,

May 21 (Agencies) : In a gesture of solidarity and service to the nation, a high-level national team of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) called on Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh in the national capital today and offered voluntary emergency services with the Association's readiness to provide 24x7 medical support, if required, across the country in the light of recent developments.

The delegation, comprising senior national office bearers of the IMA, including National President Elect Dr. Anil Kumar Nayak and Honorary National Secretary General Dr. (Ms) Savita Datta, conveyed to the Minister that the Association has already instructed its network of hospitals and doctors nationwide to be on emergency standby. They reiterated their commitment to setting up dedicated emergency response cells wherever needed, especially in areas affected by ongoing armed operations. The meeting, held in the backdrop of recent incidents in Jammu & Kashmir brought to focus the pressing need for enhanced protection of medical personnel and facilities in conflict



zones. The Minister acknowledged their concerns and appreciated the IMA's proactive stance and sense of national duty. During the interaction, Dr. Jitendra Singh advised the IMA leadership to place special emphasis on Jammu and Kashmir, given the sensitive security situation and recent incidents in the region.

He noted that the medical fraternity's active presence and preparedness in J&K could play a vital role in supporting both civilian and paramilitary needs during emergencies. The Minister encouraged the Association to coordinate closely with local authorities and consider strengthening their on-ground response infrastructure in the Union Territory.

Dr. Jitendra Singh, himself a noted Physician and Diabetologist, assured the delegation that the Government is fully committed to safeguarding healthcare professionals and ensuring that medical infrastructure remains operational and protected, even under challenging circumstances. He lauded the IMA's offer to remain available for round-the-

clock service as a testament to the nobility of the medical profession.

Members of the delegation also underscored their association's longstanding commitment to public health and national service, reiterating their readiness to coordinate with both central and state authorities during emergencies, natural disasters, and conflict situations.

The IMA delegation also informed the Minister about their activities like coaching and mentorship programmes for NEET exam aspirants, particularly targeting students from underserved and remote areas.

The initiative aims to bridge educational gaps and support aspiring medical students with quality guidance, aligning with the Association's broader commitment to nurturing the next generation of healthcare professionals.

The meeting concluded with the Minister encouraging deeper institutional collaboration between the Government and IMA, especially in areas of disaster response and health emergency management.

# Congress pays floral tributes to Rajiv Gandhi

**Congress committed to uphold Rajiv Gandhi's vision for a Secular & Progressive India: Hari Singh**

### Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: Floral tributes were paid to the former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna Shri Rajiv Gandhi Ji on his 34th death anniversary in a function organised in the Jammu North Assembly segment. The event was held under the leadership of Shri Hari Singh Chib, Vice President of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) and Incharge District President Jammu Rural.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of Congress workers and local residents who gathered to remember the immense contributions of Rajiv Gandhi to the nation. Floral tributes were offered to the portrait of the former Prime Minister, and the atmosphere was



filled with emotion as speakers recalled his legacy and vision for a modern and empowered India.

Speaking on the occasion, Hari Singh Chib said that Rajiv Gandhi was not just a statesman but a true visionary who laid the foundation of a technologically advanced India. "He dreamt of taking India into the 21st cen-

tury and worked tirelessly to empower the youth and the rural population through revolutionary reforms. From strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions to ushering in the IT revolution, Rajiv Gandhi's initiatives continue to shape the present and future of our country," Chib said.

Hari Singh Chib added that the

Congress party remains committed to upholding the ideals of Rajiv Gandhi and will continue to strive for a secular, inclusive and progressive India.

Prominent personalities present on the occasion included Som Nath Sharma (Block President, Pata Paloura), Rajni Bala (former Corporator, Ward No. 60), Bal Krishan Sharma, Om Parkash, Madan Singh Chib, Kamal Singh, Romesh Kumar, Rangreej Kumar, Amit Kumar, Kaka Ram, Parshuram Singh, Neeta Chib and others.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge by the attendees to work towards preserving the legacy of Rajiv Gandhi by promoting unity, development and democratic values across all sections of society.



# Suryavanshi sparkles as Royals finish season with victory against CSK

NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): In their last match of the Indian Premier League season, Rajasthan Royals recorded a six-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings at the Arun Jaitley Cricket Stadium in New Delhi, with 14-year-old opener Vaibhav Suryavanshi again showing his potential with a measured half-century.

Suryavanshi took 33 balls to score 57 runs for his second half-century in six matches of his debut season. He had posted 101 off 38 balls against Gujarat Titans and 40 off 15 balls against Punjab Kings. However, on Tuesday, he took his time to settle down while his opening partner Yashasvi Jaiswal (36 off 19) went after the bowlers.

Suryavanshi got into his usual destructive rhythm, hitting four sixes and as many boundaries. The youngster raised a 98-run stand for the second wicket with captain Sanju Samson (41 off 31 balls).

Suryavanshi sent the ball soaring into the stands off Ravindra Jadeja twice and completed his



half-century with a six off Noor Ahmad. Once he got going, the 188-run target turned into a stroll for the Royals and the other batters added the finishing touch.

The Royals did have a minor scare as they slid from 135/2 to 158/4. Having lost many games from winning positions this season, the Royals came under some pressure but Dhruv Jurel (31 off 12 balls) and Shimron Hetmyer (12 off 5 balls) ensured

the Royal ended the season with a win.

Earlier, CSK had a shaky start with 12/2 on the board as Yudhvir Singh grabbed both the wickets. However, young Ayush Mhatre once again proved his worth and his 20-ball 43 helped CSK recover from the early losses.

Mhatre's wicket was followed by the dismissal of Ravichandran Ashwin (13) and Jadeja (1). Dewald Brevis (42 off 25)

and Shivam Dube (39 off 32 balls) helped CSK rebuild their innings. Skipper MS Dhoni managed only 16 off 17, failing to provide a late flourish. Dhoni though became the fourth Indian batter to smash 350 sixes in the T20 format. The 43-year-old achieved the feat after Rohit Sharma (542), Virat Kohli (434) and Suryakumar Yadav (368). Overall, Chris Gayle holds the record for most T20 maximums with a tally of 1,056.

Pacers Yudhvir (3/47) and Akash Madhwal (3/29) shared six wickets between them.

With many young players excelling this season, Dhoni advised them to strive for consistency. "They have to try for consistency, but if you are looking for 200-plus strike rate then consistency is hard to get... they have the ability to hit sixes at any stage," he said.

"Don't take pressure, when the expectations rise... learn from senior players and coaching staff... it's about reading the game... this would be my advice to all the youngsters who have done well," he added.

# First-class cricket returns to Darwin after 19 years as Australia A hosts Sri Lanka A

MELBOURNE, May 21 (Agencies): First-class cricket is set to make a long-awaited return to Darwin after nearly two decades, with Australia A scheduled to face Sri Lanka A in a multi-format series this July. This will be the first time since 2006 that Darwin hosts a first-class match, when Australia A played Pakistan A and India A took on New Zealand A, reported ESPNcricinfo.

The upcoming series will feature three 50-over matches followed by two four-day games. It marks another step forward in Darwin's re-emergence as a host of top-tier cricket, with the city also set to stage the first two T20Is of Australia's home series against South Africa in August.

The first four-day match against Sri Lanka A will be played on a drop-in pitch at Marrara Stadium, which is also the venue for the T20Is the following month. The match will serve as a key trial for the ground's readiness to potentially host one of the two Tests against Bangladesh in August 2026. These Tests were originally scheduled for March 2027 but were moved forward to accommodate the 150th anniversary Test at the MCG.

The Australia A squad will be announced in the coming weeks, with

selectors expected to focus on emerging players, especially as several experienced names are likely to be unavailable due to county commitments in England. Jason Sangha, who was instrumental in South Australia's recent Sheffield Shield victory, is among the players tipped for selection.

"It's fantastic to confirm a multi-format series which gives the next crop of emerging cricketers excellent development opportunities throughout the Australian winter," Peter Roach, CA's head of cricket operations and scheduling, said, as quoted from ESPNcricinfo. "Darwin's dry season weather between May and September offers both the Northern Territory and Australian Cricket an incredible winter opportunity which allows cricket to be played in Australia all-year round," he added.

After this home assignment, Australia A will travel to India in mid-September for another red-ball series that will include two four-day matches.

The series in Darwin begins with three 50-over matches on July 4 (day-night), July 6, and July 9, all to be played at the Marrara Cricket Ground. The first four-day game will take place at Marrara Stadium from July 13 to 16, followed by the second from July 20 to 23 at the Marrara Cricket Ground.

# Fleming impressed by Anshul Kamboj's growth in IPL 2025

NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): Chennai Super Kings (CSK) head coach Stephen Fleming has lauded young seamer Anshul Kamboj for his progress and impact during the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) season. The right-arm quick has featured in seven matches so far this season, picking up five wickets and making a steady impression with his control and pace.

Speaking about Kamboj's development, Fleming said the youngster has shown promising signs, especially with his deceptive pace and ability to extract movement off the pitch.

"Yeah, Kamboj is good," Fleming said at the post-match press conference.

"His speed is up to 138-139 kmph and it's deceptive. His big strength is his length, and he gets the ball to wobble. He's got some real potential with both the white and red ball, and we're really happy with how he has developed and the opportunity he has taken this year," he added.

Kamboj's best performance came against Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), where he returned figures of 1/16, showcasing his ability to contain runs and bowl with discipline in crucial phases of the game.

CSK lost their game against the Rajasthan Royals (RR) by six wickets in Delhi, but the young pacer has also impressed his captain.



The wicketkeeper-batter went on to appreciate the young uncapped Indian bowler, who snapped one wicket in his spell of three overs, where he gave away just 21 runs at an economy of 7. "Kamboj is someone who doesn't get swing, but he gets some seam movement, the ball hits you harder than the speed gun suggests, he has taken the responsibility and he is someone who can bowl good yorkers. That's (powerplay) one area where there's a hole for us, we don't want to give away too many runs in the first six overs. He has bowled 3 overs in the powerplay, which I feel is tougher when the ball isn't moving much and when the batsmen are well set," MS Dhoni said.

# IPL 2025: Gujarat Titans eye top-two finish as struggling LSG look to salvage pride

AHMEDABAD, May 21 (Agencies): Former champions Gujarat Titans will aim to extend their winning streak to solidify a top-two finish when they face a struggling Lucknow Super Giants in their Indian Premier League clash here on Thursday.

With 18 points from 12 matches, table-toppers Titans have already booked their place in the playoffs. However, with Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Punjab Kings close behind on 17 points, the race for a top-two spot is still very much alive.

For Gujarat, everything seems to have fallen into place. Their top-order trio of Orange Cap holder B Sai Sudharsan (617 runs), skipper Shubman Gill (601), and Jos Buttler (500), has been in prolific form, laying the foundation for most of the team's victories.

Together, they have racked up 16 half-centuries and a century, dominating the tournament's batting attacks with clinical consistency.

Such top-order dominance, however, has left the middle order largely untested.

Gujarat's bowling unit has been equally formidable. Their Indian pace battery has led the



charge, with Prasidh Krishna being the leading wicket-taker this season after snaring 21 wickets. Mohammed Siraj and lanky left-arm spinner R Sai Kishore have chipped in with 15 wickets each.

Adding further firepower to the attack is the return of South African pace ace Kagiso Rabada, who missed most of the season following a suspension for recreational drug use.

On the other hand, Lucknow Super Giants saw their playoff

hopes dashed after a comprehensive defeat to Sunrisers Hyderabad on Monday. The Rishabh Pant-led side, now on a four-match losing streak, has endured a campaign riddled with inconsistency and injuries. LSG have leaned heavily on their overseas recruits -- Mitchell Marsh, Aiden Markram, and Nicholas Pooran -- for runs.

The lack of noteworthy contributions from Pant, who has endured a woeful season, and the middle order has compound-

ed their problems.

Injuries to key bowlers further derailed their campaign.

Left-arm pacer Mohsin Khan missed the entire season, while express quick Mayank Yadav, who was retained with high hopes, spent most of it on the sidelines.

Avesh Khan and Akash Deep also struggled with fitness, leaving LSG's bowling attack depleted. Pant acknowledged the devastating impact these absences have had on the team.

"Definitely, it could have been one of our best seasons but coming into the tournament we had a lot of gaps, injuries and as a team we decided to not talk about that, but it became difficult to fill those gaps for us," he said after their previous game.

To make matters worse, LSG will be without their most successful bowler this season -- spinner Digvesh Rathni, who has claimed 14 wickets at an economy of 8.18.

He has been handed a one-match suspension for his on-field altercation with Abhishek Sharma in the previous game, further denting their faltering campaign.

# India's tour of England: Shami begins preparation for Tests

NEW DELHI, May 21 (Agencies): There might be an air of doubt about Mohammed Shami's ability to last a five-Test series but former national selection committee members MSK Prasad, Devang Gandhi, Jatin Paranjpe and Gagan Khoda are unequivocal that the 'Amroha Express' is a must-pick for the tour of England. Shami has played nine IPL games this season for Sunrisers Hyderabad with only six wickets in his kitty and has gone for over 11 runs per over.

However, it has been learnt that Shami has already started bowling with the red Dukes ball at the SRH nets with an eye on the England tour, now that SRH's playoff qualification hopes have been dashed.

The Indian squad, which is expected to comprise 16 members, will be one of the trickiest ones to select in recent times as there is a debate around who

the new captain should be.

While the former committee members differed on their choice of the vice-captain, they were unanimous that one can't look beyond Jasprit Bumrah even though there remains a question mark over his fitness status.

"My captain would be Bumrah as he has already proven himself as a leader. As far as my vice-captain is concerned, I would like Shubman Gill to gain some experience. In case you have a problem with Bumrah's fitness then my choice is KL Rahul," former chairman of selectors Prasad said. "As far as my assessment goes, if we are taking 16, then I would want a left-arm swing bowler and my choice is Arshdeep Singh. I would like KL Rahul to bat No. 4," he added.

Gandhi said it is "surprising" that there is a debate about whether



Shami would make it to the Indian team. "Unless he is carrying an injury... The IPL is not an indicator of someone's Test match form. You need someone of Shami's calibre in England," Gandhi said.

"For captaincy, it would be unfair if you

don't consider Bumrah for leadership. As far as Bumrah's deputy goes, this is the time to show faith in Rishabh Pant," he added.

Paranjpe also went with Bumrah and Pant in the leadership roles, while Khoda backed Rahul for captaincy.

# Steven Smith set for brief MLC 2025 stint with Washington Freedom amid tight international schedule

WASHINGTON DC, May 21 (Agencies): Steven Smith is likely to play a few matches for Washington Freedom in the 2025 Major League Cricket (MLC) season, in the short gap between Australia's World Test Championship (WTC) final against South Africa and their tour of the West Indies, as per ESPNcricinfo.

Washington Freedom announced that Smith "will feature" in two games, but the final approval is still being sorted out with Cricket Australia. If cleared, Smith could play on June 17 against the LA Knight Riders in Oakland and on June 21 against the MI New York in Dallas. However, if rain pushes the WTC final into its reserve day on June 16, his availability for the June 17 match might be affected. Australia's West Indies tour begins with a Test in Barbados on June 25.

"It's great to have Steve Smith again with us this season albeit only for probably two matches," Freedom general manager Michael Klinger told the team's website, as quoted from ESPNcricinfo.

"That continuity is really impor-



tant for us. He was a fantastic leader for us last year, a big reason why we won. Hopefully he will be part of the Washington Freedom setup for many years to come," he added.

Smith was the captain of Freedom in 2024 and led them to the title, scoring 336 runs in nine innings at an average of 56 and a strike rate of 148.67.

Other Australian stars will not be part of MLC 2025, Pat Cummins, who signed with San Francisco Unicorns last year, has opted out, and Travis Head had already said he wouldn't return. Josh Inglis, another Test squad member, did play in the previous edition.

Meanwhile, Washington Freedom have brought in young T20 talent Mitchell Owen, who continues to land franchise deals after impressing in the Big Bash League with Hobart Hurricanes.

"He can play in pressure situations, making an unbelievable hundred in the BBL final," Klinger said of Owen, as quoted from ESPNcricinfo.

"He provides a style of batting that is quite similar to Travis Head, a right-handed version. We felt he's a real good replacement. He's at the start of a career that's about to flourish," he added.

"He could potentially be a long-term player for Washington Freedom. Someone we look to have a great relationship with going forward," he remarked.

Owen is currently part of the Punjab Kings set up at the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025, having previously featured in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2025 for Peshawar Zalmi and for the Paarl Royals at the SA20.

Freedom have also secured Australian left-arm seamer Jason Behrendorff to help fill the gap created by Marco Jansen's absence.



# Dimple demands handing over of wanted terrorists Hafiz Saeed, Azhar Masood to India

Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: Mission Statehood President Sunil Dimple led a massive anti-Pakistan rally demanding the handing over of wanted terrorists Hafiz Saeed and Azhar Masood to India. The protest also called for the unification and liberation of Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK), Gilgit, and Baltistan as integral parts of Jammu and Kashmir State, India. The rally witnessed strong support from local residents, activists, and political workers.

Dimple and the protestors voiced strong support for the Indian Army's ongoing Operation Sindoor, which aims at liberating Indian territories currently under illegal Pakistani occupation. Protestors demanded immediate cash relief and government support for the families affected by the war, especially those who lost loved ones



or suffered damage in border areas due to shelling and attacks.

Angry slogans were raised against former U.S. President Donald Trump for announcing a ceasefire before the completion of the Pahal-gam revenge operation, and against Turkey for allegedly funding Pakistan during the conflict. Dimple declared that there was no need for any ceasefire until POK is completely merged with India and until the Indus Water Treaty is scrapped permanently.

Addressing the gathering, Dimple warned Pakistan to dismantle its terror infrastructure and stop protecting terrorists like Hafiz Saeed, Azhar Masood, and other leaders of groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and Hizbul Mujahideen. He demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi take concrete steps for the liberation of Indian territories and also visit Jammu & Kashmir personally to evaluate the worsening situation and ensure development

and stability.

Dimple criticized various political parties for allegedly playing politics over Operation Sindoor and the sacrifices of security forces. He condemned the recently dispatched parliamentary delegation abroad, calling it a waste of public money with no real benefits, especially when the global community is already aware of Pakistan's role in sponsoring terrorism in the region.

He further accused political leaders of conducting only photo ses-

sions during their visits to border-affected areas, without actually helping the people. Dimple highlighted that the Jammu and Kashmir government has not provided any financial assistance to families of martyrs or to residents whose homes were damaged in cross-border violence and bombings.

In a strong appeal, Dimple urged all 90 MLAs and 5 Members of Parliament to donate six months' salary to the Operation Sindoor Relief Fund. He also called upon government employees and bureaucrats to donate one month's salary to support affected families until the war concludes.

Senior leaders who joined Dimple in the protest included Tarun Singh, Ashok Sharma, Narender Chowdrey, Sanjay Kumar, Sanjeev, Baba Dupta, Parveen Kumar, Rajesh Kumar, Happy Kumar, Suny Kumar, Rocky Kapoor, and many others.

# Apni Party leaders pay solidarity visit to shelling victims in Rajouri



Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: Apni Party Provincial President (Jammu), Manjit Singh, along with several senior party leaders, visited various areas in Rajouri today to meet individuals and families who have suffered human and material losses due to the recent cross-border shelling by the Pakistani army.

The leaders also visited the Government Medical College (GMC) and Hospital in Rajouri to meet those injured in the shelling.

According to a press release issued here, the leaders visited Earwin

Kether, Thandi Kassi, Bela, Gooni, Dhani Gri, and other affected areas in the district.

"While meeting the victims, Manjit Singh and the accompanying leaders expressed their deepest sympathy and extended unwavering solidarity to them," the press note said.

On this occasion, Manjit Singh said that "the administration must ensure not only that the victims of this cross-border shelling receive adequate compensation, but also that they are provided with immediate relief to address their urgent needs."

The prominent leaders

and workers accompanying Manjit Singh during the visit included Senior Provincial Vice President Faqir Nath, Provincial Vice President Arun Chibber, Provincial Secretary Aijaz Kazmi, District President Rajouri Manzoor Bhukari, Provincial President Youth Wing Vishal Naryania, Punch Birpur Sanjeet Kumar, District President Youth Wing Rajouri Afran Anjum, Provincial Secretary Youth Wing Rajouri Riaz Gukhar, Danish Shabir, Mezan Choudhary, Waseem Mughal, Masawan Hussain Shah, Mohammad Shekur Jat and others.

# Secretary Transport conducts inspection of vehicle fitness certification drive at Choglamsar

Top News Report

LEH, May 21: In a bid to enhance road safety standards and improve citizen service delivery, the Secretary, Transport Department, Union Territory of Ladakh, Bhupesh Chaudhary, conducted a detailed inspection of the vehicle fitness certification renewal process being carried out at the Choglamsar ground on Wednesday.

He was accompanied by the Assistant Regional Transport Officer



(ARTO), Hidayatullah, and other departmental officials.

During the inspection, the Secretary interacted

with technical staff, vehicle owners, and citizens present at the site. He issued firm directions that the process of fit-

ness certification must be carried out strictly in accordance with the provisions laid down under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and the Central Motor Vehicles Rules.

At the same time, he underscored the importance of minimizing inconvenience to the general public, especially in harsh climatic and topographic conditions such as those prevalent in Ladakh.

Chaudhary emphasized that fitness testing is a vital regulatory mechanism to ensure that only roadworthy vehicles ply on public roads.

This directly contributes to the safety of not just the vehicle owner, but also passengers and other road users. He highlighted the responsibility of the department in upholding high safety standards through strict but fair enforcement of the rules. To streamline the process further and reduce crowding or unnecessary delays, the Secretary directed the concerned officials to operationalize an online appointment system for vehicle fitness testing at the earliest. He noted that the digitization of such services will not only improve efficiency but also bring greater transparency and accountability into the system.

Following the field visit, the Secretary also inspected the Regional

Transport Office (RTO) premises in Leh. He reviewed the functioning of various public service counters and took stock of the administrative and technical workflows.

He directed the staff to ensure prompt and efficient service delivery to citizens, while maintaining a courteous and helpful approach. He emphasized that the Transport Department is a key public interface agency, and its functioning should reflect professionalism, responsiveness, and transparency.

In addition, Chaudhary inspected the readiness of the Transport Control Room, which is proposed to be inaugurated shortly by the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

The Control Room is envisaged as a central facility to enhance real-time monitoring of transport operations, data management, and enforcement coordination across the Union Territory. The Secretary expressed satisfaction over the progress of work and urged officials to complete all preparatory arrangements well in time for the formal inauguration.

The inspection visit is part of the department's broader reform agenda aimed at improving service delivery, leveraging technology, and ensuring robust enforcement of safety regulations across the UT of Ladakh.

# Shri Amar Kshatriya Rajput Sabha distribute scholarship in Gurha Slathia



Top News Report

SAMBA, May 21: In a significant initiative to support education among the economically weaker sections (EWS) of the Rajput community, Deputy Commissioner Samba, Rajesh Sharma on behalf of Shri Amar Kshatriya Rajput Sabha, distributed scholarships worth Rs 44,500 to 12 meritorious students at Gurha Slathia, Samba district.

Shri Amar Kshatriya Rajput Sabha has been consistently providing scholarships every year to encourage talented students from the Rajput Biradari belonging to EWS categories across Jammu Province. This year, scholarships have been sanctioned for nearly 100 deserving students, reaffirming the

Sabha's commitment to education and community upliftment.

The scholarship distribution event at Gurha Slathia was conducted under the supervision of Mangleshwar Singh, General Secretary of the Sabha.

While addressing the gathering of students and parents, Singh emphasized the importance of education and discipline. He urged parents to keep a close watch on their children's activities, especially in the current challenging social environment.

Mangleshwar Singh also advised students to stay away from drugs, focus on their studies, and actively participate in sports to maintain good health and build a strong physique. His address highlighted

the role of a balanced lifestyle in shaping the future of youth.

Several notable figures attended the event, including Narinder Singh (Advisor), Inder Singh (President, Samba District), DDC Member Sudershan Singh, Ex-Sarpanch Jatinder Singh, Vir Partap Singh, Uttkansh Salathia, Pankaj Singh, Vikas Singh, and other prominent personalities from Gurha Slathia. Their presence added significance to the occasion and reflected the community's collective support for education.

The event concluded with appreciation from parents and community members, applauding the Sabha's ongoing efforts to empower the youth through education and awareness.

# International Biodiversity Day celebrated in MIER College



Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: To commemorate International Biodiversity Day, observed globally on May 22, the Biodiversity Cell of the J&K Biodiversity Council, Jammu, in collaboration with the Environment Unit of MIER College of Education, organized a Painting/Poster Making Competition on May 20, 2025, under the theme "Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development."

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from more than 16 students of MIER College of Education, who used their artistic talents to highlight the importance of biodiversity and sustainable living.

Through thought-provoking visuals and creative expression, the participants conveyed compelling messages about the need to live in harmony with nature.

The competition was judged by Prof. Nishta Rana, Professor and Head, School of Edu-

cation, and Dr. Monika Bajaj, Associate Professor and Head, School of Social Sciences and Humanities. The judges praised the artistic excellence, creativity, and depth of environmental awareness demonstrated by the students.

In a close contest, the first prize was jointly awarded to Sonakshi Gupta (B.A. Hons. Political Science, Semester VI) and Shweta (B.Ed. Special Education, Semester II) for their outstanding creativity and impactful presentation.

The Second Prize was shared by Janvi Sharma (B.Ed., Semester II) and Paaras Chib (B.A. Hons. Psychology, Semester II), who impressed the judges with their originality and confident execution. Manvi Parmar (B.Ed. Special Education, Semester IV) earned the third prize for her commendable effort and unique perspective. A Consolation Prize was awarded to Shriya Mantoo (B.A. Hons.

Psychology, Semester VI) in recognition of her sincere participation and artistic contribution.

All participants, including prize winners, received Certificates of Participation and Awards from the J&K Biodiversity Council, acknowledging their dedication and creative engagement with the theme.

Prof. Adit Gupta, Director, and Principal of MIER College of Education, congratulated the winners and appreciated the initiative, stating, "Observing World Biodiversity Day proved essential for spreading awareness about the importance of biodiversity and the urgent need for its conservation."

The efforts of the Environment Unit were acknowledged for having organized such a meaningful and inspiring event in collaboration with the Biodiversity Council, which encouraged environmental responsibility among students."

# JKTF hails UT Govt's decision to engage/continue Aayas Services in Kindergarten Schools

Top News Report

JAMMU, May 21: The Jammu and Kashmir Teachers Forum, affiliated with the All India Secondary Teachers Federation (AISTF), extended its heartfelt appreciation to the UT Government for its recent decision to extend/engage helpers under Support at Pre-Primary (ECCE) and continue the services of existing Aayas in the School Education Department for the current academic session 2025-2026.

In an official statement, UT Spokesperson Joginder Singh Thakur conveyed that the forum's leadership, including UT President Sheikh Mohammed Ashraf, UT Sr Vice President Rafaqut Hussain Malik, UT Sr Vice Chairman Mohd Mahroof, UT Vice Chairman Mehmood Ryaz Bhat, UT VICE President Neetan Kalyan, UT Convenor Lokesh Sharma, UT chief coordinator Dr Sanjay Sharma, UT Press and Publicity Secretary Jail

Ahmed Provincial President Jammu Sanjeet Sharma, UT Secretary Raman Kumar Sharma, UT Additional Spokesperson Ranjeet Singh along with the entire leadership, has lauded the Education Department's initiative.

The decision reflects the government's commitment to enhancing the quality of education and supporting the academic community.

The J&K Teachers Forum expresses its sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Education Min-

ister Sakina Itoo, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Shantmanu, Project Director Samagra Siksha Bhawani Rakwal for their diligent efforts in ensuring the continuity of Aayas services.

The engagement of helpers under ECCE and the continuance of Aayas services will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the academic landscape, providing crucial support to students and teachers alike. The forum looks forward to continued collaboration with the

Education Department to address other pressing issues and enhance the overall quality of education in Jammu and Kashmir. "We are deeply appreciative of the UT Government's decision to engage helpers under ECCE and continue Aayas services. This initiative will significantly benefit our students and teachers, and we commend the Education Department's efforts to improve our education system said UT President Sheikh Mohd Ashraf."